

pontnews&views

FREE monthly community magazine for Ponteland and district



Campaigners secure
public meeting on 280
home green belt scheme
.....
New head teacher outlines
vision for school
.....
Boxing legend in town to
launch new tailors

Duck Race raises record amount for charity

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Marion and Tony Prince with one of their winning hanging baskets



Lily Bell and Alice Cowell shared the Rotary Club Trophy for best handwriting



John Turner won the Tom Bolam Shield for the best blanch leeks



John Hinckley took the top three places with his marrows

Growing talent on show

From leeks and marrows to chrysanthemums and cookery, the 36th Ponteland Parish Flower Show showcased the best talent in gardening and a host of other hobbies.

Among the 126 classes displayed at the Memorial Hall on Saturday September 14th were entries in the Flowers, Fruit and Vegetables, Children, Cookery, Handicrafts, Wine, Art and Photography categories.

New for this year was the incorporation of Ponteland Memorial Hall Leek Club, with its trophies for leeks and onions.

Chairman Syd Cowan said: "It was a slow start to the growing season as it was cold in April but we had a very good day. There was a tremendous entry in the children's classes, especially baking, and a very big entry in the handicrafts. We also had a lot more entries in the fruit classes, ruined last year by the weather."

For the list of winners, visit ponteland.info/ponteland-parish-flower-show-2013.html

Photos by Keith Robertson



Maria Shuttleworth with her prizewinning chrysanthemum spray

Success on the menu for Ponteland Business Breakfast Club

The first meeting of the Ponteland Business Network's Breakfast Club has been hailed a success.

Organiser Brian Russell, of Russell and Co. Accountants, said: "It was good to see so many people who had not so far been involved in the Ponteland Business Network and on a damp miserable morning too."

The event, held at the Diamond Inn on Friday September 13th, was attended by all sectors of the local business community as well as business support services Arch and North East Chamber of Commerce.

Matt Gray, of Bonner and White and Chair of PBN, said: "We believe there is an exorbitant wealth of talent in Ponteland, but we think the biggest problem local businesses have is not knowing one another. The point of these meetings is to reduce this problem. By having regular meetings on the second Friday of every month we will give the business community of Ponteland a chance to meet one another, discuss issues and hopefully support one another's enterprises."

Brian added: "It's now vitally important that we keep these people informed and motivated. We will be making more noise over the next few weeks and months to spread the message of the PBN. Look out for our blog, twitter feed and Facebook page. All of these, as well as our home on LinkedIn, will get the message out that there is a group for business people to get involved with."

The next meeting will be held at the Diamond Inn, Friday October 11th between 7.45am and 10am. Anyone wishing to attend can register with Brian Russell at brian.russell@profitabilitygroup.co.uk

Campaigners secure public meeting on 280-home green belt scheme

Councillors being asked to decide on controversial plans to build 280 homes on Ponteland's green belt are to hold a site visit and public meeting.

A report to Northumberland County Council's West Area Planning Committee meeting on September 18 said the visit would "allow Members to familiarise themselves with the site and its surroundings prior to their formal consideration of the application".

It said requests have been received from a number of local residents for a public meeting to be held prior to the application being considered, due to the complex and controversial nature of the development proposal and the significant level of public interest.

The authority has received around 2,000 letters of objection and 200 letters of support since the outline application for the 82 hectare site at Birney Hill Farm was lodged in January by Lugano Developments Ltd.

The Newcastle-based firm says the £96m scheme would create 900 jobs and include 70 "affordable" homes, a farm shop and café, and 650m² of office floorspace, whilst 39.2 hectares of the site would be retained in agricultural use and managed as part of a Community Trust by a farm manager.

A further 17.9 hectares of publicly accessible open space would also be provided on the site to include children's play areas, a Victorian kitchen garden, community orchard and areas of allotment land.

A county council spokeswoman said October 7th had been pencilled in for the site visit and October 9th for the public meeting, but neither were confirmed nor a venue for the public meeting when we went to print.

