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**Connect**  
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## Welcome

**Hello and welcome to the latest edition of Newton Mearns Connect, brought to you in association with the Herald and Times Group Magazines.**

We bring you a fresh mix of community news stories and features.

The area has been busy in the run up to Christmas with lots of groups looking ahead and planning for the new year.

On page six we hear of a new scheme offering veterans free gym and fitness memberships throughout the area.

Turn to page 14 for our round up of upcoming winter events to pencil in the diary.

Also inside we hear of some of the council's plans that will be put in place next year. We also bring you features on how to equip your home for winter and make it a cosy haven, as well as some make-up hacks on the best ways to use glitter this party season.

We hope you have a lovely Christmas and a wonderful New Year!

**Until next time,  
Team Connect**

### Contacts

#### Editorial

If you have a story that you would like to be included in a future issue of Newton Mearns Connect contact: [connect.mags@newsquest.co.uk](mailto:connect.mags@newsquest.co.uk)

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##### Pest Control:

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##### Housing Services:

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#### Newton Mearns South:

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07388 859264

Councillor Barbara Grant

(Conservative):

0141 639 3809

Councillor Jim McLean

(Conservative):

07388 859263

Councillor Jim Swift (Conservative):

07534515159

#### Newton Mearns North:

Councillor Tony Buchanan (SNP):

07976 360398

Councillor Charlie Gilbert

(Conservative):

0141 639 2948

Councillor Paul O'Kane (Labour):

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# Free gym membership rolled out for veterans is welcomed

**A free health and wellbeing programme for local veterans is the first of its kind in the country.**

The Health for Heroes programme being offered by East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure (ERCL) gives armed forces, army, navy and air force veterans a free gym and fitness membership, as well as access to one-to-one and group sessions.

They can also go along to Live Active sessions twice a week with support from expert health advisors, who have been trained to carry out health and well-being consultations and can provide a personal exercise, nutrition and fitness plan.

Membership includes unlimited

access to ERCL's gyms, pools, fitness classes and health suites at each of their four East Renfrewshire locations.

Already 14 veterans are signed up to the scheme in East Renfrewshire and there are plans for other regions to offer a similar programme.

"The gym membership has really worked out for my health. Going to the gym and doing yoga every week has been great for my physical fitness and boosting my mental health - it makes me feel like I'm doing the right thing for my wellbeing," said David Martin from Barrhead.

"I've lost 2.5 stone, thanks to a combination of a good diet and exercise."

David served in Afghanistan with the army in 2011 and 2012. He was discharged in 2015 after being in a coma and suffering a brain injury following a car crash.

David's next door neighbour, James, joined the army in 1972 and served in Northern Ireland.

"Coming to the gym, playing badminton with a friend or going for a swim is good therapy," said James. "Veterans stick together, so David and I keep an eye out for each other. I'm also part of a new peer support groups for veterans, which has just started at Barrhead Foundry."

Veterans interested should contact Jane Duncan for an initial chat on 0141 577 3043 or [jane.duncan@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:jane.duncan@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk)

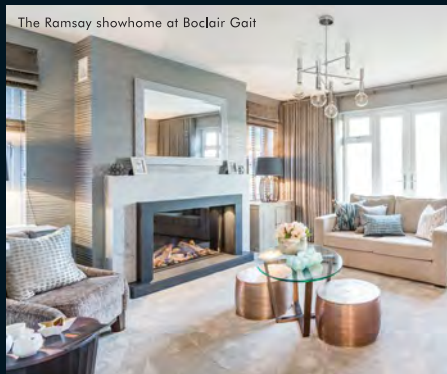


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# Newton Mearns Connect

## ***Festival set to reach new heights***

**Aerial acrobatic performers, a craft beer area, a gin garden and a host of top music acts will be the highlight of the Playground Festival, returning to East Renfrewshire in 2020.**

Taking place from July 31 to August 2 at Rouken Glen Park, the event also promises to be family-friendly, thanks to Mini Manoeuvres who will be providing face painting, soft play, dancing and games for the little ones.

This year's inaugural event attracted more than 14,000 people and acts appearing included Lauryn Hill, Groove Armada, Hot Chip, Django Django and Anna Calvi.

A festival spokesperson said: "We are so looking forward to bringing Playground Festival back to Rouken Glen Park, and working with East Renfrewshire council to deliver a festival fit for the phenomenal surroundings of one of the UK's best parks.



"Like every major UK festival, we have big ambitions to deliver a world-class line-up of music next summer and cannot wait to announce our first headliner."

