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Write: Cian creative pr, 5 East Boldon Road, Cleadon Village, SR6 7SH

Produced by Cian creative pr



Hundreds enjoy free afternoon of music in Ponteland

Hundreds of music lovers enjoyed an afternoon of free entertainment in Ponteland.

Performers at the Town Council's Music in the Park event included singer Sonia Michelle, Dunston Silver Band, Ponteland's Community Band and Community Choir, and children from all five schools.

But even BBC weatherman Paul Mooney, who compered, could not prevent the

event being moved from Ponteland Park to the nearby Memorial Hall due to recent heavy rain leaving the ground waterlogged.

Coun Peter Cowey, Ponteland Town Mayor, said: "Drums, jazz bands, choirs from the various schools, Sonia Michelle and Dunston Silver Band completed an afternoon's splendid entertainment.

"Despite the enforced move to the Memorial Hall and the competition with the Wimbledon Final, around 500 people came



during the afternoon and we raised £320 for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Trust Fund."

Music in the Park, now in its third year, is one of a number of community events run as part of the Town Council's vision of giving residents a real sense of pride in Ponteland. Sponsors include Ponteland Lions Club and Ponteland Rotary Club.

Performers at the Music in the Park event held on July 8 and comper Paul Mooney. Photos by Trevor Walker.



Lindsay Aspden, Stable Manager at South Dissington Stud, owned by Semore Kurdi, is pictured above competing in Novice level show jumping at Burgham last month.
Top left: Caroline Taylor of Berwickshire in the Novice eventing class. Photos by Trevor Walker.

Ponteland businessman delighted with success of equestrian event

A Ponteland businessman behind a hugely popular Northumberland equestrian event has spoken of his delight at its success against the odds last month.

Sunil Mehra, joint president of Burgham Horse Trials alongside business partner Semore Kurdi, was relieved when the event was given the go ahead by British Eventing officials at the last minute after weeks of rainfall, having seen so many others cancelled this summer.

Major horse trials which have fallen victim to the unseasonal weather include Badminton, Chatsworth, Gatcombe, Aske and Eglinton, leaving thousands of frustrated riders and spectators disappointed.

Burgham did not escape totally, with British Showjumping cancelling three days of action and the Dubarry Burghley Young Event Horse qualifiers moved to nearby Todburn Equestrian Centre, but all British Eventing classes went ahead including an additional day requested just two weeks before the event which

attracted entries from three international Olympians.

The event's Facebook page, which boasts more than 2,500 fans, has been inundated with compliments after the huge effort by the Burgham team to get the green light.

Huge crowds turned out to support more than 700 competitors – a massive increase on the number of eventers last year. Riders who took part travelled from places as far afield as Perthshire in Scotland, Conwy in Wales and Berkshire in the South of England, and included big names such as Ruth Edge, Matthew Wright and Jamie Atkinson.

With an estimated 8,000 people attending the event over the three days, with BE90, BE100, Novice and Intermediate classes competing in the three disciplines of cross country, show jumping and dressage, Burgham Horse Trials enjoys one of the highest attendances at this level in the country.

The many positive comments on the Burgham Horse Trials Facebook page include: "There are many venues that must be envious of you staging an

event at all given recent weather, but to stage such a super event, with great courses and fantastic competition in a friendly and delightful setting is the icing on the cake!" and "Another great event at Burgham, such a great course and always well run, thank you for so much effort."

Mr Mehra said: "We were confident that the ground would hold up well given Burgham's excellent drainage, and the superb feedback we have received from competitors has borne that out.

"It's extremely rewarding to see so many riders and spectators enjoy a great weekend's eventing, especially after the frustration they have suffered this year due to the horrendous weather across the country."

The organising team will soon get plans underway for the next event – an Advanced Badminton qualifier next March which will now include all classes from BE90 to Advanced.

For more information visit www.burghamhorsetrials.co.uk or see the event's Facebook page.

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PROJECTS REPORT

Pele Tower

The remedial works on the Pele Tower have been completed.

Memorial Hall

Pre application discussions have not yet commenced with Northumberland County Council and this is being followed up by the surveyor for this project.

Coping stones at Waitrose Bridge

The application to the Environment Agency is set to be approved and it is hoped that the works can be carried out when the river levels have dropped.

Bridge redesign

The work will be carried out when the river levels have dropped.

River bank repairs

Initial contact is to be made with a consultant from Hexham in an attempt to move this project forward.

Skate Park

Grants have been made available for this project to go ahead. Plans are being drawn up to enable a planning application to be submitted.

Statue at Coates Green

Arrangements have been made for the repairs to be carried out following the damage caused to the plinth. The company carrying out the repairs have recommended the installation of a pin kerb enclosing a gravel margin around the plinth and this was agreed.

Park path lighting project

Quotes are being sought for the design of the scheme based on preliminary layouts.

War Memorial

The various proposals have been sent to the Memorial Hall for comment.

Land survey

The Clerk has met with the Council's Solicitor and this project is now underway.

Street maps

The Council considered a report in relation to the production of paper copies of the map and the installation of a map display unit. Both items were approved and the Clerk was given delegated authority to progress this work. Approval was also given for the installation of a further copy to the backboard at Broadway. The possibility of putting maps of the outlying areas on the back of the paper copies of the street map was discussed and would be considered at a later date.