The plans can be viewed at www.pontelandfutures.co.uk

TICKETS AVAILABLE FOR CHRISTMAS CHARITY BALL

A charity ball which raised £20,000 for Newcastle RVI's Tiny Lives appeal last December is to be repeated.

The Diamond & Ice themed ball at The Gosforth Park Marriott Hotel was organised by staff from Ponteland Private Nursery, who have been invited to join forces with the charity again.

A number of tables are available priced at £450 for a table of ten or individual tickets for £45. The event on Saturday December 14th includes a three course menu, live entertainment and a disco until 2am and is suitable for Christmas office parties.

Dress code is black tie for gents and glitter and sparkly for ladies. To book tickets or to make a donation for a raffle prize contact organiser Jo Slade on 07584 499697.

ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY LAUNCHES PONTELAND DEMENTIA SUPPORT GROUP

A new support group for people with dementia has been launched in Ponteland by the Alzheimer's Society.

The Dementia Café, known as 'D.Caff', provides a café-style session for people with dementia and their carers to socialise and get much needed face-to-face support. Activities include table-top games, team activities, speakers and entertainment.

The Ponteland Dementia Café will be held on the third Wednesday of the month from 1.30pm to 3pm at Merton Hall, Merton Way. For more information contact Alzheimer's Society Acting Locality Manager Daniella Hayes on (0191) 274 2727.



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PROJECTS REPORT

West Road Easy Access

Negotiations are continuing with NCC Highways to find a resolution to this issue. The planning application has been withdrawn whilst these discussions are ongoing.

Refurbishment of second timber footbridge

This work is complete. The Council agreed that the contractor had made an excellent job of the refurbishment.

SKATE PARK

The Council considered a report in relation to the finalisation of the Skate Park proposals. Councillors were reminded that the planning approval had been granted, and the various costs involved with the equipment, fencing and path works were discussed. Ponteland Community Partnership (PCP) has been most successful in its fundraising efforts and was commended for its hard work. The Town Council agreed to meet a shortfall with funding but PCP will continue to attempt to raise further funds. It was hoped that the work could be completed by the end of the year. The Council formally recorded thanks to PCP and to donors for bringing this project to fruition.

WEBSITE

An enquiry had been sent out to four companies requesting quotes for updating the website. After some discussion it was agreed that a small party of four Councillors would meet with the company which had submitted the lowest bid and then report

back to the October meeting with a view to arriving at a decision on whether to proceed.

GRANTS

West Northumberland Citizens Advice Bureau had asked for a grant towards their work which had been used by a number of Ponteland residents. It was agreed to give £500 and meet with them to discuss their future requirements.

HIGHWAYS WORKING PARTY

The Working Party met on August 21 when members considered the Local Transport Plan submission (LTP) for 2014-15 and recommended submitting the following three priority items:

- Provision of dropped kerbs from the Diamond Inn to Prestwick Cemetery on the eastbound pavement.
- Formalisation of a footpath between Ladywell Way and Kirkley Drive. This had been created over an area of rough ground and was a useful and well used link.
- The installation of a double sided traffic light outside the Diamond Inn on the junction of Main Street and Eland Lane in order to improve the visibility of the traffic signals for drivers travelling north through Ponteland.

The reserve items are:

- Dropped kerbs on both sides of West Road near to the Park entrance, also 10 dropped kerbs to North Road up to the speed limit sign if required and two dropped kerbs at

Woodside and Eastern Way – the latter two items required checking by Northumberland County Council.

- Installation of a street light on the footpath between Kirkley Drive and the Medical Centre this was also to be checked by NCC.
- Installation of street lights on roads without footpaths at Greenacres, Hill Park, Hillside, Lynwood Close, Marian Way, Pinegarth and Woodend.

It was agreed to submit these items to NCC. The Town Council had also been invited to submit a priority for a length of road resurfacing and after contacting all Councillors, the majority view was Middle Drive and this was agreed for submission to NCC.