Festival organisers have promised that teething problems with this year's event will be ironed out for 2020.

Headliner Lauryn Hill showed up late and only managed to perform six songs before curfew and there were complaints of no free water and bar queues that lasted well over an hour.

Tickets for the 2020 event are priced at £39.50 for adults and £24.50 for children and are now on sale.



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# Newton Mearns Connect



## Strain on foodbanks

**Food banks in East Renfrewshire have seen an 18 per cent increase in the number of emergency food parcels handed out, compared to last year.**

It adds up to 12 packages of food aid every day, with more than a third going to children.

The UK's biggest food bank network the Trussell Trust recorded its busiest ever six-month period

between April and September, with more than 823,000 parcels provided to people in need.

In East Renfrewshire, the charity says it handed out 2,247 three-day emergency food parcels over the period.

Trussell Trust chief executive Emma Revie warned that problems with Universal Credit were pushing people into poverty,

with the five-week wait for initial payments under the system a key factor behind food bank use.

"Our benefits system is supposed to protect us all from being swept into poverty, but currently thousands of women, men and children are not receiving sufficient protection from destitution," she said.

"This is not right. But we know this situation can be fixed – our benefits system could be the key to unlocking people from poverty.

"It's in our power as a country to end the need for food banks. This can change."

Meanwhile, a spokeswoman from the Department for Work and Pensions said: "We spend over £95 billion a year on welfare, and have simplified the benefits system through Universal Credit.

"Free school meals are provided for 1.3 million disadvantaged children."

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# Newton Mearns Connect

## Memory of local dad honoured

**A fundraising drive to support men's mental health has been set up in memory of a Newton Mearns dad.**

Alan Foulkes, 41, died after a short battle with suspected peritonitis, an infection of the inner lining of the stomach.

His memory will live on, thanks to his family, including his wife Helen and sons Craig and Ross, aged 16 and 18.

Mourners at Alan's funeral were asked to support a donation to Barrhead's Men Shed, which provides a space for people to come together and share their love of DIY.

Alan's parents, Ray and Gillian, said they hope the money donated will mean men who are feeling isolated will be able to get the support they need.

"Alan was always interested in doing things and we used to put up fences and the like," said 74-year-old Ray. "We have a house in France and he helped us with it over the years.

"He would have really appreciated the work that goes on at the Men's Shed. He loved his tools – my

garage is still full of them.

"It was suggested to us that the Men's Shed is a cause that would be close to Alan's heart, so we wanted to support the local one."

Ray visited the group's Robertson Street hub to present a cheque for around £400. The Men's Shed has wasted little time in putting the money to good use, by buying a new saw which will also include a plaque inscribed with Alan's name.

"It is great what they are doing for men in the area. Hopefully, the donation will give people a chance to get the support they need," said Ray.

"So many people turned out for Alan's funeral. We also received messages from all over the world, as he met people while playing games online. It was all so touching."

Men and women alike are welcome to go along to the Barrhead Men's Shed, where they can share tools, gain a sense of achievement and enjoy some social interaction.





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# WHAT'S ON

Keep up to date with all the events going on in and around your area with our handy what's on guide.

## EVENT: FREE SANTA VISITS

Date: Every Sunday until Christmas  
Time: 12noon - 4pm  
Location: The Avenue Shopping Centre  
Cost: Free

**What's on:** Families are invited to the Avenue's free visits to Santa in the run up to Christmas. Plus The Avenue is partnering with the Salvation Army, Barrhead, for their Give a Gift to Santa Appeal, this year. Donate your unwrapped gifts on Sundays to Santa (last date for donations is 15th December). Children can have a meet and greet with Santa in the mall between 12 noon and 4pm outside Asda.

## EVENT: WEDDING FAYRE

Date: Thursday 12 January  
Time: Midday - 4pm  
Location: Eglinton Arms Hotel, Eaglesham  
Cost: Free

**What's on:** Getting hitched next year? It's good to explore all your options and get a better idea of how you would like your dream wedding to look. If you're recently engaged, then head along to this Wedding Fayre at Eglinton Arms Hotel to meet with a team of event coordinators, be guided through the venue and chat all things weddings with their suppliers.

## EVENT: ELF ACADEMY

Date: 14/ 15 Dec, 21/22 Dec and 23 Dec  
Time: 14th Dec 2pm - 5pm / 15th Dec 1pm - 4pm /  
All Other Dates 9am - Midday or 1pm - 4pm  
Location: Eastwood Park Theatre, Giffnock  
Cost: £20

**What's on:** What's on: Back for its fourth year ERCL's Elf Academy returns. Let children enjoy a series of creative and fun activities in these jam-packed sessions. Make a Christmas craft, play some games, join in with a wintery tale and enjoy a festive film before graduating from Elf Academy with your very own Elf ears. Booking in advance is essential.

