



Drumchapel

G15 Thriving Places Community news

www.g15tp.scot

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DRUMCHAPEL COMMUNITY CHALLENGES RACISM

BY BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER THROUGH EDUCATION, SONG, DANCE, POETRY, FOOD & FOOTBALL



This special edition is funded by Friendship House, a community organisation where New Scots can make new friends in the community that has become their home



A Challenging World

The world is currently going through disturbing times, and it is important that we all take time to reflect upon what is happening. Wars, destruction, indiscriminate killing of innocent people have unfortunately become the daily reality for millions of people throughout the world.

This edition of the Drumchapel News focuses on an issue that we are experiencing in our everyday lives, whether on our streets or on our phones, iPads and TV screens, and that is racism.

Closer to home we are experiencing an increase in racist comments and activities. Recently, in England some people wanted to set fire to a hotel where asylum seekers were living. These same people raised the St. George's flag, considered the flag of England, insinuating that the flag was only for white people born in England. Unfortunately, in Scotland, a minority of people have embraced the idea of using the Scottish flag with similar intent.

The Scottish flag cannot be used to identify with racism. On the contrary, the flag represents most Scots who are caring and welcoming people, to the extent that we do not talk of immigrants in Scotland, but of New Scots.

During the month of October, we engaged in different activities promoting Drumchapel as a welcoming multicultural community, open to receive New Scots. We displayed in the Community Centre 26 flags of the countries of origin of New Scots living in Drumchapel. At the centre of these 26 flags we raised the Scottish flag, understood as a symbol of solidarity and unity.

We successfully launched this year's anti-racism campaign under the title "Hope Not Hate" on the 3rd of October with songs, poetry, speeches, a quiz and plenty of food. Even with the bad weather, the event was still well attended by just over 200 people. We organised a global solidarity football tournament under the title of our campaign which brought together 34 men and women of many flags, living in Drumchapel to play football together.

Like last year we promoted the "human library" where a New Scot goes in to the schools, community groups and third sector organisations to tell their story of how they came to live in Scotland and establish a conversation with the pupils and group participants about their story and the issue of racism. We distributed "Show Racism the Red Card" stickers on the "Wear Red Day" in the shopping centre and concluded our campaign with a ceilidh where we all danced together as one community.

Our hope is that this issue of the Drumchapel News will help each one of us to reflect more on this vital issue as well as help build an even more inclusive and welcoming community, based on care and solidarity.



Understanding the Terms

Many people struggle to understand the meaning of words that have become part of our everyday conversations. Unfortunately, some people spread false ideas and meanings about these terms, so we would like to offer some clarification.

Asylum seeker = is a person who has left their home country and is seeking protection from persecution or serious human rights violations in another country. The person makes a formal application for asylum, which is a request for international protection, but has not yet been legally recognised as a refugee. Essentially, an asylum seeker is waiting for a decision on their asylum claim while seeking sanctuary in a safe country.

Refugee = a person who has been forced to leave their country to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster. A refugee is different from an asylum seeker because a refugee has the right to remain in the country and does not need to apply for asylum.

Human Rights = Human rights are rights we have simply because we exist as human beings - they are not granted by any state. These universal rights are inherent to us all, regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. They range from the most fundamental - the right to life - to those that make life worth living, such as the rights to food, education, work, health, and liberty.

Islamophobia = dislike of or prejudice against Islam or Muslims, especially as a political force.

Antisemitism = hostility to or prejudice against Jewish people.

Genocide = the deliberate and systematic killing or persecution of many people from a particular national or ethnic group with the aim of destroying that nation or group.

Hopefully, this page has helped clarify some of the terms that we use daily, thus helping us to understand more about the different ethnic groups with whom we share our everyday lives.

Racism = prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism by an individual, community, or institution against a person or people based on their membership of a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized.

Hate crime = a hate crime is defined as a criminal act motivated by prejudice or bias against a person's identity, such as their race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. It involves an offender intending to harm another person based on these characteristics. Hate crimes can be directed at individuals, property, or society.

Muslim = a follower of the religion of Islam who believes in one God called Allah who was revealed to the people through the prophet Mohammed.

Ramadan = it is the ninth month of the Islamic month, and it is a time of fasting, communal prayer, reflection and community.

Eid = is the festival of the breaking of the fast at the end of Ramadan

Sikhs = are a group of people who belong to an Indian religion and philosophy that originated in the Indian subcontinent.

Arabs = an ethnic group of people mostly living in the Middle East and North Africa. However, there are a significant number of Arabs now spread throughout the world.