BUDGET WISH LIST 2013-14

Councillors were asked to give some thought to items they wished to be included in the Budget wish list for the year 2013-14.

PLANNING NEWCASTLE'S FUTURE – THE NEXT STEPS

A letter had been circulated to all Councillors relating to special events in Newcastle about proposals to build in and around the city. Councillors were urged to attend one of these events if possible as the proposals did have an impact on the Ponteland area. A copy of a form from the Newcastle West Green Belt Protection Campaign was also circulated for information if Councillors wished to respond to this on an individual basis.

HIGHWAYS

WORKING PARTY

The Working Party, which met on June 20, discussed various items including the Local Transport Plan submission to Northumberland County Council that was due in September. Further efforts are to be made to encourage house owners to cut back hedges to leave footpaths clear and trees to keep highways clear for double decker buses and high vehicles.

ENVIRONMENT

WORKING PARTY

The Working Party met on June 18. A recommendation to obtain prices for preparation of the land near to Waitrose and for planting of shrubs in that location was approved. The Council also endorsed the production of a Management Plan for the park, with some involvement from Friends of Ponteland Park. The Council also agreed a policy for the acceptance of Memorial Seats. The Chairman of the Working Party then reported on the Northumbria in Bloom summer judging which had taken place in the afternoon.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

Councillor Richard Dodd stated that there would be a workshop in Ponteland at the Memorial Hall on Thursday 19 July from 7pm until 9pm in relation to the NCC Core Strategy. This had been arranged following the drop in session held in Ponteland on July 3. Coun Dodd stated that NCC was currently examining the possibility of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). The detail was as yet unknown however there were some real concerns at the possibility of such a venture. He stated that some progress had been made in relation to

Brewery Lane and the parking problems at that location. A meeting had been held with Waitrose and NCC Officers in an attempt to move forward on this issue. Coun Dodd reported that an application had been received in respect of the Blackbird Inn. A Scrutiny meeting was being held at the Leisure Centre on Thursday July 12 to look into the issues of Leisure Centres throughout the County and how they were run. The first meeting of the Leisure Centre Users Group had been held on July 4.

MAYOR'S REPORT

The Deputy Mayor had attended a leaving presentation for Mr Prandle, the headteacher at Ponteland High School. The Mayor reported that he intended to hold a meeting to discuss responses received in relation to the Ponteland Plan. It was then intended to hold a public meeting at the Memorial Hall in August. He agreed to circulate his response to the questions included within the NCC Strategy document and other Councillors were asked to add their comments to these questions. In relation to Music in the Park it was reported that this had been a great community event despite being held indoors due to the weather. The standard of performers had been excellent, particularly the schools who all gave first class performances. Thanks were given to all involved. See article on p3.

This report is based on the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on July 11.

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Richard Winter and Kevin Higgins in one of the new surgeries.

Refurbishment of expanding dental practice nearly complete

State-of-the-art surgeries now open

The completion of a full refurbishment programme for an expanding Ponteland dental practice is just weeks away.

The transformation of the practice on Bell Villas opposite the Sainsbury supermarket is taking shape, with two new state-of-the-art surgeries and a dedicated sterilisation room now in operation.

Building contractors are currently creating a much bigger open plan waiting room, new front entrance, accessible toilet, a dedicated decontamination room and an imaging suite.

Once completed in early autumn, the Higgins & Winter practice will be able to offer new treatments including high end restorative dentistry, implants and facial aesthetics, as well as a traditional family dental service for all ages.

Opening hours have already been

extended to increase accessibility and provide convenient appointment times, with late opening until 7.30pm every Tuesday.

Experienced dental surgeons Kevin Higgins and Richard Winter are behind the expansion plans, having taken over the surgery in January following the retirement of John Hallam after 28 years.

Father-of-three Richard, who had previously been with the Kingston Park Dental Practice for 12 years and has a special interest in restorative and implant dentistry, is a tutor for the northern region for the Faculty of General Dental Practice. Among his previous posts was a spell as lead dentist on Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean and a teaching post at Newcastle Dental Hospital.

He said: "It's great to see the refurbishment taking shape now, with the second surgery now open. Once the works are completed we will be holding a series of open events where visitors can find out about the new

treatments and services we will be offering and the new employment opportunities – we will soon be recruiting for dental nurses, hygienists and clerical staff."

Father-of-one Kevin, who has been a dentist for 20 years and was latterly with the Darras Hall Dental Practice for seven years, leads on implant and cosmetic dentistry as well as dental sedation and general surgery and is also actively involved with the training and mentoring of younger dentists.

He said: "We have obviously tried to minimise disruption for patients during the staged building works and we'd like to thank them for their patience. I'm glad to report we are now just weeks away from completion."

You can find out more about the new Higgins and Winter Dental Practice at their website at higginsandwinterdental.com or call the surgery on (01661) 872979.



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Geoff is pictured with Mike Sadler, Chairman of Ponteland Photographic Society, and his wife Jean.

Museum exhibition of centenarian's life in photos

At the end of June, Ponteland resident T Geoffrey Willey cut the ribbon to open a special museum display of his lifetime's interest and career in photography.