REQUEST FROM THE DIAMOND INN FOR PERMISSION TO USE THE COATES GREEN AREA FOR A NEW YEAR'S EVE FIREWORK DISPLAY

The Proprietor of the Diamond Inn has requested permission to use Coates Green for a firework display on New Year's Eve. The costs of this event are to be met by local businesses and a contribution from the Town Council was requested. The Council felt that the fireworks should be let off from behind Rialto and agreed to a contribution of £250 towards the cost of fireworks.

ANNUAL AUDIT RETURN 2013-14

The Council was informed that the Annual Audit Return for 2012-13 had been received

from the external auditors, who had no issues to raise. It was agreed to accept and approve the Annual Return, which will be displayed for a period of 14 days and also appear on the website.

MAYOR'S REPORT

AMT Benchmarking meeting – August 21st

The Mayor attended the above meeting in Morpeth where the Town Council was offered the opportunity for the Action for Market Towns benchmarking exercise to be carried out. This will involve a survey being carried out by AMTi and the Council would be informed of the date of this survey. An interim report would be available in December and a full report by March 2014. Apart from the shops/business survey a footfall count will also be carried out.

Meeting with ISOS Housing – August 22nd

ISOS requested a meeting with the Council regarding proposals they had to build four two bed apartments on a garage site in Rowan Drive. The meeting was held on August 22nd and a planning application would be submitted to NCC in due course.

Ponteland High School Year 13 Celebration of Achievement

The Deputy Mayor attended this event on September 5th and was most impressed by the standard of achievements reached by the students.

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



Get ready for the dark nights

By PC Rob Anderson
Ponteland Community Beat Manager



In the period between August 12th and September 15th we have had 13 crimes recorded for the Ponteland area.

These break down to the following offences:

- One theft from a shop
- One theft of a motor vehicle
- One possession of an offensive weapon
- Four damages to motor vehicles
- One making off without payment
- One offence of harassment
- Two house burglaries
- One burglary to a work unit
- One criminal damage.

Enquiries are ongoing in relation to the offences and arrests were made for the harassment, one damage to a motor vehicle, the offensive weapon and the burglary to the work unit.

It's getting to the time of year again where our houses are in darkness when we return home after being at work or out for

the evening. Please remember to set your timers or leave a light on if you're coming home after it gets dark. This can deter unwanted visitors and assist in your own safety when entering the house.

We have received a few complaints about inconsiderate cyclists around Ponteland. The Highway Code covers bicycles and their riders and we strongly recommend you check out the appropriate sections before venturing out onto the road. Sections 5 and 59 to 82 cover all the necessary rules and can be accessed at the below website address or in a copy of the Highway Code: www.gov.uk/browse/rules-for-cyclists-59-to-82/you-and-your-bicycle

Please read them and consider other people's safety as well as your own.

CSO Jill Ruddick left us on September 13th to take up her new role as a Police Officer. She will be missed and we wish her the best of luck in her new posting. Jill has been replaced by CSO Paul Cotterill who you will now see in the town. Please take the time to get to know him as he is walking around.

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:

- PC Lee Davison 5th October 11.30am - 12.30pm at Belsay village shop
- PC Rob Anderson 19th October 10am - 11am Waitrose, Ponteland
- PC Rob Anderson 19th October 11.30am - 12.30pm Co-op, Broadway
- CSO Paul Cotterill 26th October 9.30am - 10.30am Merton Hall, Ponteland
- PC Lee Davison 9th November 11.30am - 12.30pm at Belsay village shop.

We also have Engagement Days at these venues and dates:

- 10th October 10am - 12noon Merton Way/1pm - 3pm Broadway
- 16th October 1pm - 3pm Stamfordham/Belsay.

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

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New head teacher outlines vision for Richard Coates

The new head teacher of Richard Coates CE Middle School has spoken of her delight at her appointment as she outlined her own vision for the role.

Heather Cape arrived for the start of the new academic year earlier this month from a middle school in Rothbury, having been in close contact with the school since her appointment in April.

The mother-of-two said: "I am absolutely delighted to have started in post and consider it a privilege to be selected to lead such a wonderful school. I am looking forward to continuing the outstanding work within the school and developing it further.

