

pontnews&views

FREE monthly community magazine for Ponteland and district



Footballer Dan, 14,
gets England call-up

Wedding hair stylist
named best in north

Police warning after
attempted car theft

Housing developer pledges 900 jobs with £96m investment

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Pont News and Views is published by Ponteland Town Council in conjunction with Ponteland Community Partnership. If you would like to submit an article, feature or advertise in the magazine, contact: **Tel:** (0191) 3408422 **Mob:** 07954 157939 **Email:** pontnews@cian-pr.co.uk

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

Produced by Cian creative pr

Kirkley zoo helps save turkey from festive fate

Kirkley Hall's Zoological Gardens helped save this turkey from the Christmas dinner table - and introduced her to a potential mate.

Sky's Tyne and Wear reporter Dan Salisbury Jones decided to sacrifice his festive meal to rescue one turkey hen, so six-month-old organic bronze turkey Tina was liberated from a poultry farm in Northumberland before being taken to her new home.

The lucky bird will now live at the zoo, near Ponteland, with a male turkey who has been living on his own.

Kirkley Hall veteran Sage, eager to impress his new company, put on a show by displaying his feathers for Tina when she arrived. Zookeepers at the gardens hope the two birds will become mates and eventually bring some young turkeys into the world.

They renamed the liberated turkey Onion to compliment her companion - so the couple can now be known as Sage and Onion.

The bird cost Sky Tyne and Wear £25 to set free but reporter Dan said it was "a small fee to see love blossom".

The bird's safety was a priority during the rescue operation, and advice was taken from expert handlers at the poultry farm and Kirkley Hall.

Photo by Trevor Walker



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Green Belt war of words heats up after MP's Parliamentary attack



The battle against plans to build hundreds of homes on Ponteland's Green Belt has heated up after MP Guy Opperman criticised two developers in Parliament.

The MP said the Lugano Group, which intends to build 280 homes at Birney Hill, was "taking the community for fools" and questioned its tax and employment arrangements as "outrageous".

He added that the Banks Group, behind plans for 500 homes at Clickemin Farm should be "ashamed of itself" for "attempting to form a cash cow of housing on the green belt".

Both firms reacted angrily, with Lugano threatening to sue Mr Opperman if he repeated his claims outside Parliament, although he has now agreed to meet directors. Banks said there was a real need for affordable housing in Ponteland which could not be met by brownfield development alone and that the scheme would be "directly influenced by the comments and ideas we are receiving from local people".

They have, however, received support from the vice president of the Town and Country Planning Association, Graeme Bell OBE. Writing for national industry magazine Planning, he unfavourably compared the Green Belt campaigners with Sir Charles and George Trevelyan, who gave Wallington Hall to the National Trust.

"So what would Sir Charles and his younger brother think of the forest of signs just 20 miles down the road from Wallington that declare 'Ponteland residents say NO to building in the green belt'?"

"I think they would be appalled that...those of privilege seek to deny others a roof over their head if it comes at any sacrifice to themselves.

"...In some cases the most sustainable solution may well be to build on green belt land...On this small island, we must learn to share."

To view the full article visit:
planningresource.co.uk/news/1161919/land-value-when-its-shared

Birney Hill proposals bring 900 jobs and UK leading 'green' design to Ponteland: page 6-7



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Birney Hill proposals and UK leading 'green'

An impression of how Birney Hill could look



would bring 900 jobs design to Ponteland



Birney Hill, a £96 million proposal for high quality housing at Ponteland, would create 900 job opportunities and bring a superbly designed, 'green' housing scheme to the area. Birney Hill will lead the way in the UK for cost-saving, energy efficient housing set in beautiful, biodiverse landscape.

Ten per cent of all the 672 construction jobs and 228 permanent job opportunities forecast at Birney Hill would be apprenticeships, offered as a legal agreement in the planning process.

Lugano Developments Ltd, as developers, will also give around £16m to be invested in Ponteland, including £2m to help transform the shopping precinct in the village centre and £1.5m for each of two schemes to improve traffic management around Darras Hall and Ponteland, and to improvements to local schools.

80% CUT IN ENERGY BILLS

Energy bills for any of the 280 family houses at Birney Hill would typically be £320 pa rather than the average £1600 pa for similar sized Darras Hall homes – an 80% reduction in annual energy bills for homeowners. Each of the houses would be built to zero carbon and passive house standards.