Geoff, who is 101 this month, has donated his unique and extensive collection of photographic equipment and a lifetime's hoard of his own pictures to the Ryedale Folk Museum in North Yorkshire.

In return and in recognition of his continuing support for the Museum, they have mounted a special exhibition of the veteran photographer's life and times in a display room named in his honour.

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Great exposure for photo society

Ponteland Photographic Society is staging another of its popular photographic displays in the village library throughout August.

Chairman Mike Sadler said: "I hope visitors will enjoy seeing some of our members' recent work. You are welcome to join our friendly group whatever your level of interest in photography, so why not come along and see what we have to offer. We meet at Merton Hall most Monday evenings at 7.30pm, from September 10 until early April next year."

Visit www.pontelandphotographicsociety.co.uk where you can see the full programme for the coming season and some useful hints and tips on improving your own photos.

YOUNG TENNIS PLAYERS MAKE REGIONAL FINALS

Children from a Ponteland school have been named runners-up in a regional tennis competition.

With the nation gripped with Wimbledon fever, the heat was also on in the North East at the Grand Final of the 2012 Tony Blair Sports Foundation Tennis Challenge Cup.

The event saw the eight best teams of Year 3 pupils from across the region take part in the final, which was held at Sunderland Tennis Centre.

After the competitors had completed all their matches and had taken part in a number of testing skills challenges using Tennis Factory equipment, the final scores were calculated.

Yarm Primary School were announced as the 2012 champions, with 2010 and 2011 winners Darras Hall First School taking the runner-up spot.

SCOUTS HEAD EAST FOR A EUROPEAN ADVENTURE

Teenage scouts from Ponteland and Morpeth are off on a challenging Eastern European adventure.

A contingent of 15 from the Castle Morpeth scouting district are on a 100-mile, 10-day walking expedition across the Crimea region of the Ukraine to meet the demanding requirements of the Scouting Explorer Belt award.

They flew to Kiev on July 18 before taking the sleeper train to Sevastopol in the Crimea.

As well as trekking, the young people have been engaging with local communities and taking part in a community project. They will also complete a number of challenges to learn about the way of life and culture of the country, working side-by-side with some of their Ukrainian scout contemporaries.

They have undergone a range of training sessions to help prepare them, including river crossing and tick removal, and carried out many fundraising activities as each person taking part had to raise £975.

For details about the group's activities, visit www.castlemorpethscouts.org.uk/crimea



A WARM WELCOME FROM YOUR NEW LOCAL

If you like a traditional village inn with great food, The Bay Horse in Stamfordham is your new local.

This popular Grade II listed watering hole perched on the edge of the village green has recently re-opened after a comprehensive refurbishment which adds a touch of contemporary style to the building's rustic charm.

Managing Director Kevin Laing, who also oversees The Angel Inn in Corbridge, has brought in head chef David Teasdale who has recreated the menu which has proved such a hit at The Angel.

It includes simple, popular dishes using locally sourced ingredients – the venue even has its own flock of sheep at South Dissington Farm!

They all offer great value, with mains starting at just £10.95, a children's menu at £5.95, and the daily 'SOAPS' dish – the Stamfordham Old Age Pensioners' Special – of bangers and mash with seasonal vegetables for £5.95.

Specials include a selection of game dishes, and dishes on the mouthwatering dessert menu are

priced at £5.95. If you prefer a light lunch, there is also a full sandwich menu starting at £5.25.

An extensive wine list is complemented by refreshing local real ales supplied by the Wylam Brewery.

No expense has been spared with the refurbishment, which has created an elegant 70-seat restaurant, a cosy, candlelit lounge boasting comfy leather sofas and a log burner, a traditional bar and beer garden, while attentive service enhances the friendly and welcoming ambience.

For those wishing to stay the night, there are seven luxurious ensuite bedrooms upstairs which have been subject to the same high quality treatment.

But for those who don't have time to stop, there is even a takeaway service being launched offering fish and chips and a selection of drinks from the extensive wine and beer menu.

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Your letters

The Editor
Dont News & Views



A candidate for a new, powerful policing role sets out his priorities in this month's letters page...

Police and Crime Commissioner candidate pledges to put victims first

I wonder how many people know that on 15 November this year we will be having a democratic election for a brand new civic role.

The Government is introducing Police and Crime Commissioners for every police force in the UK including our own, Northumbria Police.

The public accountability for the delivery of the police service will be placed in the hands of the PCC on behalf of the electorate. The PCC draws on this mandate and then sets the strategic objectives of their force area in consultation with the Chief Constable.

The PCC is accountable to the electorate and the Chief Constable is accountable to the PCC. Each area will also have a Policing Crime Panel made up of councillors and independents that will maintain a regular check and balance on the performance of the PCC.

The PCC role is to scrutinize, support and challenge the performance of the police and hold the Chief Constable to account. He or she will decide the budget, allocating assets and funds to the Chief Constable and set the Council Tax precept for the area. The PCC may appoint or remove the Chief Constable if necessary and must maintain an efficient and effective police force.

One of the challenges during a period of austerity is to find savings to ensure that our police officers have the tools to do the job. The PCC has a statutory duty to enter into collaboration agreements with other PCCs, other policing bodies and partners to improve efficiency or effectiveness.

At its heart the PCC must listen to the voice of the community, as he or she will be the local link between the community and the police.

