

Association was chased out of Donegall Pass". A somewhat 'over the top' remark as, of course (you guessed it), the Chinese Welfare Association was never chased out of Donegall Pass - "effectively", or otherwise.

It is noticeable that Ms Kelly was much less geographically-definitive, during her speech on migrant worker exploitation, when she referred to slum accommodation in 'Dungannon' and a murder in 'North Belfast' (it is to be hoped that the bases for these assertions are infinitely better researched). By contrast she elects to be much more fastidiously precise in her narrow selection of the Donegall Pass locality, in 'South Belfast', and adds insult to injury by plucking an entirely fictitious event 'out of the air' with which to traduce an entire community.

So, dear reader, what are we to make of the noxious nonsense promulgated, perhaps even sincerely, by the 'great and the good' - witlessly directed at the easy target of an inner-city, largely Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist, deprived community that is not characterised by articulacy nor fully-enabled or empowered to cogently respond?

It surely cannot be - nor would we dream of suggesting - that people of that ilk are mere bullies who, from privileged positions of power and influence, find it convenient to take 'cheap shots' at disadvantaged communities (about which they, evidently, know absolutely nothing) in the smug expectation that their stock will rise among fellow chattering class sophists.

We most certainly *do* suggest, however, that Ms Kelly has the elementary manners and good grace to withdraw her ill-judged remark - a remark that has threatened to undermine the Forum's work on hate crime and ethnic/cultural diversity - and unreservedly apologise to the community that she has, so carelessly, vilified. The Forum also notes that a number of e-mails and other forms of correspondence to Ms Kelly and her party leader, Mr Durkan - in addition to a letter from the South Belfast Roundtable (on Racism) - remain unanswered. Surely this cannot be a rather unedifying display of unalloyed arrogance? We do hope that this uncharacteristically silent MLA doesn't think that we have gone away.

### Midnight Street Soccer

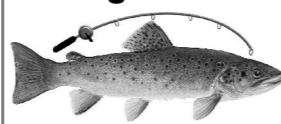
This programme is being delivered through South Belfast Sports Development Unit and begins in March - every Saturday night from 9pm to midnight. Special thanks must go to Michael Smyth and Brian Armstrong without whose help the project would most definitely not have been the success that it is.

The team has previously reached the finals which are held ↗



in Dundalk (well done lads!) and let's hope they can do the same this year. The project is targeted at young men aged 14-17 and seeks to provide an alternative to risk taking/anti-social behaviour. If you have any queries about this you can contact Leanne, at the Forum, on 90326256.

### Donegall Pass Rod and Reel Fishing Group



The fishing club meets monthly in the Forum offices and is currently looking for new members. The group is open to

all males over the age of 18yrs and members are required to contribute towards club dues.

The group is 'angling' to get away on two fishing residentials this year and, to fund this, they have started to sell the Lottery Bonus Balls. If anyone is interested in joining, or helping with the fundraising, please contact Leanne at the Forum.

### Donegall Pass Young Men's Football Team

The team continues to go from strength to strength, they have had a number of good cup runs and are currently sitting in 5th place in the Old Boys League. Division 4 (correct at time of going to press). Not bad, considering that the team only entered this division at the start of the season! The team welcomes any new members and, if you are interested in joining, you can talk to any team member or leave your details at the bar or the Forum and they will be passed on.



The lads currently train at Queen's PE Centre on Wednesday nights 8pm-9pm and play their competitive matches every Saturday. For the new season the group will be seeking to purchase some new equipment and, possibly, new kits - and, to do this, they'll be doing a bit of local fundraising. Please dig deep and support this very worthwhile initiative and help this local club to develop.

### Belfast Community Safety Partnership Small Grants

DPCF recently applied for, and was successful in obtaining, £860 from the above fund. This money will go toward work with local young people who are not engaging in any provision over the summer months. This was the first time the Forum applied for resources from this fund and we will be applying yearly for similar relevant pieces of work.

