



## Newsletter Autumn 2009



**Ultimate Ulster – “Silver Medal” for Groomsport!  
The second most popular village in the Province! Thanks  
to all who voted for us!**



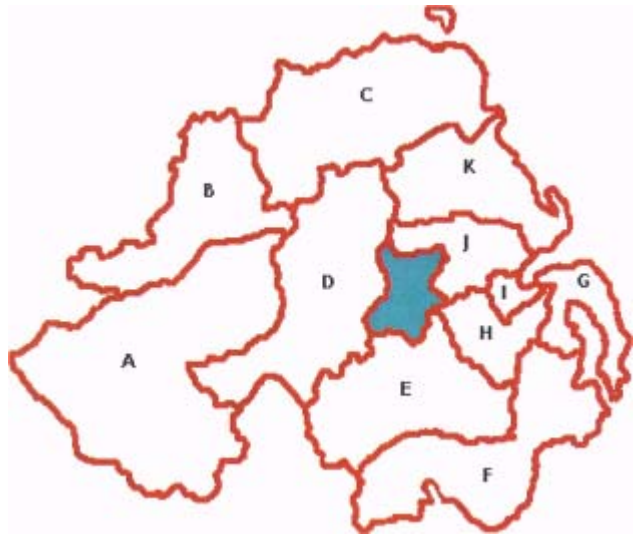
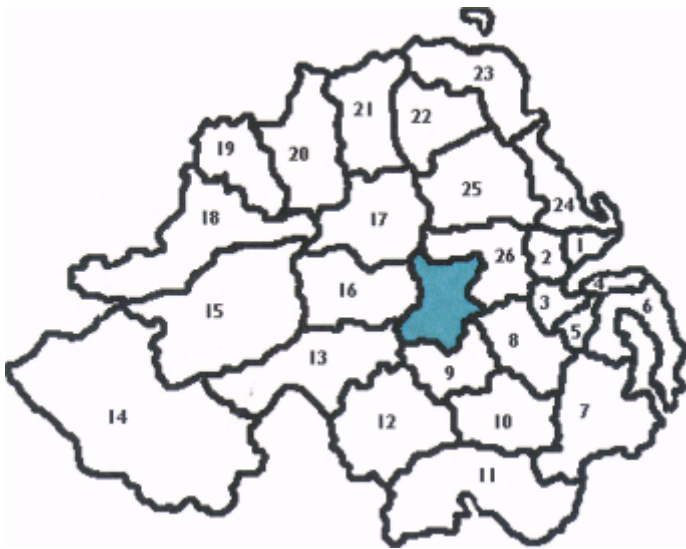
Inside this issue:

Preparing for 2011

Keeping Safe

Important Dates for your diary

**PREPARING for CHANGE**



From this .....

.....to this!

## What change?

In May 2011 the number of councils province wide will be reduced from 26 to 11. North Down and Ards will merge to form a new council. At present the two boroughs have 48 elected councillors. This figure will be reduced to 40 when the two councils merge.

A number of important functions will be transferred from central to local government. These include:

- Planning
  - local development
  - planning applications
- Road Service
  - grass cutting
  - street lighting
  - environmental improvements etc.
- Dept. for Social Development
  - urban regeneration
  - energy conservation
  - range of housing functions

Other functions will include local tourism, arts, sports and leisure as well as local economic development.

Please drive carefully and keep to the 30 mph limit!

## How will the change affect Groomsport?

With local councillors having a wider remit on top of a larger area to cover, there is the possibility that a small village like ours will lose its voice and disappear in the “wider scheme of things”.

## What is the Village Association doing?

- Membership of North Down Housing Community Network
- Membership of Inter-community forum
- Liaison with Supporting Communities N.I.
- In process of registering with Community Places
- Attendance at Community Planning Events
- Attendance at Public Meeting re: changes to Planning Laws

By attending meetings and networking with other groups, we are able to stay well informed and voice our concerns about a number of issues.

At the Community Planning meeting held on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> September Trevor Polley, Chief Executive of NDBC, stressed the importance of communities working together to present a united vision of the way forward.

At the same time we need to make sure that local needs are met!

## What can you do?

The Village Association needs your help and support. Please try to attend the AGM on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

Would you be willing to stand for committee? We are always looking for “fresh talent”! Are there issues which affect the village that need to be brought to the attention of the Council, Housing Executive or statutory agencies? We can’t resolve “neighbour disputes” but we do work very hard to try to put your concerns regarding the state of footpaths, speeding, dog fouling etc. to local councillors and relevant bodies.

Please contact us via the Village Association post box inside the Spar shop. The Royal Mail post box situated at the entrance to the Maxwell Halls is also available for use.