## EVENT: MEDITATION & HEALING WORKSHOP

Date: Wednesday 18 December 2019, Wednesday 8 January 2020  
Time: 7pm - 8.30pm  
Location: The Market Place Barrhead  
Cost: £10

**What's on:** These workshops will be exploring manifesting and goal setting techniques, meditations for inner calm, gratitude, increased vitality and core connection, energy and intention healing, intuition and the energy body. Cost of workshop is £10 payable in cash on the day.

## EVENT: MUSICAL MINDS

Date: Tuesday 17 December  
Time: 10.30am - Midday  
Location: Newton House Care Home  
Cost: Free

**What's on:** These community groups are designed for Alzheimer Scotland - Action on Dementia for a sing-a-long, a cuppa and a blether at Newton House Care Home Cafe on the third Tuesday of every month. All are welcome; people who can attend independently and/or for those unable to do so should come with a companion who can provide any support for them. As spaces are limited please contact Nkennedy@alzscot.org or Newton House on 0141 616 5060 in advance.



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# Newton Mearns Connect

## Finding a way to give back to the community

**Worthy causes in Newton Mearns are to get £1,800 of funding in the first of several donations to come from a partnership with homebuilders.**

Once all the homes in the first phase of the Maidenhill development in the town are bought, CALA Homes and Taylor Wimpey will hand over a total of £9,250.

The homebuilders have pledged a £50 donation for each of the 185 homes after forming a partnership with East Renfrewshire Good Causes (ERGC).

Buyers have now moved in at Westfield Gardens and Hazeldene Lea, which means the first tranche of funding can be made.

"This is an especially meaningful partnership as the money is coming from a local development and will go directly into funding projects and causes across East Renfrewshire neighbourhoods," said Russell Macmillan, founder of ERGC.

"We've done a lot of fantastic work in the local community since I started the charity over 12 years



ago. In the last six months alone, for example, our funding has allowed us to deliver a piano to a day care centre for people living with dementia and provide paint and garden materials to a team of volunteers to improve the outdoor and entrance area to Isobel Mair School.

"Thanks to this donation, we'll be able to continue our important outreach."

Angela O'Hara, sales consultant, at CALA Homes (West), said that giving back to the local area is hugely important to the company.

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# Newton Mearns Connect



## Major international interest for local author's financial self-help guide...

**A self-published Clarkston author has sold the rights of his book to a Seoul publisher.**

The personal finance title, that reads as a self-help guide to midlife professionals aged from 35 to 60 who are stuck in a rut and looking to restart their lives, is to be translated for Korean readers.

David Sawyer, 47, from Clarkston said **RESET** should be on sale in Korea in the new year.

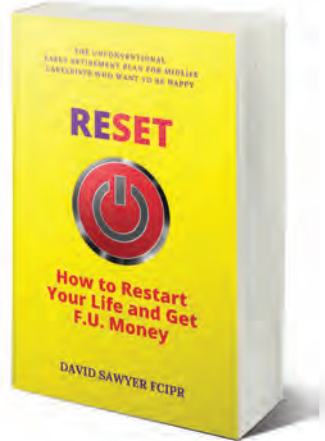
"When I got the call to say a Korean publishing house wanted to take on my book, I nearly fell off my chair," he said.

"All I could manage to blurt out was, 'north or south?' But when I looked into it, I could see the potential. South Korea has a population of 50 million and people there are committed to self-improvement and getting their finances in order.

"Fingers crossed that the translator does a good job and sales do even better than in the UK and US. I can't wait to see the front cover."

David, a public relations consultant in Glasgow, first published the book in August 2018 after working on it full-time for 10 months. It has gone on to sell 7,600 copies worldwide, against average per-book lifetime-sales for self-published authors of 250, and 3,000 for those who publish traditionally.

Meanwhile, the self-published audiobook version sold nearly 1,000 copies within three months of publication.



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# Newton Mearns Connect

## Luxury retirement village to open soon

**Work on a Newton Mearns retirement village is due to start in the new year.**

The £60million development, which has been called The Hills at Whitecraigs, will be home to more than 300 elderly residents with 214 one and two-bedroom flats, 38 cottages and an 80-bed care home.

An estimated 365 jobs will be supported over the next 30 years with more than £74million said to be generated to the local economy.