The development would create new wildlife corridors as habitats for protected species and protect key views and landscapes, as well as enhancing biodiversity and landscape quality.

Flooding concerns would be tackled through cutting edge technology including a Sustainable Urban Drainage system collecting surface water from the site. The most effective and up-to-date drainage systems would be incorporated into the infrastructure at Birney Hill. Major long-term improvements together with porous paving, green roofs and reed beds address flooding issues head on, and also lead to improvements for existing residents in the area.

COMMUNITY TRUST

Birney Hill would create a community trust to be run by residents,

who would oversee a number of community-centred projects to benefit Ponteland. These include a not for profit organisation, funded with a £3m contribution from Lugano over a five to eight years. It would provide community grants to stimulate social and economic enterprises, such as improving land drainage in existing gardens.

There would also be a £3m community farm with kitchen garden, urban allotments and a visitor centre, designed as a destination in its own right.

The community trust would also oversee a new community bus service for Ponteland residents, made possible with a £1m contribution, and there would be a £1.65m contribution to offsite affordable housing.

LIVING NEIGHBOURHOOD

Birney Hill would be the first development in the UK to be a cyclist, pram and wheelchair friendly environment. There would be no raised kerbs anywhere in the estate, making it much easier for all ages to enjoy walking and cycling round their neighbourhood.

Lugano, a North East-based developer, already has £30m of developments underway across the North East and is committed to bringing the highest quality housing scheme to Ponteland. It is working with a team of national experts on the proposals for Birney Hill to deliver an outstanding place to live and work, which will also boost the long-term economic health of the area.

Find out more about the proposals for Birney Hill by visiting www.pontelandfutures.co.uk.



Help shape future development of your village

Introduced as a key part of the Localism Act 2011, neighbourhood planning powers seek to empower communities to manage and enable development in their local area by creating a vision of how their areas should grow; deciding what they should look like; creating locally specific planning policies to manage development in their area; or granting permission by legal order for sites that the local community would like to see developed in a particular way. These powers are discretionary and, in Northumberland, will be exercised by parish/town councils.

Communities, through their parish/town councils, can use neighbourhood planning to:

- Choose where new homes, shops and offices should be built.
- Say what those new buildings should look like.
- Grant permission for new buildings that fit with local planning policies for the area.

Neighbourhood planning includes three separate tools: Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs); Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDOs); and Community Right to Build Orders.

Communities can choose to utilise one or more of these tools to achieve the desired development aims of the local community, for example, a Neighbourhood Development Plan complimented by Neighbourhood Development Order.

A group has been set up to progress a Neighbourhood Plan for Ponteland to promote and improve social, economic and environmental conditions in the area over the next 20 to 30 years. The PNP Group has already held meetings with Northumberland County Council and Ponteland Town Council where an outline of the process for a Neighbourhood Plan was clearly identified.

This initial survey is the start of the consultation with the community and by collating residents' views the PNP will then be able to direct efforts in the right areas.

To find out more about Neighbourhood Plans visit: northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=10909

To find out more about the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan Group or to download more copies of the survey visit: www.pontelandpcp.co.uk

Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan Initial Survey

It is crucial that we obtain as many residents' views as possible and to this end could you please spare some of your precious time to complete this survey.

Please place your completed questionnaires in a sealed envelope marked 'Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan Group' in one of our collection boxes at 'drop off' points listed below by the closing date of **Monday 21st January 2013**:

- Ponteland Town Council Office, Meadowfield Court
- Ponteland Care Centre, Meadowfield, the Community Services reception (Tuesday to Friday)
- Darras Hall Estate Committee, Old Station Court (Monday to Wednesday)
- Darras Hall Clinic, Broadway (Monday to Friday)
- Sainsbury's Supermarket, Ponteland - main exit till
- Waitrose Supermarket, Ponteland - Customer Service counter



PLEASE ANSWER ALL OF THE QUESTIONS.

Please note that it is important to complete your name and address details where indicated otherwise your views cannot be taken into account. * *Note prerequisite fields*

Name(s) *	<input type="text"/>		
Address *	<input type="text"/>		
Telephone Number	<input type="text"/>	E-Mail	<input type="text"/>

Please tick appropriate box

1. HOUSING DEVELOPMENT. *Please tick your view*

Yes No

Any development should be...