### South Belfast Highway 2 Health

The organisation has been successful in securing funding to retain the project for a further year; this service is greatly needed within the area and hopefully the next year can build on the successes of previous years. Current projects include:

- Weekly Fruit Break scheme for Botanic P.S. and Surestart
- Monkeynastix - Surestart Monday mornings
- Complementary Therapies - Based in Elm Court (Mondays) and Community Centre (every Tuesday)
- Women's Group - Wednesday 7pm - 9pm (Forum)
- Men's Football Training - Wednesday 8pm - 9pm Queen's PEC
- Senior's Lunch Club - Friday 12.30- 1.30 (Community Centre)
- Midnight Soccer - Saturday 9pm -Midnight (Olympia Leisure Centre)
- Sexual Health Programme (Beginning April)
- Men's MOT (April)

New programmes will be starting when budgets have been finalised for the project - so keep an eye out for more information! ↗

### Posnett Street

The Forum has been in contact with the Housing Executive in reference to the Posnett Street site.

Unfortunately no progress has been made as, at the request of the Department of the Environment, the Housing Executive is currently engaged in a process of drawing up an inventory of all spare land that it currently owns. The Forum is monitoring this development closely and will fight any attempts to build on the Posnett Street site without the input of the community.

### Residents' Parking

By now all residents will have had the opportunity to respond to the proposals for Residents Parking? Every house in the Donegall Pass area received information that was available to the Forum. *If you haven't sent in your response - please do it now* (it doesn't matter if you don't have a car or you park off the street).

It is clear from the responses that the overwhelming majority of residents reject the current proposals to implement fees for residents and visitors parking. Road Services has indicated that there is no 'Plan B' and that the current traffic situation will continue in the Donegall Pass area.

In response, representatives of the Forum, along with representatives from the Lower Ormeau and the Markets, will meet with the Minister of the Department of Regional Development at the end of March and will be pressing for an alternative parking scheme. Your views would be most welcome.

### And the Good News?...

The Forum has received a grant of £18,000 from Belfast City Council, through its Neighbourhood Economic Development Programme, for a feasibility study to be carried out on the "IncluZion Zone" building. Invitations to tender have gone out to a number of Architects and it is hoped that the Forum will be in a position to appoint the successful bidder within the next few weeks.

### PERMITS, PARKING AND AUTOMOBILES

#### Reflections of a Pass resident

Most people will, by now, have heard of the proposals for residents parking schemes that have been dreamed up by the Roads Service. The less said about it, the better - it raises more questions than it answers and doesn't answer



the questions it could and should raise.

The Community in Donegall Pass is going through something of an environmental tsunami, deluged by waves ↗

of development; the pavements broken, rain-filled and rutted by the constant digging and patching that is needed to repair the damage caused by thoughtless drivers. More and more we are being closed in. It's not an exaggeration to say that, some days, in order to get to the Post Office in Botanic Avenue, you have to negotiate the obstacles by going over, through or - in the case of the wheelchair-user, the old lady with shopping bags, the mother with a child in a pram or the any number of folks who are dealing with this every day - by stepping out into the traffic and risking being hit by someone driving while talking on their mobile phone.

Basically, you are trudging through watery muck, squeezing past the cars parked up against the phone box beside where the van is unloading next to the motorbikes that are spread round the restaurant signboards - conveniently placed so as not to cover the holes full of rainwater between the spaces their customers have turned into a car park - ... "Excuse me, but I thought it was a footpath." "Yes... yes, footpath... what is it?" "Well, let's see nigh, it's a place for people to walk on, so that they're free of the traffic and... what? What's walking?..."

Yes, some people still do it - walk, that is. Some of them can still manage to walk further than the distance between vehicle and table, considered by some discerning restaurant customers as "quite a way away". Now, we do not speak on behalf of the disabled here - their needs are well served by the "ample wheelchair ramp access provision" that isn't covered by some dipwick's car. No, we speak of those whose need to park as close to the restaurant door as possible passeth all understanding - preferably on the footpath, outside the door... if there's room. "Get the best seats". "How close would you like to get, sir?" "How about if I just drive through the front wall and park at the table?!" "Yes, why not. Just wind your windows down and we'll have the waiters throw the food into you."



Yes, it does sometimes resemble an open-air zoo out there. Now, in *this* big open-air cage, the animals bring their toys with them - everywhere. Some of them are very big toys. Some of them look like those other animals you see on the telly - they're called rhinos. And they've got metal bars, fat tyres and black windows - and they're not really meant for footpaths. Footpaths are for people - those who use feet as a means of conveyance.