I have been selected as the Conservative Candidate for the Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner and I'm currently developing my campaign. At the centre of my campaign are the needs of victims. They must have a voice and a part in all decision

making. At present I believe their views are at best marginalized and I aim to put them at my right hand side if I am successful at the election. Put quite simply, victims first, offenders second.

I also believe we need to be tougher on persistent offenders, target serious and organized crime, root out corruption, seek greater efficiencies and restore civic pride in not just our police but also take pride in the places where we all live.

We are indeed fortunate that we live in one of the safest regions in the country but we must not be complacent and we need to continue to listen to the community and ensure that their policing needs are fulfilled. That's why I think the idea of a Police and Crime Commissioner is a good thing. I would be interested to hear your views?

For further information please contact me:
Follow the campaign at
www.philbutler2000.blogspot.co.uk
Twitter: @philbutler2000
Email: philbutler2000@yahoo.co.uk

Phil Butler
*Conservative Candidate
Northumbria Police and Crime
Commissioner*

We do not subsidise Newcastle students

'Concerned Ponteland resident' has been misinformed about the funding of Newcastle pupils educated in Ponteland.

Some of our pupils travel in from our own rural catchment which includes Heddon and Horsley and goes out to Ryal, Kirkwhelpington, Whalton and Knowesgate. My own understanding is that about 30% of our pupils come from outside Northumberland.

Such cross-border flows are not unique to Ponteland and take place, in both directions, between Northumberland and Tyne & Wear, Durham, Cumbria and Scottish Borders.

Newcastle City Council does not pay Northumberland County Council directly for the education of pupils coming into Northumberland; each authority is funded directly from Government for each pupil it educates, and not for the number living in

its own area. So we do receive additional funding in respect of pupils coming into Northumberland.

Northumberland meets the cost of school transport for Northumbrian pupils living above certain distances from their nearest school but not for out-of-county pupils.

I am pleased that the standards within the Ponteland Partnership of Schools attract extra pupils to us and welcome the support the pupil numbers give us in maintaining lively schools and a broad curriculum.

With regard to traffic and congestion, the light controlled crossing, funded by our county councillors, has significantly improved traffic flow on Callerton Lane. My own experience is that it has much improved the morning situation, in which drivers park briefly, drop off pupils and leave. The afternoon pickup is more problematic because drivers arrive early and park until their child finds them.

The schools regularly promote walking to school and ask parents to park considerably if they have to pick up pupils. Beyond this it is difficult to see what might practically be done beyond extensive and enforced parking restrictions.

Mike Brown
*Chair of Governors,
Ponteland Community High School*

Shocked at omission of Ponteland from Olympic torch route

Whilst we, as a community, enjoyed the Jubilee celebrations, I am dismayed and indeed shocked that Ponteland was completely ignored when the Olympic Torch route was devised.

We were the only sizeable Northumbrian community to be left out, and indeed when one sees on television that the route incorporates even quite small places, I feel we, and especially all our schoolchildren, were denied the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to participate.

June Atkinson
*Dunsgreen
Ponteland*

Letters on all issues are welcomed by Pont News & Views but the views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher. The Editor reserves the right to amend any submitted letters for legal or other reasons. All letters submitted should include the writer's name and address.

September issue deadlines: The September issue will be delivered on August 31. Deadline for all copy and adverts is Friday August 17. Businesses should be aware that all bookings for advertisements must be paid in full by the deadline to ensure placement in the September issue.

What's on...

Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

Our speaker on Monday August 13 is Dr Alan Fendley and his subject 'The Other Geordies'. Meetings are usually held on the second Monday of every month in the lounge of Ponteland Memorial Hall, Darras Road, at 2.30pm. Membership is open to gentlemen aged over 55. The annual subscription is £10. For further details contact Donald Lloyd at donaldflloyd@sky.com or on (01661) 872661.

Ponteland Floral Art Club

Our next meeting is at Ponteland Memorial Hall, Darras Road, at 7.30pm on Tuesday August 21.

Higham Rock Concert

Saturday August 25 from 12noon until late at Higham Lakes. Performances by The Beer Monkeys, Hells Bells and more. Rock DJ pay bar. Hog roast and bbq supplied by Crescent Butchers. Bike/car parking and camping available. For tickets contact Higham Lakes on 07950 428159, Rob Grant on 07856 271964 or Dave Surtees on 07562 005499. Event in aid of the Afghan Heroes charity. For more information visit highamlakes.com

Annual Duck Races

Sunday September 2 at Ponteland Park from 1.30pm to 4pm. First race 2.15pm. Fun for all the family with bouncy castle, fairground organ, children's games, refreshments and displays. Race tickets available from Mackley & Steven optometrists or any Rotarian. Proceeds to Rotary charities – local and international.

Wildlife Group Welcomes New Members

The first of the new season's meetings of the Ponteland Group of the Northumberland Wildlife Trust [NWT] takes place on Tuesday September 4 at 7.30pm in St Mary's Church Hall in the village. On that evening we are delighted to welcome Mike Pratt, the Chief Executive of the NWT based in Gosforth, who will give a short illustrated talk on the Living Landscapes Project. New members are very welcome to come along; tea, coffee and light refreshments are included in the nominal £2 entry fee, payable at the door. Monthly meetings of this friendly group are normally held on the first Tuesday of every month from September right through until April. We hope to see you at this and subsequent meetings.