Flags In The Community Centre





Gorata's Story

A year ago, in the early morning of the 28th of September 2024, I, my husband, our two daughters and my younger sister entered the UK through London Heathrow Airport and claimed asylum at PCP. Indeed, time flies, it feels like it was just yesterday when my family and I packed our lives into bags, fleeing our country due to fear of being sexually assaulted and brutally killed in our home country.

This was a time in my life when I was afraid and hopeless, life felt meaningless, part of me was oppressed by suicidal thoughts while the inner person in me kept questioning my thoughts, "What about the girls you birthed? what about your husband who is doing all for your safety? What about the little girl God entrusted you with her life?" My mind was a battlefield of thoughts, I did not know what the future held, I had never imagined life outside the boarders of my country of origin, it was difficult to trust anybody as I was sexually assaulted. I was angry at the world, broken from the inside, the woman in me, who was a dreamer, a go getter, a loving wife, sister and mother was trapped in sorrow and pain. At that point I was only holding on to prayer and the unconditional love I have for my family kept me going even in the midst of the storms of life.

After our arrival in the UK, we were accommodated in a hotel room in East London and on the 2nd of December 2024, we were moved into a dispersal home in Glasgow, Scotland, I will forever be grateful to God for this day, I remember when we entered the house, it was late at night, we met a MEARS officer, the first Scot I met, this man, I don't remember his name, it was as if he already knew us, "what a kind gesture!" he was very welcoming and lovely, he made us laugh that we instantly forgot the troubles that came with being in a hotel for two months.

In our new home, I was still struggling the rape trauma, believe me it was tough, I found out there are systems in place to help victims like me. One thing about Scottish people is they never cease to amaze me with their level of kindness, it's as if they are birthed by the same parents, I mean even siblings don't usually portray the same characters, one child may be quiet and respectful, while the other may be the opposite, but as for Scots..... I still wonder how they do it. Everyone I came across portrayed the same qualities, from GP, Health visitor, psychiatrist, rape crisis team, social worker, food banks, support groups, they all collaborated so well in helping us find a sense of belonging, as well as fight this giant rape victim demon. I never had this support in my country, I was only labelled as a rape victim and it was very difficult to disclose, I lived in isolation, I just wanted to die, today I feel much better, that I find myself writing about it even though I am crying while writing, I am hopeful that one day I will be able to talk about it without tears running down my cheeks, with the help of Scottish systems.

I still have fears though, I am afraid because our asylum claim was rejected by the home office, and we are on the appeal phase. I am worried for the outcome of the case, especially after witnessing protests where asylum seekers and immigrants are not wanted in Scotland, I am more worried for my five year old daughter in school, I wonder what if others start to bully her because she is an asylum seeker. My family has been through a lot already, I am not in any position to take in bad news but I believe the Scots standing with asylum seekers are more than those against, so we are able to sleep at night and tackle each day as it comes.

Today I celebrate my being on this journey of life, my coming to Scotland, I didn't even know about Scotland before, I heard this name for the first time when we were told we are being moved to Scotland, we didn't even object at that time, it must have been God, he knew Scots will help us heal and find inner peace. I've cried, I've learnt, I've grown, I've conquered, I have built a new life, found a new family and made beautiful relationships at Friendship house, 3D Drumchapel and Thriving Places. I acknowledge that the journey

hasn't been easy, and it is still not easy as I am still in the healing process and have not received settlement status yet, but it has been worth it. It is being in Scotland that made me realise that life goes beyond the borders of my country of origin, that there is hope, and I can't change what has already happened but I can re-write my future and I am grateful. I love Scotland, love is the greatest, and Scottish people are showing us love, from this gesture, we have learnt, and we will pass it to our generations. Let love lead.

My Experience Living in Drumchapel, Glasgow

Two years ago, my family and I moved to Drumchapel, Glasgow. Since then, we have come to appreciate the peaceful environment and the friendly spirit of the community. Most of our neighbors are kind and supportive, and we often share greetings and small conversations that make us feel part of the area.

While we have occasionally faced some prejudice, our overall experience has been positive. My children are happy in their schools - both primary and secondary -

and I have become involved in volunteering at their school and in other local places.

What I value most about Drumchapel is the sense of safety and comfort. Despite some of the negative things people sometimes say about the area, our personal experience has been rewarding.

We feel that Drumchapel is a place where families can truly belong.

Written by Manal





Hi Everyone,

Having spent all my life in Drumchapel, I have nothing but respect and hope for the area. Much has been said and written over the years around the social issues that concern us, such as lack of social housing, health issues and general poverty.