1a. **Affordable housing for social needs.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

1b. **Low cost market** housing which is part of a strategic plan strictly controlled so that owners benefit rather than, say, speculators.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

1c. **Left to market demand** and subject to appropriate planning consent

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

1d. **Not over and above the scale seen in Ponteland over the last 10 years**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

2. GREEN BELT. How important is protecting the Green Belt to you?

2a. I wish the existing Green Belt around Ponteland protected as it is now

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

2b. I recognise that to develop infrastructure and possible housing some Green Belt may be used but wish this to be minimised to retain Ponteland's character

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

3. Regarding our infrastructure, *please rank in order of importance 1-8 with 1 being the most important*

3a. Drainage & potential flooding

☐

3b. Traffic congestion and parking

☐

3c. Public transport links

☐

3d. Schools and education

☐

3e. Local jobs

☐

3f. By-pass (irrespective of suggested location at this stage)

☐

3g. Library

☐

3h. Health facilities

☐

4. Regarding public services, *please rank in order of importance 1-7 with 1 being the most important*

4a. Shopping precincts - Merton Way & Broadway centres improvement

☐

4b. Shopping precincts - Merton Way & Broadway centres rebuilding & expansion

☐

4c. Leisure facilities – improvement of leisure centre

☐

4d. Leisure facilities – more facilities for the young

☐

4e. Recreation facilities – including improvement of parks, allotments, more informal spaces etc.

☐

4f. Facilities for visitors e.g. hotels, entertainments etc.

☐

4g. Care homes

☐

5. CONSERVATION AREA/ENVIRONMENT

Conservation Area Character Appraisals help residents and the Council to understand the history of an area and why it is special. They help shape future developments and planning policies, as well as giving residents an idea of what enhancements could be made. At present, whilst there is a designated Conservation Area in Ponteland there is no Appraisal or Management Plan.

Should the Neighbourhood Plan include a statement about why Ponteland has a very special character that would be destroyed by inappropriate development?

Yes No

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------

Thank you very much for your time in completing this survey questionnaire. It is only by obtaining as many residents' views as possible that the committee can do their work effectively and without bias. We intend to circulate a more detailed questionnaire later based on the results of this initial document.

The Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan Group

Your letters

The Editor
Pont News & Views



A clear message for housing developers and criticism over plans for roundabout adverts in this month's letters...

If you listened you'd hear we don't want Green Belt built on

I read with interest Lugano's account of the 'planning ideas days' they held earlier in the year.

I note their comments that they are working in collaboration with the local community and that their first step was to ask local people what they wanted.

They have produced a wish list of "improvements" that they obtained from those who attended through use of their well engineered questionnaire. Improvements listed are such things as flood prevention, infrastructure, schools, parking spaces, shops.

They also say that people identified many issues that are important to them and that recurrent themes fell into two types: improvements to Ponteland and aspects of the area that residents appreciate and wish to retain. Such as protection of the Green Belt.

Please stand by your word and listen to the people of Ponteland when they say they do not want any development on the Green Belt under any circumstances.

Sue Johnson
Cheviot View
Ponteland

Massive concerns over Memorial Hall donation

As a resident of Ponteland I have massive concerns with the recent donation of £10,000 from a potential developer.

There is no doubt that the donation will positively benefit the residents of Ponteland and will contribute to long awaited improvements to the Ponteland Memorial Hall.

It would have been nice to have assurances made at the time of the donation by Banks that there are no strings attached to a sum of money from a development company that needs residents to 'buy in' to destruction of our Green Belt.

Hopefully by being involved in community projects such as these, potential developers

will fully understand and appreciate that development of the Green Belt is not what the vast majority of Ponteland residents want or need.

Lesley Noble
Cheviot View
Ponteland

Why aren't local county councillors leading Green Belt fight?

I am writing to point out that the item headed 'County Council surgeries' (page 11, December issue) has a mistake in the date.

This only helps to confirm my impression that it is a fairly casual group. Are they doing anything to push the interests of Ponteland residents in the County Council?