"Throughout my career I have worked in a variety of middle and primary schools across the North East of England. In my previous role I was a successful head teacher at Dr Thomlinson C of E Middle School in Rothbury, where I had worked for 13 years - initially as the deputy head teacher.

"As a parent of two children, aged ten and six, I fully understand the worries and concerns children have about school, and the concerns parents have about their children at school!

"I value the need to work in close partnership so that our children have the very best opportunities in life and I am looking forward to getting to know more people from the community as the term progresses.

"I am passionate about teaching and learning and believe school should be an exciting place full of enriched learning opportunities that allow all children not only the chance to achieve, but to excel."

New Richard Coates head teacher Heather Cape. Photo by Keith Robertson.



Summer of success at Ponteland High

It has been a summer of success at Ponteland High, with great GCSE results following an equally impressive A level performance from hard working students.

The school recorded 70 per cent of students achieving five or more A*-C grades including English and Maths.

Four students achieved all A* grades: Charlotte Burrin; Rosie Clear Hill; Joseph Pilsbury and Matthew Ross, while another 11 achieved all A* or A grades: Patrick Allsop; Robyn Bartlett; Emma Farquhar; Ellen Forsyth; Josh Hunter; Rosie Jesper; Daniel Jones; Katie Landreth; Sophie Mackenzie; Bea Milligan and Annabel Wilson.

Other high achievers included Claire Anderson, Jamie Carpenter, Jack McCann, Kristin Morgan, Tabitha Wainwright and Carolina Williams with 9 A*/As, and James Anderson, Harriet Barrett, Ruby Bartholomew, Callum Chick, Patrick Maughan, Luke Reynard, Joseph Robinson, Tom Swatridge and Lisa Ward, who each gained 8 A*/As.

Other headline figures this year:

- 47 students achieved five or more A* or A grades, representing 17 per cent of this year's 274 Ponteland High GCSE exam-takers.
- 85 per cent of students gained a C or above in their Maths GCSE – with 27 per cent achieving an A* or A grade.
- 73 per cent of students achieved C or above in English, with 18 per cent gaining either A* or A.
- The proportion of students achieving 5 A*-C grades is 81 per cent.

Headteacher Kieran McGrane said: "We are very pleased that we have improved on last year's results and, more importantly, that the hard work and effort of our students has been rewarded with such excellent results, especially when set against a national picture of harder exams and a drop in overall outcomes.

"We benefit from a talented and committed team of teachers, and together with supportive parents, we intend to continue this upward trend of achievement at Ponteland High School."

A class students: Robyn Bartlett, Ellen Forsyth and Rosie Clear Hill. Photo by Keith Robertson.





The time of your life

Retirement should be a time spent relaxing, socialising and enjoying the benefits that come with working hard for so many years. Select Living by Helen McArdle provides new homeowners with the opportunity to do all of these things and so much more.

At Eslington Mews in Low Fell prospective buyers are invited to their sales and marketing office to take a look around the apartments and find out how exciting retirement could be.

The vision behind Eslington Mews comes from Helen McArdle herself, who is a constant driving force behind Helen McArdle Care. She has not only built a community where people can live as independently as they want, with as much support as they need, but she has also created a lifestyle that reflects the dignity and luxury that older people deserve.

The luxury retirement community comprises of 21 one and two bedroom apartments spread over three floors and boasts fully fitted kitchens and bathrooms, en-suites, fitted wardrobes in the master bedrooms, a balcony or patio area and the latest in security technology. The community is situated in the heart of Low Fell with convenient transport links and several parks, shops and leisure facilities close at hand. Should you choose, there

is even the opportunity to have your apartment styled by an interior designer to create the home of your dreams.

Apartment owners will also have access to the facilities of Springfield House, the care home which is located on the same site, including: The Tea Rooms; The Orangery Restaurant; a function room; a wellbeing suite and gym; an Internet café; a beauty salon and a GP surgery. All apartment owners will also be able to enjoy an array of activities including Zumba Gold, gourmet evenings, beauty treatments and therapies. Apartment owners can also purchase care and domestic services as and when they need them.

