

Conall McDevitt MLA,
Cllr Claire Hanna,
Cllr Bernie Kelly at the
King's Hall



New community garden at Musgrave Park

I was really pleased to attend the opening of this new facility, jointly funded by the Council and the Public Health Agency. This includes a community food-growing garden, therapy area, and 'green-gym' equipment. I don't think we can over-estimate the value of gardening and outdoor play for the health and well being of adults and children alike and I hope everyone will take the opportunity to visit and use the facility. Exercise and access to free, fresh food are just two of the benefits of a community garden, and I would love to see more of them in Balmoral.

Cutting down our food waste and buying fresh food in season make a major difference to people in developing countries. A recent report from Oxfam shows that the amount of food thrown away in rich countries every year is almost equivalent to all the food produced in sub-Saharan Africa, and the carbon footprint of imported food is contributing to climate change, impacting on the poorest countries. Our individual decisions can make a real difference in cutting down on greenhouse gas emissions as well as supporting local traders. As well as improving provision of community gardens, I am pushing for the council to introduce a 'Belfast Bikes' public hire scheme (as in Dublin, London and Paris) and to consider provision of drinking water fountains in our parks.



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RUAS Sale of King's Hall

The RUAS have generally been good neighbours to Balmoral residents for one hundred years or more, and growing up nearby I enjoyed using the site. Understandably there was some irritation among residents about pressure on parking at show time, but this was only for a few days in the year and, on the whole, I believe it was reasonably well controlled. An outline application (that is, in principle) for planning permission has been submitted to build 140 housing units (excluding the King's Hall building itself, which is a listed building).

As a member of the Council's Planning Committee, I will keep a close eye on the planning applications and will try to ensure that the infrastructure is adequate to support any new housing development, and that the density is appropriate. In addition, I would like to see the RUAS show jumping arena, which is an extensive green field site in the complex grounds, preserved as a multi use green space.

Our shared history in focus

Claire Hanna is the SDLP representative on the Council's Historic Centenaries Working Group (HCWG), set up to further public education about historic events in the decade 1912-1922, such as the signing of the Ulster Covenant, World War One, the Somme, the Easter Rising and the partition of Ireland. The group is also tasked with addressing other 'diversity' issues including support for minority languages and the flying of flags.

“While I acknowledge that these events of 1912-1922 have been very significant in shaping our history, I believe it is important that the focus is on education and understanding, rather than triumphalism or attempts to justify political violence. For the people of Ireland, North and South, irrespective of political tradition, in terms of people killed and maimed, the decade was a tragedy.

I am a social democrat who also identifies with the democratic Irish nationalist tradition which aspires to a united Ireland achieved by agreement. The decade 1912 – 1922 saw the triumph of physical force and the threat of such force, and I believe it is important that we do not uncritically celebrate non democratic methods of doing politics that may serve to encourage those who persist with these approaches.

There is a Gaelic seanfhocal/proverb, “faoi scáth a chéile a mhaireann muid” which means “we live in each other's shadow” or “we are all interdependent”. My approach to the decade aims to emphasise shared aspects of our history, beyond just 'green and orange' issues, with a focus on wider issues like trade union history and the rise of women's suffrage.



Cllr. Claire Hanna
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Elected to serve you Cllr Claire Hanna

Since my election in May 2011 I have been working hard on a range of quality of life and political issues, and helping to solve constituent problems relating to waste and environmental health, town planning, traffic and parking, licensing, tackling anti-social behaviour and access to services. As well as providing an advice and advocacy service, I am 100% committed to representing the diversity of the Balmoral community and am working to ensure this remains a shared and welcoming area.

I serve on the Council's

- Policy & Resources Committee, the main Standing Committee of the Council dealing with financial and political issues;
- The Town Planning Committee, which has a consultative function in relation to planning matters and may in due course have full decision-making powers on planning
- The Historic Centenaries and Diversity Working Group working group; examining potentially contentious issues include language, flags and marking of historical events
- I also sit on the citywide Policing and Community Safety Partnership and the South Belfast Partnership Board.

Belfast City Council provides services including waste collection, street cleaning, recycling, parks and leisure services, building control and environmental health. This are the main areas I can assist with, but can also liaise with external agencies, like Roads Service or the Planning Service, to attend to matters of concern to you.

**Please contact me at any time by telephone,
email, Twitter or by post.**

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**Balmoral
Clean, green,
shared and safe**



Cllr. Claire Hanna



**Conall McDevitt
MLA**



**Alasdair McDonnell
MP**



Cllr. Bernie Kelly



Balmoral Report

**An update from
Councillor Claire Hanna**

**Upper Malone – Finaghy – Windsor
Blackstaff – Musgrave – Malone**



Flooding Update

*This photo from my mobile phone on 27 June shows
the extent of flooding in one part of Balmoral*



Several weeks after severe flooding in several parts of South Belfast, my SDLP colleagues and I are working with residents to deliver long term solutions that ensure we avoid further damage to homes. It is unacceptable that residents live with the threat of flooding during every heavy downpour.

In recent weeks substantial funding has been announced, but it is vital that upgrade work, while welcome, is not piecemeal and avoids simply displacing flooding from one area to another. Unfortunately, "once-in-a-century" rainfall and flooding is now happening every few years. Until the infrastructure is replaced, I am working to address peripheral issues, like blocked gullies (often on private property) and poor road drainage, to reduce the level of water that may reach gardens and houses. I'm in touch with residents across Balmoral to work through specific local flooding risks and make sure tasks aren't getting lost between government agencies.

While removal of the flood risk remains the goal, the SDLP locally is lobbying on the urgent need to develop an efficient emergency protocol and I welcome the acceptance by Stormont that the Floodline response was wholly inadequate. Sandbags need to be accessible during flood warnings and clearer information for residents on how to protect homes, support vulnerable family members and neighbours, and access support in case of damage must be available from one source.

Please contact me if I can help with flood prevention in your street or with issues arising from June's weather.