Why are there no articles from them in Pont News reporting back and vociferously supporting residents' points of view in the fight over the protection of the Green Belt? Being impartial over something as unacceptable as this can surely not be an option?

The letter from Ponteland Town Council also avoids the issue. I believed PTC was the first level of local councillors who would pass on the views of the Ponteland people to the Northumberland County Councillors.

They can make recommendations only they say, but apparently not objections, which does not seem very democratic, in an open society.

Ian C. Brown
Church Flatt
Ponteland

Editor's note: the error on the date of the January surgery published in the last issue was mine. It is Saturday January 5, and not Saturday January 6 as stated last month. My apologies for any confusion.

Round-about way of advertising will hardly encourage tourism

I see that the County Council have come up with a new idea.

They are going to erect advertising hoardings on two of our local traffic roundabouts, four on the one alongside Dobbies and four more at the Callerton Lane-Rotary Way junction. Other hoardings are apparently being installed in similar locations throughout Northumberland.

Presumably they have spotted Newcastle City doing this kind of thing and feel the need to put their particular shoulder to the wheel of progress.

I would have thought myself, that for a county much reliant economically on tourism, this might not be a good idea but presumably there is a belief that it will help attract more people to come here from other parts of the country and from abroad, all only too keen to get a peek at our double glazing adverts.

But why stop there? Why not emulate the example set by the proprietor of Newcastle United FC, get hold of a suitable sponsor and rename County Hall as say, 'Hot-dog House' with suitable posters attached to the front of the building and perhaps large scale models of the product anchored to the roof.

Councillors might then parade through Morpeth, on their way to committee meetings, kitted out with ceremonial sandwich-boards advertising a wide range of local products and produce.

The possibilities are endless.

John Hague
High View
Ponteland

Thanks for helping me after fall

I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to three people who came to my aid when I tripped on an uneven pavement opposite the library on 15th November.

A very kind lady, I think her name was Kath, called an ambulance and a lady from Parklands chemist and gentleman were very comforting.

I'm happy to say I'm fine now and thanks again.

Dorothy Luper
Willow Place
Darras Hall

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.

February issue deadlines: The February issue will be delivered on Thursday January 31. The deadline for all copy and adverts is Monday January 14. Businesses should be aware that all bookings for advertisements must be paid in full by the deadline to ensure placement in the February issue.

What's on...

Ponteland History Society Help Desk

Are you doing a school project, researching family history, needing historical information on a date, building or person in the Ponteland area, or looking for an old local photograph? Then perhaps we can help. Our free help desk is open at Ponteland Library from 2.15pm to 5pm on Friday January 4, where we can give access to our own archives. For more information see <http://www.ponthistsoc.freeuk.com/page12.html>

County Council surgeries

Your local Northumberland County Councillors Richard Dodd, Peter Jackson, Veronica Jones and Eileen Armstrong are available to meet constituents on the first Saturday of every month from 10am-11am at Waitrose supermarket, Ponteland and Broadway, Darras Hall. Their next surgery is on Saturday January 5.

Feast of the Epiphany service at St Mary's

Sunday January 6 is the Feast of the Epiphany when the Church remembers the coming of the Wise Men to Bethlehem. At the 10am service at St Mary's we will have something special - the choir will bring us some Epiphany music and we will sing the Epiphany carols.

Callerton Garden & Flower Club

We meet in the Memorial Hall, Ponteland, on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 2pm. Visitors £4.

Railway films at St Mary's

Railway Films, Sunday January 12, 3pm and 7.30pm in St Mary's Church Hall, Thornhill Road. Some archive films to bring us some sun - and we will build the Victoria tube line in London. Doughnuts in the interval. Admission free, all welcome.

Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

Our speaker on Monday January 14 is Michael Cullen and his subject: Statues, Plaques and Other Oddities. 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.

North East of England Group of the Alpine Garden Society

The next meeting of the Group will be on Monday January 14, 7pm for a 7.30pm start, where Peter Maguire will talk on 'Summer

Flowers of the Dolomites'. Anyone interested in Alpines is welcome to come along and find out what we are about and what we do through the year. We hold a seed exchange to buy members seed to sow in the New Year, followed by refreshments and a chance to chat. Our meetings take place in St Marys Hall, Thornhill Road, the doors are open at 7pm for a 7.30 start. The charge for visitors is £2.50 per meeting. Details from Terry Teal at t.teal@btinternet.com or (0191) 413 2574.