When you have twelve cars tightly packed on a footpath outside a restaurant, with an empty car park only yards away, you have to ask questions. See - it's not really too difficult. Footpath-people-walking. Not, cars-selfish-stupid-arrogance. It's not much to ask. ↗

...Cont'd. from Page 3

One of the ironic things about the situation is that some of the worst excesses occur in the area around the police station. The response to this from our local constabulary is somewhere between nil and minimal. Whether or not this is because they don't have the resources, the manpower or the interest is hard to say.

So, to go some way to addressing the traffic problem, residents in the area and all known relatives, living or dead, with cars are being asked to pay for the privilege of parking outside their houses. (Those who don't have driveways off the road, that is.)

The problem with traffic in the Pass is not the volume of residential parking but the vehicle numbers generated by the businesses that continue to grow in the area. Which begs the question, why are the businesses, and their customers, not being charged for filling every space available with cars, vans, buses and trucks?

For instance, the businesses on Botanic Avenue - whose staff and company vehicles use the footpaths on the Pass as free parking, using the old "garden line" ploy. People who use the pavements beside the the IncluZion Zone building as parking and tell the redcoats that they are working there (as if that was an excuse), when, in fact, their business is elsewhere.

Delivery vans pull up on the footpath because they "don't want to block the road" or because "there are double yellow lines there". You begin to wonder if they have a brain between them.


The business who took the liberty of 'hiring' the Roads  **New Application For Housing? Do It By Phone!**

Housing Executive

**Do you want to make a new application for housing?** 

**Want to apply for transfer from your Housing Executive Home?** 

**You can now do this by telephone - you don't need to fill out an application** 

**You will be asked for some basic information about your application** 

**You will then be offered a morning or afternoon appointment with a housing officer who will call with you to assess your circumstances** 

**If you wish to apply, please phone: 0844 8920 900** 

Service to turn the footpath outside their premises into a car park, complete with white painted lines and notices warning of the dangers of clamping for those who were not employees or customers. Donegall Pass Community Forum got on the ball and had it shut down, though the lines have yet to be removed and the pavement parking continues.

The story is the same the length of the road and these are the concerns that our departments should be dealing with. Clamping or an outright ban on pavement parkers would be a much more effective way of dealing with the problems, rather than the introduction of residents' parking.

**English for Speakers of Other Languages Classes**

A basic level ESOL course starts at the beginning of April - for people who cannot speak English or who have very little knowledge of the language. If you know someone who would benefit from attendance, please contact Ken Orr at 9032 6256.

The course is supported by the Inner South Belfast Neighbourhood Partnership's 'Early Wins' strategy via Neighbourhood Renewal funding from DSD.

Congratulations



Christmas Hamper Winner

**E Bishop**

Thank you to those who helped to raise

£108.99

*We really appreciate your support in our fight against meningitis & septicaemia*

*S. Lutterford*  
Signature

28 January 2008  
Date

Offices: Belfast Bristol Dublin Edinburgh  
A charity registered in England and Wales No 1091105  
A company limited by guarantee. Registered in England No 4367996  
Registered Office: Midland Way Thornbury Bristol BS35 2BS

**Useful Numbers:**

- Advice Worker (Marie - Tuesdays): 9032 6256**
- Advice Worker (John - Thursdays): 9032 6256**
- Donegall Pass Community Forum: 9032 6256**
- Employability Outreach (Andrew - Wednesdays): 9032 6256**
- GEMS NI: 9033 2313**
- Gingerbread NI (Lone Parents): 9023 1417**
- Housing Executive: 08448 920900 (Main); 08448 920901 (Repairs); 08448 920902 (Housing Benefit Enquiries)**
- Job Centre (South Belfast): 9054 5432**
- Labour Relations Agency: 9032 1442**
- P.S.N.I.: 9065 0222. For non-emergencies, phone 0845 600 8000 ('phone Crimestoppers, anonymously on 0800 555 111)**
- South Belfast Highway2Health (Leeanne Mills): 9032 6256**



# THE PASS FORUM NEWS

www.donegallpass.org

Donegall Pass Community Newspaper

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**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Forum's AGM was held on the evening of Wednesday 20th February 2008. Approximately 40 people attended - a mix of local residents, business owners, city council staff and representatives from funding bodies; Minister Michael McGimpsey and Councillor Pat McCarthy were also present.