Ponteland Parish Flower Show

The 35th Annual Ponteland Parish Flower Show will be held in the Memorial Hall on Saturday September 8. There are more than 120 classes, including flowers, vegetables, fruit, cookery, handicrafts, wine, photography and children's. The show opens at 1pm, with the awards ceremony at 4pm. Entrance cost is £1 for adults, and children are free. See preview on p18.

Ponteland's weekly market

Ponteland's weekly market at Merton Way shopping centre is on between 9am and 4pm each Friday.

SIAN TO CLIMB KILIMANJARO FOR MENINGITIS RESEARCH

A Ponteland medical student will be hitting the heights in a big way to raise money for charity.

The summit of Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest peak in Africa, is where Sian Copley is aiming to be when she joins a group of climbers to take on the challenge in September.

The 22-year-old is hoping to raise £2,500 for the Meningitis Research Foundation (MRF) by completing the six-day expedition in Tanzania, which is run by Student Adventures.

She is currently in the process of completing her degree at Newcastle University, hopes to work as a doctor and has gained experience in hospitals in England – RVI, North Tyneside General and the Cumberland Infirmary – as well as in Canada and Barbados during an elective.

Sian, who is doing some training in advance of her departure in Scotland and the Lake District, said: "A couple of people I know at university said they were doing the trek and as it's on my list of things to do, I quickly signed up.

"I'm also taking on the challenge of climbing Kilimanjaro because the work that MRF does into researching meningitis and septicaemia is so important. As I've studied medicine, I've seen first-hand the devastating effect that diseases can have on sufferers and their families, with some cases resulting in death or permanent disability.

"I'm really looking forward to it and I'm often doing planning and research when I take a break from studying. We get a few days to ourselves afterwards and I'll be looking to go on safari in Tanzania and Kenya (a neighbouring country)."

To sponsor Sian, visit her online fundraising page at www.justgiving.com/Sian-Copley



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High School in top 10% in country for GCSE results

Ponteland High has been named as one of the top 10 per cent of non-selective schools in the country when it comes to GCSE exam performance.

The elite list includes only those schools where at least 19 per cent of students gained 5 A*-A grades including English and Maths in 2011.

Now the school has received a certificate honouring its students' achievement from SSAT (The Schools Network) Ltd, a private company set up to carry on the work of the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, which was abolished by the coalition government.

SSAT has ranked every school in the country according to how well they performed in the 2011 GCSE exams, setting the bar higher than ever before by concentrating only on the highest A*-A grades.

Sue Williamson, SSAT Chief Executive, said: "Ponteland High School should be congratulated for its stunning achievement in securing some of the best GCSE results in the country. There is plenty that other schools could learn from Ponteland High School's success."

Headteacher Stephen Prandle described the award as "a testament to the commitment and hard work of the students, teachers and leadership team, and a vindication of our belief in high expectations, good teaching and ambition for every young person."

Blooming rain won't even stop for floral judges

By Muriel Sobo

Wednesday June 11 was another day when the rain did not stop and the day that the judges of the Northumbria in Bloom competition did their perambulation of Ponteland, viewing gardens and allotments.

The flowers did not look their best. This year has been a severe test for both flower and vegetable growers. Councillor Joyce Butcher and Town Clerk Kath Mavin accompanied two judges as they inspected the plantings at Athol House.



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Consultation event to highlight threat to the green belt

By **Brian Prickett**,
Chairman, Ponteland Community Partnership



You may already be aware that several housing developers have already had discussions with Northumberland County Council planners and declared an interest in specific designated sites in the green belt around Ponteland.

At last month's County Council Core Strategy consultation event, which at least two of the developers attended, all 11 of the workshop groups were adamant that there should be no development in the green belt around Ponteland.

But in order to encourage and coordinate as full a response as possible from the community – both for and against the proposals for up to 1,500 homes and associated infrastructure – Ponteland Community Partnership has established a development subgroup.

The main objective of this group will be to coordinate and facilitate community engagement related to any proposed development in the green belt area around Ponteland.

It will include representatives from the Community Partnership, Ponteland Civic Society, the Darras Hall Estates Committee and the four Ponteland county councillors. Ponteland Town Council has also been invited to join.

The new group will hold an open consultation meeting for local residents on Tuesday August 21 at Ponteland Memorial Hall from 2pm until 5pm and 7pm until 9pm to enable the views of the community to be collected, collated and relayed back to potential developers. We would encourage as many residents and businesses as possible to turn up.

The event will have the following format:

2pm to 5pm – drop-in session and discussions

7pm to 9pm – discussions and workshops.

There will also be an interactive website set up shortly so that members of the community can be kept up to date and also express their views, and details on this will appear in Pont News & Views.

We look forward to your involvement and receiving your comments.



Is Ponteland's semi rural character under threat?

JOIN THE HOLIDAY CLUB

What better time for a holiday club than near the end of the school holidays? The club, for children aged four to 12, takes place from Tuesday August 28 to Friday August 31 at Ponteland Methodist church hall from 9.30am to 11.30am each day.