Embroiderers' Guild - Ponteland branch

We now meet at the Memorial Hall from 2pm - 4pm on the 4th Monday of the month (except December. On Bank Holidays the meeting is on the preceding Monday). On 28th January we will be assessing and researching some of the 'Folios from the Embroiderers' Guild'. On 25th February 'Ten Years of Stitching' - talk by Maria Shuttleworth. On 25th March Mini Workshop - 'Make a Sewing Bag' with Jane Penny (using all your favourite stitches). New members and visitors are most welcome (you don't have to be an expert to join!) Visitors' fee £3 (includes tea/coffee and biscuits). Further information from Carol Bird (01661) 881395.

Ponteland Civic Society

The first meeting of the New Year for Ponteland Civic Society will be on Monday 28th January at 7.30pm at St Mary's Church Hall when Marion Anderson will speak on 'Lord Eldon' (1751-1838), lawyer and Lord Chancellor 1801-1806. Visitors, for whom there is a nominal charge of £2, are most welcome.

Ponteland Photographic Society


We meet at 7.30pm every Monday evening through to April 15, 2013 in the large room at Merton Hall in Ponteland, with a short break over the Christmas/New Year holiday and again at Easter. Meetings usually last for two hours. If you are interested in photography, you're welcome to come along and see how we can develop your interest even further.

Ponteland's weekly market

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

Get a free hot drink at Merton Hall

Start the new year making new friends over a cup of coffee/tea or hot chocolate in Merton Hall. Pop in Monday to Saturday between 9.45am and 11.15am and pay only 30p for your first cuppa and your second is free.



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APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

In response to various applications received, the Council approved grants to Dalton Village Hall, Tynedale Hospice at Home and Ponteland Bowling Club. A grant of £395 was also approved in respect of the Ponteland Army Cadets to enable them to purchase their own flag.

PROJECTS REPORT

River bank repairs

Permission has been granted for works to repair the river banks in certain areas by the Environment Agency. The Council agreed that quotes could be sought for the works.

Street information signs

Information relating to the back of the paper maps has been sent to Cityscape. The Clerk was also asked to obtain prices for lowering the sign on Main Street.

Skate park

The planning application is currently out for comment. A report relating to quotes for the fencing will be submitted to Council in the New Year.

Repairs to brick wall at Waitrose

An order has been placed for the works. A method statement is required from the contractor to enable an application to be submitted to the Environment Agency for the works to commence.

Tree works at sub station and on Darras Road

The Council approved a quote for the works to be carried out.

Ponteland Park second timber footbridge reinstatement

It is hoped to carry out work on the second timber footbridge in the new financial year. In order to provide a greater flexibility in working, the Council agreed to seek quotes early in the New Year and award the contract in March 2013. Any payments would be made in the new financial year 2013-14.

Highways Working Party

The Working Party met on November 21. Various items had been discussed including the re-instatement of rumble strips at Prestwick and proposals for a right hand turn at Eland Lane. The Working Party had a further meeting with representatives of NCC on December 12.

Environment Working Party

The Working Party met on November 19. The Council approved a recommendation to

install a picnic bench in the park at the bottom of the West Road entrance with the proviso that if any problems occurred within six months of installation that the bench would be relocated. It was agreed that the Council would enter Northumbria in Bloom in 2013.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

Councillor Richard Dodd reported that a reduction of 10% in the NCC Highways maintenance staffing for the West area had been agreed. He reported on problems at the Leisure Centre with the temperature of the swimming pool that had resulted in closure until a solution could be found. The User Group was involved in finding solutions for the various issues at the Leisure Centre and a further meeting would be held in January. The parking bays are being installed on Thornhill Road. Councillor Dodd also reported on new proposals in respect of planning whereby parish and town councils would be allowed a five minute slot to speak for or against an application at Area Planning meetings. This time would be shared with local County Councillors if they also wished to speak on applications.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Mayor reported on his and Councillor Ramsay's attendance at meetings of the Neighbourhood Plan Group. He had also spoken to an officer at NCC about the process for formulation of a plan and this required the full support of the Town Council. Terms of Reference were to be drawn up and presented to the Group for consideration. Council representation on the group would continue and this would also include County Councillors Peter Jackson and Mrs Veronica Jones. *See article and survey on p8-9*

MAYOR'S REPORT

It was noted that the Town Council offices would be closed for the Christmas break from 12.30pm on Friday December 21 until 9.30am on Wednesday January 2.