The Chairperson, Terry Watson, opened the meeting - extending a warm welcome to everyone and inviting all to take time to read through the report which had been prepared by the Forum to highlight the work carried out during the year. He referred to the fact that funding for all staff posts is due to finish at the end of August 08 and that the staff were working hard to try to secure future funds. He also thanked all staff and volunteers who have worked for the forum over the past 11 years and all funders and stakeholders for their support and advice.




Attendees at the AGM were able to view a number of exhibitions that were on display - Shared History Project, Pass in View Photography Project, Highway to Health Project and Current Development Plans for the area.

Jim McKinley, Physical Regeneration Officer, gave a short computerised interactive presentation of a concept plan of the Botanic Corridor and Posnett Street site which had been commissioned by South Belfast Partnership Board and produced by Queen's University Students. Jim also talked about future plans for the IncluZion Zone (BELB) building and stated that all community groups and residents would in due course be consulted with regard to what they would like to see the building used for.

Ken Orr, Training and Community Education Co-ordinator, launched the new Forum's website by providing a tour of the site through visiting various pages which he described as a 'shop window to the world'



Elaine Mansfield, Forum Development Manager, gave a brief overview of some of the new projects that were being delivered during the year including the making of a Bill of Rights DVD which involves interviews with various residents in Donegall Pass and will, when completed, be publically screened to give the opportunity for an open discussion. She also made reference to Lloyds TSB who funded the *Pass in View* project which was currently being showcased, the Community Relations Council for providing funding for the newly formed Women's Group and to NIHE for supporting the Forum through printing the News Sheets.

Everyone present was provided with light refreshments, following the meeting, and had the opportunity to discuss any issues with Forum Staff and Committee Members. 

The Forum hopes that everyone found something of interest at the AGM and that it was informative and interesting to all.

**Volunteering Matters**

Forum Development Manager, Elaine Mansfield, again, appeals to anyone who is interested in volunteering opportunities with the Forum or has any ideas on issues concerning the area to call into the Forum's offices at Grove house, contact her by phone (90326256) or e-mail [elaine.mansfield@donegallpass.org](mailto:elaine.mansfield@donegallpass.org).

**Citizens' Advice Bureau Training**

The CAB is offering free training for advisors. This will be delivered 1 day per week for 11 weeks. Anyone interested in this training should please contact the Forum's offices (9032 6256).

**STILL WAITING FOR AN APOLOGY**

Dolores Kelly, MLA, on Tuesday 5th February 2008, speaking during 'Private Members' Business in the Assembly stated, "If we think about the people who have come to our part of the world, we can bring to mind...the Nigerian couple who were burned out of their home in Donegal (sic) Pass...". This is not only a perfect example of 'False Memory Syndrome' but an astounding piece of news for anyone living or working in Donegall Pass. Ms Kelly (was she using the 'royal we?') may, indeed, be able to "bring to mind" this outrage - however, it would appear that she is the only person able to perform this prodigious feat of imagination.

The reason that she is unique in this respect is, of course, because the alleged event never took place. The police have no record of the alleged atrocity, nor does the Housing Executive and, after exhaustive research and canvassing by the South Belfast Roundtable, nor do any of the organisations who represent minorities - including ethnic minorities. And, just on the off chance that anybody might be interested in what local people's recollections are, no one residing, or, indeed, working in Donegall Pass, has any memory whatever of any event that remotely resembles Ms Kelly's figment. Surely it cannot be that we are all suffering from some form of collective amnesia?

Sadly, Ms Kelly is not alone in her affliction. Witness, for example, the vitriolic sideswipe at Donegall Pass verbalised by the esteemed doyen of interrogative journalism, Mr Noel Thompson ("Hearts and Minds" programme, transmitted Thursday 1st June 2006) when, during an interview with the newly-installed Lord Mayor of Belfast, he stated that "effectively, the Chinese Welfare 