Properties at the retirement development in Low Fell are moving fast, with only one apartment left overlooking the beautifully landscaped gardens. Manager Lisa Hall said: "We do everything we can to ensure that the move is as easy on buyers as we understand the stresses of downsizing. With this in mind we offer Select Move to our buyers, a service that has been designed to help remove the stress from moving home; it is a two-fold moving service that will not only help them in the run up to their moving day but also to add those personal touches to make their apartment home.

"The facilities we have here at Eslington Mews are unlike any other retirement community in the North East. Without leaving the complex apartment owners have the opportunity to enjoy gourmet cooking, shop online, keep fit in the gym, and be pampered in our wellbeing suite.

It has been great watching people embrace our new style of retirement living."

With 24 hour security and an array of activities and services on your doorstep, when you buy a Select Living apartment you are not just purchasing a home, you are opening up a world of opportunities, so the only thing you need to worry about is enjoying yourself!

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by Helen McArdle

Your letters

More questions for Darras Hall Estate Committee and a call for a dedicated park dog zone in this month's letters...

I also want to know what Darras Hall Estate Committee actually does

I write in response to a letter submitted by Mr John Worth and then a subsequent letter from Mr David Hobson (July and August issues).

I don't believe the payment of the fee Mr Hobson majored on within his reply was the real point of Mr Worth's letter. Mr Worth's letter appeared to be more about what Darras Hall Committee does to keep Darras Hall the green and wildlife retreat that all (okay not all) who live here love.

What powers do the committee have to stop new residents of old houses or new builds ripping out all hedges and replacing them with fencing and walls? If in fact they do have such powers, why aren't they used to prevent such happenings and if they don't have any such powers, then I too question what the £28 fee is for.

If the removal of hedging and larger trees is allowed to continue in such a fashion there will be even fewer hedgehogs, red squirrels, foxes and frogs than we have now by stopping the natural run of the wildlife. Without the wildlife, hedging and trees the estate will be a poorer place to live.

If people wish to have fewer trees, hedges, bushes and therefore wildlife, I question what it is about Darras Hall that made them spend an inordinate amount of money moving here. And having spent that money why would you wish to lose the individuality of the estate, as it is a sure-fire way of making theirs and surrounding properties worth a great deal less!

I am fully supportive of a committee who delivers something to the community and feel the majority of Darras Hall residents would happily pay whatever the fee was as long as it was supporting a committee that held at least some of the values and vision held by the founder Joseph Wakinsshaw.

Things change and change should be welcomed, but changing a leafy and wildlife rich environment into something that resembles a new build housing estate is a change that should be stopped.

Beverley Oliver

Runnymede Road, Darras Hall

Yet another important service to the community lost

Your letters about the loss of the newspaper shop contained very one sided views and did not mention that the tenant was also running a business.

We have lost yet another important service to our community. It was not just newspapers. It was part of a real village spirit with a printer copier, shoe repairs, dry cleaning, cigarettes and groceries and was a good forum for chatting about current issues.

But landlords are making it harder for small shopkeepers. Funeral parlours, betting shops and charity shops and supermarkets are moving in, a clothes altering and wool shop has been lost, and even our doctors' surgeries and council offices have moved out to an industrial estate.

I can see the time coming when we shall have just one supermarket, greatly expanded with an upmarket restaurant with all these small services under one roof and set in landscaped grounds.

Ian C. Brown

Church Flatt, Ponteland

Park needs dedicated dog zone

I was pleased to see a notice in the park recently, stating that dogs should be kept on a lead in the picnic area during the summer months.

It's about time that the dog owners in this village realise the park is also for children, not just for dogs. As a mum with a toddler, I'm very reluctant to allow my child to run freely, as there are so many dogs running around unleashed.

While most dog owners are responsible enough to pick up their dog's mess, remains of it are inevitably still all over the grass. And you only have to walk through the park in the snow to see the vast areas of dog 'wee' all over the place.

There needs to be a designated area in Ponteland Park for dogs to allow the children of this village to play in a clean, safe environment.

Francesca Corbett

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 edit any submitted letters for legal or other reasons.