However, not enough has been said about the fantastic community spirit of which we have an abundance. Volunteers, local groups, third sector organisations are dedicated to tackling the issues mentioned above, and we are proud of this work.

Recently, my faith was challenged when I was contacted to assist a family who had their house attacked. The front windows were smashed, and paint was thrown over the front door entrance. The family, a mum and dad and three children of school age, were deeply traumatised and frightened, not understanding why this took place. This family are New Scots who came here in search of safety and peace wanting to rebuild their traumatised lives experienced in their country of origin. This was a shameful, mindless, defenceless and cowardly act and certainly not the Drumchapel I love.

However, once again, the community responded by rallying around the family to reassure them that the people of Drumchapel are a welcoming and caring community. What happened to this family does not represent what most of our community believe. This has been proven by the organisations and individual people who came to assist and reassure the family. G15 Youth Project, a local housing association, Drumchapel Life, G15 Thriving Places and of course Drumchapel Community Council all came together to support the

family through this difficult and challenging time.

There is no doubt we are all living in challenging times which we are witnessing all over the globe. Climate change, wars, discrimination and racism are all contributing to create an uncertain future for humanity. Displacement is one of the results of these issues which affect the poorest and most vulnerable societies and communities globally. People are forced to leave their country of origin in search of a better life.

You would think that in 2025, we would have reached a common goal of reducing famine and world poverty. Incredible wealth has been accumulated by so few people leaving the great majority scrambling to make ends meet. Is it an understatement to say that it is a constant struggle just to exist? We see many of our own community in Drumchapel struggling to make ends meet, pay bills, keep food on the table while keeping the house warm.

So where do we go from here? What now? We are all human beings, irrespective of colour, religion, gender or race. Respect, unity, decency, solidarity are fundamental for creating the society and the community that we strive to build. Everyone has a role to play in establishing the society and the community we want. Resources must be shared, wealth redistributed, and poverty finally eradicated once and for all. Division must be challenged because unity is one of the most important steps towards achieving these goals and will lead to the society and the community the majority want.

Andy Lynch, on behalf of Drumchapel Community Council

Interview with Fatima

Q: Tell us a bit about yourself

Hi, my name is Fatima, and I am 14 years of age and live in Drumchapel. I originally came from Libya when I was 6 years old and have been attending Drumchapel High School for the past three years. I am part of the High School's Anti-racism society which consists of about 10 people.

Q: What does the anti-racism society do?

We meet every Monday, and it is run by me and the vice president where we talk about our next events. At the moment we are running a fund-raising event for the children of Gaza in Palestine. We divide our group into three smaller groups, one on each floor, and we ask the pupils and teachers for funds for Gaza and in return we give each person a Palestinian badge, made by us. All the funds will go to the Gaza foundation for children. We are focusing on this now because we want the money to go very soon.

Currently, in the month of October, we are also doing an activity around Black history month where each person chooses a subject and creates a power point about Black History, which is sent to the teachers who then present it to the class. We might do something in Home Economics, for example, where we make some food, like African curry. At the moment I am doing this and will then go around to the teachers for them to try the food. Each member of the group will focus on a different country.

Q: Have you experienced racism in any shape or form?

Personally, I have experienced racism. It was home time at school, and I was going home from school and there were two boys, one of them said to the other that he would give the other one a fiver if he took the girl's headdress off. I was by myself in front of them and heard what they said and then I stepped away and went to my friends. Luckily, I found one of the police officers in the school and I reported the issue to him.

Q: How do you feel about that?

I feel angry and upset about what they were saying and what they wanted to do because that is unacceptable. It is my right not to let anyone touch me or say anything to me. At the same time, I have lots of friends who always defend me should anything like this happen. On other occasions when I experience any racism my friends have been there to back me up. In Drumchapel I feel welcomed compared to where I used to live, where I experienced a lot of bullying but here in Drumchapel people are so nice.

Q: What is your message to the people of Drumchapel?

My message is that I want everybody to be kind to people who are moving into the community even if they are black, Muslim, Indian, whatever, we should not show any kind of disrespect, keep things to yourself and be kind.

"Every coloured person is different and beautiful in their own way" by Fatima.



Hope Not Hate

Hate builds walls, hope opens doors.
Hate divides, Hope restores.

We are not colours, we are not names,
We are one people, our hearts the same.

Hate is heavy, it weighs us down.
Hope is gentle, it lifts from the ground.

Choose the seed you want to grow,
plant hate, and pain will show.
Plant hope, and love will rise,
a brighter world before our eyes.

So, hand in hand, lets choose our fate:
To live with hope, not live with hate.

by Thusi Upendra

Schools' Artwork