Although the theme is 'Sports Academy', the club will also be great fun for the less sporting. Children are welcome for any or all of the sessions. The cost for all four sessions is £8, which includes a closing party on the Friday to which parents/carers are invited if available.

Early booking is recommended. To reserve a place ring Hannah Middleton on 07503 185854.

CYCLING CLUB EVENT AT KIRKLEY HALL

Local Cycling Club Tyneside Vagabonds will be running a beginner first time Cyclocross/MTB races for all ages on Saturday September 8 at Kirkley Hall at 2pm.

This is part of the Go-Ride Games. Please contact Edward Beechinor on 07534933771 for more information.

The Club also runs regular coaching sessions for Adults and Children and we have regular rides leaving Ponteland on Saturday and Sunday. See tynevags.org.uk/website/index.php for more information. New members welcome.



Key priorities of Ponteland people highlighted in feedback from planning event

Better health, schools and leisure facilities, smooth-running traffic with more parking spaces, better bus services and links to the Metro, higher quality range of shops, more protection for wildlife, and houses to suit young and old residents are all at the top of the list of Ponteland residents who took part in a planning ideas day about the future of Ponteland hosted by Lugano Group at Ponteland Memorial Hall.

Around 400 residents participated in workshops and completed detailed feedback forms, all of which were analysed following the day-long event in June.

The responses identify many key issues that matter to people who live and work in Ponteland. Recurrent themes fall into two types – improvements required to Ponteland, and aspects residents appreciate about the area and wish to retain.

Improvements centre around traffic congestion and lack of parking; measures to cope with flooding; the choice and quality of shopping; health, schools and leisure facilities; flexibility of housing sizes to provide a range of houses for younger and older residents; and more job opportunities in and around Ponteland.

Residents are also keen to retain the green, rural character of Ponteland and its 'village' feel, and to protect the green belt.

Richard Robson, Lugano Group director said: "This was our first community event at Ponteland and it not only highlighted

the concerns of local people but also their willingness to be involved in discussions about the future of their area.

"Infrastructure, affordable homes, the environment and the character of Ponteland were repeated issues in the discussions and workshops throughout the day and evening.

"We hope to attract as many residents to our next community event in a couple of months' time. It will use the detailed feedback from this event to inform our first stage proposals for Ponteland, which we will bring along to the event and talk through with local people."

A report of the planning ideas day event has now been produced and can be downloaded from this link. <http://tinyurl.com/planning-ideas-day-report>

The event's listening, consultative approach to development, it says, "is a responsible way forward for considering the future planning of the settlement, supported by Lugano and in line with the principles of the coalition government's localism and

neighbourhood planning initiatives".

The planning ideas day was organised to generate discussion about the future development of Ponteland. The afternoon workshop session, for example, looked at what Ponteland might look like in 2030 in four different scenarios.

They were: if no development at all took place; if 'green' priorities led development decisions; if incremental, unplanned change was implemented; and if a self-sustaining settlement providing employment and facilities for local residents was pursued.

The strengths and weaknesses of each scenario were discussed and each group's decisions and strategies examined.

Lugano Group, which owns 2,500 acres of land in the Ponteland area, will address the key themes that emerged from the first event in its plans for the area.

Local people will be welcome to attend the next planning event, which Lugano intends to hold in September.



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35th annual Ponteland Parish Flower Show: Saturday September 8

By Syd Cowan

The 35th Annual Ponteland Parish Flower Show will be held in the Memorial Hall on Saturday September 8.

Fortunately the show does cover a number of classes that are not weather reliant. Most gardeners are having a very difficult time but we do hope that the weather will improve and some produce and flowers will be good enough to show.

There are more than 120 classes, including flowers, vegetables, fruit, cookery, handicrafts, wine, photography and children's.

The full show schedules are printed and are available from Ponteland Library and Post Office and also from Post Offices in Belsay, Dinnington, and Stanington and the Library in Heddon.

The show opens at 1pm, with the awards ceremony at 4pm. Entrance cost is £1 for adults, and children are free.

Bob Butcher's winning onions in last year's show. Photo by Trevor Walker.



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Secretary Greg Waugh at:
secretary@thepontelandgolfclub.co.uk
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Have your say on Town Council's 20 year blueprint for development

By Coun Robin Ramsay

Ponteland Town Council has produced a document setting out ideas on the development of Ponteland for the next 20 years and beyond.

Ponteland Town Council's Local Plan is available online at pontelandtowncouncil.co.uk/News.html and hard copies are available from the Town Council offices costing £3.

This plan was written by Ponteland Town Council in the period October 2011 – May 2012 and it provides a reference point for future planning. The plan will require funding, some elements very substantially, and at the time of writing local government funding is under pressure and in short supply.

Nevertheless, the Council feels that it has a duty to make proposals that would benefit Ponteland over the next 30 years or so and we hope that the financial climate will

improve and that our plans will be funded and come to fruition in future.

The map shown opposite sets out their conclusions and as can be seen they have provided some challenging ideas for the community to consider. It envisages a school campus created alongside Rotary Way which could take congestion out of the centre of Ponteland.

A Metro line or bus route is included in order to improve public transport links and reduce reliance on cars. It reviews the provision of affordable housing and highlights the issues that need to be resolved if they are to remain affordable.