This report is based on the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on December 12.



Cover shot: Sheep in the snow at Kirkley Hall by Trevor Walker

DEVELOPMENT DECISION OVERTURNED

A decision to reject plans for five new homes in a hamlet near Ponteland has been overturned on appeal.

Croft Estates' bid to build the properties in Medburn was refused by the county council's west area planning committee last November because of the 'detrimental impact' on the area's rural character.

But inspector Chris Checkley said the houses would be beneficial because they will replace deteriorating vacant farm buildings at the former Prospect Farm.

Ponteland Town Council was an objector and its planning committee Chairman David Butler said: "I understand where the inspector is coming from about the vacant farm buildings, but I can't understand where he says Medburn is close enough to Ponteland to make the homes sustainable. He mentioned people cycling into Ponteland, but it's very difficult to bring your shopping back on a bike."

SCHOOLBOY TRIO IN NATIONAL PHOTO COMPETITION

Three Ponteland High School students were shortlisted for the Colliers Green Focus Mobile Competition, a national photography competition.

Year 10 students Ben Eggleston, Jamie Yates and Jacob Davies were invited to attend the Awards Ceremony which took place at the Museum of London on November 12. At the final judging Ben was selected as one of the main prize winners.

Geography teacher Mr Ross said: "To have three of our students selected for the awards ceremony was fantastic and a real tribute to the high quality of their photographs."

Carolyn named best wedding hairstylist in the north

A hairdresser who has helped more than 400 brides have the day of their dreams has been named the north's best wedding hairstylist.

Carolyn Clayton, of Middle Drive, Darras Hall, was nominated last summer by one of her brides and invited to enter the 2013 Wedding Industry Awards.

The national competition involves 21 categories of wedding suppliers including hair, make-up artists, photographers and florists, divided into seven English regions.

Carolyn, 33, was asked to submit information and photographs about her business, and also to invite all of her brides for the year to November 2012 to vote for her and leave comments and scores for the judging panel.

The regional winners were announced at the end of November and Carolyn won the award for 'best wedding hairstylist' of the north. She will now go through to the national final taking place on January 9 at the Bloomsbury Ballroom in London where the winners will be announced live on stage.

Carolyn, who began working in a local salon at the age of 13 and trained at John Gerard's Hairdressing College in Newcastle before setting up her own business in



Carolyn is pictured styling bride Rachel Currie's hair last month. Photo by Sara Robson.

2001, said: "With over 12 years experience working in the industry I pride myself in my work, and I am very passionate about my wedding hair design.

"I am proud to say I have been a part in over 400 weddings, each and every one different, and I find it very exciting meeting new brides and being involved in the most fantastic day of their lives. It gives me great pleasure and satisfaction, which is one of

the reasons I love my job so much.

"I would sincerely like to thank all of my brides for voting for me and for all of their lovely comments which have got me this far."

You can find out more about Carolyn's bridal hair services at www.carolyn-clayton.co.uk

Ponteland High's netball team are county champions

Ponteland High School's U14 Netball Team is celebrating as they are now officially County Champions after defeating a number of schools in a recent county-wide tournament.

In the final they put in an outstanding performance to beat Queen Elizabeth High School, Hexham, 10-2. The girls will now go on to represent Northumberland in a regional event in the New Year.

Pictured are: front row (l-r) Rachel Cripwell (Captain), Sophie Wainwright, Catherine Young. Back row (l-r) Izzie O'Hara, Faye Walker, Karly White, Sarah Hamilton, Sophie Williamson, Haneen Amer.



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Daniel, 14, gets England call-up

A Ponteland schoolboy has become one of the youngest players to be called up by the England U16s football squad.

Midfielder Daniel Pybus, 14, came on as a substitute 13 minutes from time in the Sky Sports U16's Victory Shield – a 1-0 victory over Scotland at Burton Albion's Pirelli Stadium – on November 29.