Alternatively, visit our website: [www.groomsport.info](http://www.groomsport.info)

Telephone: Ann Sanderson 02891 463145

Lynda Anderson 02891 463824

**Your dog can't help it but **you** can! Please pick up after your pet!**

# SPORTS NEWS



**Congratulations to Groomsport FC who have moved up to  
NAFL Intermediate 1C.**



**Following a very successful season last year our football team is going from strength to strength.**

## **Juniors:**

**This season – 2009/2010, three teams have been entered in the Ards Borough Youth League. The club also runs three mini-soccer teams in the North Down Mini Soccer League.**

**For more information about the club please visit the club's website at [www.groomsportfootballclub.com](http://www.groomsportfootballclub.com)**

**Please support your local team!**

**If you run or organise a sports club in the village and you would like us to feature your club in a Newsletter please send contact us via the Village Association Post Box in the Spar shop. Don't forget to give us your contact details.**

# Would you be up for the challenge?



## Half Ireman and Ireman 26 Challenge

At the end of August, Groomsport played host to two triathlon events. The annual Half Ireman was joined this year by the Ireman 226 challenge. The Half Ireman is gruelling enough, but the 226 is the ultimate test of athletic prowess and endurance. Both races attracted an international field of competitors.

The winner of the middle distance race, Alistair Duffield, finished in a time of 4 hours 34 minutes. A tremendous time!

The 226 challenge comprises of a 3.8km swim, a 180 km cycle ride and a full (42.2km) marathon. Twenty contestants started the race but one was forced to retire due to an old injury.

The winner of the men's race, Fergus McGirr from Enniskillen, completed the course in 10 hours 24 minutes. The only female entrant, Christine McCann who is also from Enniskillen, crossed the line after racing for 13 hours 25 minutes. Congratulations to both of them.



## **KEEPING SAFE – taken from Crime Prevention Advice (DPP)**



### **Your Home**

**We in Groomsport are lucky to live in a village where neighbours look out for each other. Nevertheless, these are very useful tips!**

- ◆ Always close and lock external doors when you go out
- ◆ Use window locks, especially on older windows
- ◆ Never leave spare keys in garages or sheds
- ◆ Lock garages and sheds especially if they connect to your property
- ◆ Use timers for lights and radios if you are away overnight or on holiday
- ◆ Visible burglar alarms, good lighting and carefully directed security lights are good deterrents
- ◆ Make sure fences and walls at the back of your property do not allow easy access. Prickly shrubs trained up a trellis can be off putting for a burglar

For a **free** home assessment log on to [www.howsecureismyhome.com](http://www.howsecureismyhome.com)

### **Unknown caller at your door?**

- ◆ Before you answer your door make sure your back door is locked
- ◆ If you have a door chain – use it before you open the door
- ◆ Ask for and check identification carefully
- ◆ If in doubt, ask the caller to wait outside and close the door -genuine callers will not mind
- ◆ Ring **Freephone 0800 013 2290** Your call will be answered by a trained operator who will check with the company that the caller is

genuine. If not, or if there is any suspicion as to the identity of the caller, the operator will contact the police immediately.

## 5 Steps to remember when reporting a crime or an incident

1. Make a note of the date and time of your call
2. Ask for a crime reference number
3. Ask for the name/number of the person who takes your report
4. Ask to be given feedback about progress
5. If you are not satisfied with the service you receive ask to speak to the duty officer

## Help NIHE can give if your account goes into arrears:

- Offer advice and assistance in claiming Housing Benefit and other benefits
- Arrange for your rent to be paid directly to NIHE by your employer if you work in the public sector
- Advise you on more convenient ways to pay – Paypoints, Standing Orders and paying directly at you local office
- Refer you to the Citizen’s Advice Bureau for specialist money advice if appropriate
- Make an agreement for you to clear arrears by paying regular instalments along with normal rent payments

If you need any advice or want to talk about any issues regarding rent, contact the Housing Executive on 03448 920 900

## NIHE Changes to Contact Numbers



Current number	New number
08448 920 900 .....	Main number.....03448 920 900
08448 920 901.....	Repairs line .....03448 920 900
08448 920 902 .....	Housing Benefit .....03448 920 902



If you have at least one child under five Home Start can offer you help through its home-visiting volunteer scheme.

Tel: 028 9127 1201 and ask to speak to Joyce or Naomi

Or e-mail [homestartnorthdown@talktalk.net](mailto:homestartnorthdown@talktalk.net)

**If you feel like this:**

- ◆ **Isolated, with no family or friends nearby and struggling to make friends**
- ◆ **Suffering post-natal illness but finding it hard to talk to someone about it**
- ◆ **Having a hard time coping with your child's illness**
- ◆ **Overwhelmed by the death of a loved one**
- ◆ **Struggling with the emotional and physical demands of twins, triplets or more**
- ◆ **Struggling to cope with a disability**
- ◆ **Struggling to cope with relationship problems**
- ◆ **Tired, unhappy, exhausted**

**Give Home Start a call!**