The bypass is seen as a central key which will provide access for new business parks which can provide local employment and assist in developing a sustainable community. The relocation of schools and businesses would help to release brownfield sites for housing and prevent sprawl into the green belt.

There is lots of information and comments which should start everyone thinking about our future as a community. It is important that we have a local plan which reflects our ideas and ambitions rather than have a plan imposed by others.

Anyone who has an interest in the future of Ponteland should read the full document and make their comments and suggestions by email to km@pontelandtowncouncil.co.uk or in writing to Ponteland Town Council, Unit 1 Meadowfield Court, Meadow Industrial Estate, Ponteland, NE20 9SD.

There will also be a public question and answer session together with comment at the beginning of August.

The closing date for written submissions is Friday August 10. This will enable the Town Council to have an input to the Northumberland County Council Issues and Options document, which closes for comments on the August 15.

AWARD FOR ECO-FRIENDLY SCHOOL

Ponteland First School's drive to save electricity has been rewarded with a national accolade.

It is one of 120 schools and community buildings fitted with between eight and 40 solar PV panels and it is estimated that each school will save approximately £590 a year on power.

The Northumberland County Council project is accompanied by education work as an officer from the authority runs assemblies and class sessions to explain to pupils how solar power works and how they can reduce their energy usage.

Ponteland First School has taken part in the scheme and it has won a Gold Medal Award on EDF Energy's 'The Pod' website for its efforts during Switch Off Fortnight.

Kate Cowling, the county council's education worker for solar PV and sustainability, said: "I visited the school to talk about its new solar panels and suggested some energy saving ideas.

"Its Eco Council's first action was to complete an audit of lights left on in school over lunchtime. At the end of the fortnight, the Eco Council completed another audit of lights and found that 95 more lights were being switched off in school."

Pictured are Kate Cowling (back right) education worker with Northumberland County Council and teacher Kathleen Ramsay with children from Ponteland First School.



WARNING AFTER SPATE OF HEDGEHOG DEATHS

By Margaret Stainsby

Caring animal lovers are appealing for vigilance after the suspected death of a number of young hedgehogs from poisoning.

Carol Catchpole from Longframlington, who is well known for the work in caring for hedgehogs, was very concerned about four young hedgehogs she had received from Ponteland.

All four were of similar weight and had been found wandering about during the day in different parts of Darras Hall, showing identical symptoms.

Sadly after a few weeks' care three of them died, one of which vomited blood in the last few hours - a sure indication that it had been poisoned. The fourth hedgehog has survived and making progress.

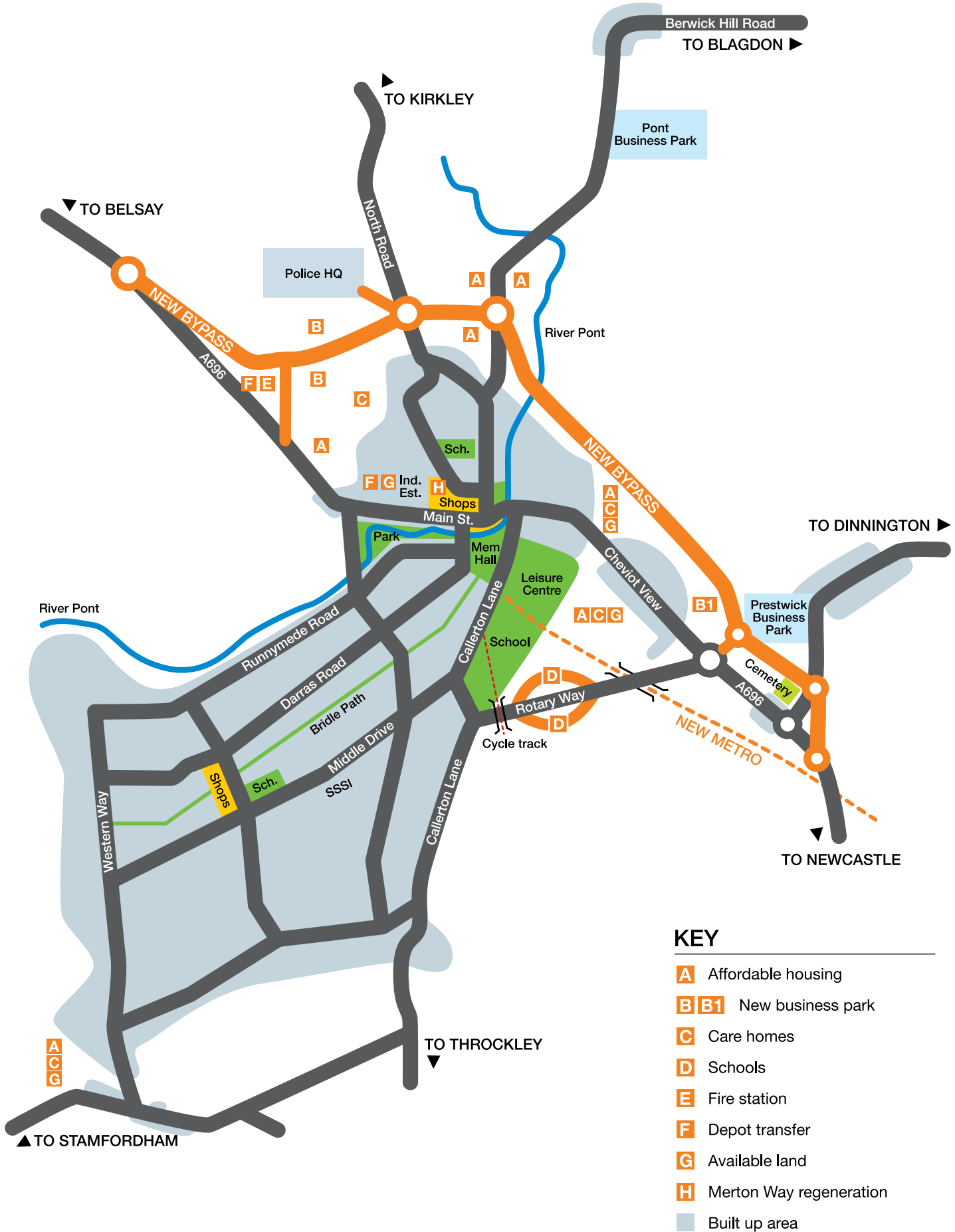
Previously the bodies of two mature hedgehogs were found, one by the river in Ponteland Park and the second on open grassland in Dinnington.