The aim of the project is to encourage healthy living and wellbeing. The development will feature tidal pools, spa facilities and a fitness suite. The self-contained village will be built around a central two-storey club house, with a bar, cafe and community facilities.



Developer Scotsbridge Holdings is now looking for suitable locations in Scotland for similar developments.

Aimed specifically at over 55s, The Hills at Whitecraigs will promote a more holistic approach to residents' health and wellbeing with its design and landscaping, including a high density of trees and water features, and specific facilities such as a bowling green.

"It will set new standards for luxury living for over 55s with a strong emphasis on health. What we plan to offer our residents is much more than a traditional retirement facility," said Scotsbridge Director Shazad Bakhsh.



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# Newton Mearns Connect

## Eco-friendly school habits

Senior pupils at Duncanrig Secondary School in East Kilbride have become trendsetters in their bid to reduce plastic waste.

They have become the first in South Lanarkshire to design and provide reusable water bottles for pupils.

The aim of the Wan Use is Nae Use project is to encourage classmates to become more environmentally aware.

Teacher Allan Wilkie said: "Some of the pupils came to us to complain about the huge amount of waste generated in the school at lunchtimes and breaktimes.

"They worked out that around 500 plastic bottles of water are



purchased every week at Duncanrig.

"We were taken aback by how quickly the idea gathered momentum – it has been amazing and we are very proud of the way the students have kept it going."

Pupils made posters, lobbied South Lanarkshire Council for more water fountains, delivered assemblies to younger students and enlisted the support of local firm Highlander Recycling, who helped to finance new reusable

water bottles.

A competition for new first year pupils resulted in 80 designs being incorporated on to the bottles, which are now being sold in the school.

First year pupils Jenna Bain and Courtney Torrance had their designs selected for the bottles.

"I included the recycling sign and waves, to remind people plastic damages the oceans and sea wildlife," explains Jenna.



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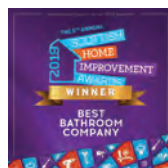
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# Newton Mearns Connect

## Investment set to boost town centres

**Town centres throughout the East Renfrewshire area are set to reap the benefits after nearly £1million is being invested.**

Councillors recently approved handing out the Scottish Government funding.

The planned list of projects includes spending £300,000 on 'intelligent' lighting for Barrhead's Main Street and surrounding areas.

Council chiefs hope that installing the lights will improve public safety, lead to easier maintenance and bring environmental benefits by reducing energy consumption.

There has been £200,000 allocated towards making access and infrastructure improvements at Capelrig Road and Fairweather Park, in Newton Mearns, as well as to enhance facilities in the park.

A report presented to councillors states the work could raise awareness of the wider Newton Mearns town centre as a shopping and leisure destination.

Funds would go towards groundworks, new paths and benches in preparation for a new play park in



2020/21, designed by the community.

Another £200,000 has been set aside for winter lighting at various locations throughout East Renfrewshire. It would cover "all main shopping centres in an inclusive way, forming a recognisable East Renfrewshire identity."

"To ensure a collaborative approach, an initial 'call for ideas' was issued to key stakeholders within East Renfrewshire Council town and neighbourhood centres to give partners the opportunity to help shape the plans," a report by the council's director of environment Andrew Cahill states.

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## Gymnast celebrates local primary's Gold School Sports status with a display to inspire pupils

**Commonwealth gymnast Amy Regan was jumping for joy when Crookfur Primary in Newton Mearns won a national sport award.**

A primary one teacher at the school, Amy put on a display with a series of somersaults at the school assembly to inspire pupils when they were awarded their Gold School Sports status from sportscotland.

The five-time Scottish gymnast congratulated the school and children for their commitment to sport.

"Sport can take you on so many amazing journeys," she said. "I used to train for 30 hours every week and competed in the Commonwealth Games in Delhi in 2010 and in Glasgow in 2014.

"I've trained all over the world, including Russia, Canada and America. Sport can help you make lots of new friends, keep you fit and teach you lots of new skills."

Crookfur Primary was one of four East Renfrewshire schools to achieve the prestigious Gold award in recognition of their commitment to sport this year.

Primary schools Calderwood Lodge and Hillview Primary and secondary school Barrhead High also achieved the Gold School Sports Awards this year from sportscotland and hosted dedicated awards ceremonies.

Over the last five years, 20 East Renfrewshire schools have achieved gold status, with support from sportscotland and the Active Schools' team at East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure, who have dedicated co-ordinators for each school in the region.

"Well done to all the pupils, teachers and staff involved and thank you for your efforts," said Anthony McReavy of East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure.