The Year 10 student at Ponteland Community High School, who has been recognised as one of the most talented footballers in the country, had earlier been called up by the Club England Division of the FA Group at Wembley Stadium to the team camp and been a reserve for the England side which played Northern Ireland in September.

He is also in Sunderland AFC's U15 side.

Within school Daniel is part of the Junior Athletic Education Programme for Talented Athletes that provides support through access to a mentor as well as specialised tutoring on time management, goal setting and lifestyle choices.

Headteacher Kieran McGrane said: "We are all very proud of Daniel's achievements so far and know that he will make an outstanding contribution when given the chance to represent his country."



Pretty pollies in Ponteland!

By June Atkinson

Here are photos of two unusual avian visitors which came into our garden in Dunsgreen, Ponteland, recently.

Both photos of the parakeets were taken through our double-glazed kitchen window.

Aren't they handsome! Apparently they are becoming considered a pest in the south, especially in London parks, but evidence does not show a detrimental impact on other birds e.g. woodpeckers or the smaller birds.



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Beware of opportunistic car thieves

By PC Rob Anderson
Ponteland Community Beat Manager



Total Policing

In the period between October 16 and December 11 we have had six crimes recorded for the Ponteland area.

These break down to the following offences:

- one attempted theft of a motor vehicle
- one damage to a motor vehicle
- one theft other
- one theft of a motor vehicle
- one assault occasioning actual bodily harm
- one attempted burglary.

The attempted theft of a motor vehicle has been dealt with and enquiries are ongoing in relation to the other offences.

I think another prompt is in order for householders about their home security now the dark nights are here. Remember make sure you leave a light on or set them on a timer when you are going out for the evening.

Following a recent attempted theft of a motor vehicle in the area can I remind you on the cold mornings not to leave your vehicle running on the drive whilst it is unattended.

Some would-be thieves see this as an opportunity to steal the vehicle, giving them the chance to use it in other crimes as well as depriving you of your transport. Everyone appreciates a nice warm car to get into before they set off on their journey but, remember, so do the criminals.

We have a new speed detecting device which will be utilised in the Ponteland area in the future following numerous complaints of speeding vehicles. This is a very accurate piece of equipment which will enable officers to issue fixed penalties for those drivers who exceed the speed limit. Please don't let this worry you but remember if you're driving, then you're in control of your speed.

The following is a list of our most complained of roads for speeding vehicles

and are all 30 mile per hour limits: Western Way; Darras Road; North Road; Callerton Lane and Runnymede Road.

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

Local police surgeries will be held on the following dates:

- CSO Jill Ruddick 11th January 11am – 12noon Ponteland Library
- PC Rob Anderson 19th January 11.30am – 12.30pm Co-op, Broadway
- CSO Jill Ruddick 26th January 9.30am – 10.30pm Merton Hall, Ponteland
- PC Lee Davison 2nd February 11.30am – 12.30pm at Belsay Village shop

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

We also have engagement days – to see venues and dates visit: northumbria.police.uk/news_and_events/events/eventcalendar.asp

Outstanding! Ponteland community groups achieve highest awards of RHS

By Muriel Sobo

Two Ponteland groups who depend on volunteers from the community achieved 'outstanding' at the awards ceremony for the Royal Horticultural Society recently.

This was the highest category and both the Athol House gardens and the Friends of Ponteland Park came out top.

Mary Short, a long-time resident of Athol House sheltered accommodation, was helped over the year by lads from the High School with financial assistance from Alan Cowell of Cowell's Nurseries and Ponteland Lions, the Town Council and Ponteland Rotary Club.

The gardens are admired by passers-by at the corner of Callerton Lane and Mayfair Gardens and Mary is seen in most weathers tending and weeding the beds around the complex. She well deserves the award!

The Friends of Ponteland Park are led by Margaret Stainsby with a dedicated committee and a membership of 250, some of whom are able to help with seasonal tasks in the Park.

Improvements to the Park have been on-going since the foundation of FOPP in 2005 and the latest project is a dipping and viewing platform at the ox-bow lake, funded by the National



Lottery. The Park is a little gem along the river as it enters Ponteland and is highly valued for its diversity and wildlife.

Congratulations to all who have helped in many different roles throughout the year and have made these top awards possible!

Margaret Stainsby and Mary Short receive their RHS awards.

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