Hedgehogs wandering about during the day are usually in some kind of trouble and need help. If you see a hedgehog during daylight hours we would like to hear from you or better still contain the hedgehog and phone one of the listed contacts as soon as possible.

Any information of sightings of distressed hedgehogs would be very much appreciated. Carol can be contacted on 01665 570650. Other local contacts: Heather (01661) 872887; Penny (01661) 825052; Margaret (01661) 824609.

PONTELAND TOWN COUNCIL

LOCAL PLAN





Ponteland under water again after dramatic thunderstorm

By Muriel Sobo

The sky turned navy blue, raindrops the size of pennies – old ones – started to fall, the street lights came on and for the next hour there was the most dramatic thunderstorm any one could remember.

The most striking picture was the lightning flash over the Tyne Bridge, seen nationwide on TV, but we all had tales to tell. Over

an inch of rain fell in that hour on Thursday June 28 and there was a record-breaking 6.3 inches for June. And to date the rain hasn't stopped.

The water has affected the phone system on Darras Hall, with engineers all over the place looking for wires where metals have deteriorated in the 60 years since the system was installed. They even said there could be a shortage of the polythene replacements because of the current demand!



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 <p>"Our new shed has enabled me to transfer all of the garden equipment from the garage. The quality is very good and I have painted it to blend in." Mr. Wagner, <i>TGB 7x5 Cabin</i></p>	 <p>"Customer service received was really brilliant. We like the garage style and the brown door blends well with the surrounding area." Mr. Fox, <i>Hanson Garage 16x9</i></p>

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Verging on the meticulous!

By Coun Robin Ramsay, Ponteland Town Council

Did you know that you are responsible for maintaining overhanging tree branches and grass verges outside your home?

Homeowners need to ensure grass outside your house is cut back to at least two metres from the edge of the road and overhanging tree branches should be at least 2.3m (7ft 6in) above the footpath or grass verge.

Trees overhanging the highway should have a vertical clearance of at least 5.4m (17ft 8in) - important on bus routes as anything lower can stop the bus companies from running double-deckers.

If this maintenance isn't done, then Northumberland County Council has the authority to carry out this work and charge you for it.

No doubt many of you will have seen various residents cutting the verges, which helps the appearance no end. Even better are those who maintain flower beds on verges such as Mr Joseph Shea, pictured here, aged 92! Perhaps you might like to join this happy band?





Warning over rogue scrap metal collectors

By PC Rob Anderson
Ponteland Community Beat Manager



In the period between June 12 and July 11 we had four crimes recorded for the Ponteland area.

These break down to the following offences:

- two public order
- two criminal damage

There have been three arrests in relation to these offences and other enquiries are ongoing in relation to the other offence.

The two public order offences were very minor in their nature and sorted out quickly.

Across the Northumbria Police area we have still been receiving calls about scrap collectors, both legitimate and unlicensed. As a result I would ask you to keep a vigilant watch for any vehicle

and its occupants which may be acting suspiciously.

If you have any unwanted items of scrap metal it's always better to contact one of the licensed scrap collectors from the Yellow Pages or Internet. Try not to leave any articles such as radiators, cookers, fridges, etc outside of your gardens unless you have pre-arranged their collection as this encourages those undesirables we are trying to deter.

If you would like some crime prevention advice please contact PC 613 Davison or myself, PC 395 Anderson, on 101.

The next Local Multi-Agency Problem Solving (LMAPS) meeting will be held at The East Centre, Prudhoe on Tuesday 7th August at 9.30am where you can raise community issues.

Local police surgeries will be held on the following dates:

CSO Jill Ruddick 4th August
9.30am - 10.30pm Merton Hall, Ponteland

CSO Jill Ruddick 24th August
11am - 12noon Ponteland Library

PC Lee Davison 11th August
11.30am - 12.30pm at Belsay Village shop

PC Rob Anderson 28th July
11.30am - 12.30pm Co-op, Broadway

Please come along and have a chat to get to know us.

We also have engagement days at these venues and dates:

22nd August Matfen and Belsay

23rd August Merton Way and Broadway



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