"Taking part in sporting activities can help improve mental and physical health, as well as boost confidence and motivation and it has such a positive impact on pupils and the school."

Funded by the National Lottery, the School Sport Award is a national initiative that encourages schools to continuously improve extra-curricular sport. It also boosts links between schools and local communities, providing opportunities for young people to progress and develop their sporting experiences.



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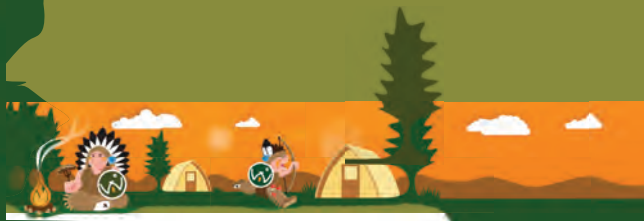
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# Newton Mearns Connect

## Just add sparkle...

**Christmas party make-up means one thing and one thing only: sparkles, and lots of them.**

The great thing about glittery make-up is you can tailor it to your personality.

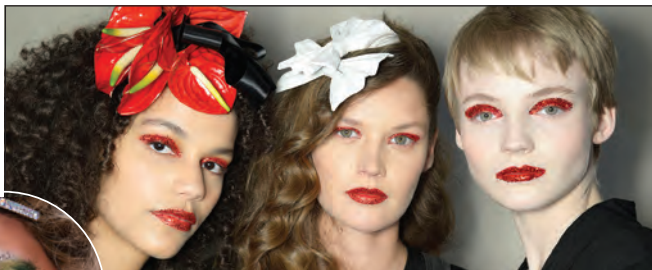
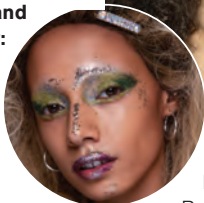
### **The lips...**

It's a bold look, but if you're used to wearing a red lip, adding glitter is the perfect way to level up, even if it's just for Christmas Day.

If red isn't your style, ease yourself into the trend with a paler shade that has a subtler shimmer.

### **The eyes...**

Many of us are scared of applying



red eyeshadow, but adding sparkles is the perfect solution. Make like the models in the

Rodarte show and pile

a festive fire-engine red glitter onto your lids, with no danger of looking like you've got a skin condition.

Gold eyeshadow is appropriately festive and can be taken up or down in intensity, depending on your preference. And for those who want the minimalist version

of the trend, opt for lighter, pearlier shades, which will still be festive and subtly different from your day-to-day make-up.

### **The skin...**

It's not just your eyes and lips which can be the star of the show, you can also get in on the shimmery trend by being liberal with highlighter along your cheekbones.

Or, if you want to step it up a notch and really get into the Christmas spirit, you can dot glitter artfully around your face.

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# Snuggle into winter mode with a cosy home...

**The chill in the air only reminds us of the need to have a cosy escape at home. Our homes really need to be snug sanctuaries at this time of year, so we can retreat and relax away from the cold.**

So, shake up your style to suit the season, splurge on a few treats and you'll banish the winter decor blues and create a haven where you can rest in comfort.

### **Go pale but interesting**

Chilled out Scandi-style, with its neutral palette, endures because its classic good looks never date and it's easy to add subtle new touches to suit a new season.

The addition of a sheepskin rug (pampering for the toes), a throw, and plenty of cushions covered in tactile fabrics like velvet or wool, are all that's needed to create a cossetting winter sanctuary.

### **Harvest some style**

Treat yourself (and a room) to accessories that are all about chic comfort, which you can move around to suit your mood and the temperature. Think furry pouffes and fluffy beanbags.

### **Be cost-conscious and cosy**

It's all about setting the scene with a cosy focal point at this time of year. If you're lucky enough to own a fireplace, this is the perfect time

to take advantage of it and enjoy that beautiful wood smoke smell and orange glow - it's pure winter joy.

### **Bag a high-street hero**

Supermarket homeware ranges are such a high standard now (and trend led) that you're missing a decor trick if you don't check them out. A trolley full of purse-friendly bargains can refresh a room without breaking the bank.

### **Add some va-va-velvet**

Velvets are one of the biggest ongoing trends



in interiors. Pair their touch-me textures with a rich colour - orange and green are this season's front runners - for a winning winter combination.

### **Raid nature's colour palette**

Embrace the warmth of the autumn colours as an antidote to the creeping chill in the air. Rich reds and russets star on the hedgerows and trees, and adding those hues in accessories will have the same effect in a room.





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