All letters submitted should include the writer's name and address and not exceed 150 words.

November issue deadlines: The November issue will be delivered on Monday October 28. The deadline for all copy and adverts is Monday October 14. Businesses should be aware that all bookings for advertisements must be paid in full by the deadline to ensure placement in the November issue.

The Stable Coffee Shop

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What's on...

Ponteland Civic Society

The next meeting of Ponteland Civic Society will be on Monday September 30th at 7.30pm at St Mary's Church Hall, when Chris Foote Wood, author, journalist and broadcaster, will speak on 'T. Dan Smith, Downfall of a Visionary'. Visitors are most welcome, for whom there is a nominal charge of £2.

Ponteland Wildlife Group

Ponteland Wildlife Group's next meeting is on Tuesday October 1st at St Mary's Church Hall, starting at 7.30pm, when Steve Speak's talk is entitled 'Archaeology in the Landscape'. The £2 admission fee, payable at the door, includes refreshments.

Ponteland U3A

Ponteland U3A's monthly speaker on Wednesday October 2nd is John Moreels whose presentation is titled 'Nostalgic views of the North East'. This is based on some of his unique historic slide and photograph collection. We meet at 2pm in St Mary's Church Hall. Visitors are welcome. No charge. Interested in U3A activities? Visit our website on www.u3asites.org.uk/ponteland or ring (01661) 822225.

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 October 5th.

Fratelli fundraiser: Monday October 7th

Last year's event was a huge success with over 150 people enjoying a superb evening. Please support your local Memorial Hall by either joining us for a fun evening or donating a prize for the raffle. Tickets £17.50 each. Comprehensive menu offering a delicious 2 course meal. Please contact Hall Secretary Vicky Robson on (01661) 822603 for tickets or further information.

RNLI Ponteland Ladies Luncheon Club

The Ponteland RNLI Ladies Luncheon Club is looking to attract new members. We meet on the second Tuesday of each month in the Memorial Hall at 12noon for 12.30pm where we enjoy a two

course lunch together with a guest speaker. Why not give us a try? If you are interested please contact the Secretary Janet Musson on (01661) 824880.

North East England Group of the Alpine Garden Society

The North East England Group of the Alpine Plant Garden Society is holding the Autumn Show of alpine, bulbs and small shrubs on Saturday October 12th at the Memorial Hall, Darras Rd. Open to the public 12noon - 4pm. Plant sales from 10.30am. Homemade refreshments are available. Entry £2.50 (AGS and SRGC members free) Our speakers on Monday October 14th are Ian and Carol Bainbridge and there will be a demonstration on 'The Art of Crevice Gardening'. Our meetings take place in St Mary's Church Hall, Ponteland, with the doors open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start. The charge to visitors is £2 per meeting. Details from Terry Teal at t.teal@btinternet.com or (0191) 4132574.

Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

Our speaker on Monday October 14th is Dennis Oliver whose talk is entitled 'The History of Stamfordham'. 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.

Merton Hall

Merton Hall is a great place to meet new and old friends, read the papers and have a cuppa. It's only 30p and the second cup is free (Monday to Saturday morning). Shopping trip to The Bridges in Sunderland is planned for Tuesday October 15th, departing 10am. For further details contact Merton Hall on (01661) 872917. Come to the brunch and bingo every second Thursday in Merton Hall from 12noon until 2pm. Have fun, keep fit and flexible with chair based exercise every Monday, 11am until 11.45am. No need to book - just come and join in for £1.50.

Ponteland Floral Art Club

At our meeting on Tuesday October 15th at 7.30pm at Ponteland Memorial Hall there will be a demonstration by Judith Clancy of Whickham, (A) entitled 'All Shapes & Sizes'.

Rotary Club Gala Concert

The Rotary Club of Ponteland is holding its annual Gala Concert at 7.30pm on Sunday October 20th at the Britannia Hotel, Newcastle Airport, with Graeme Danby (Bass), Sarah Fox (Soprano), Valerie Reid (Mezzo Soprano), Austin Gunn (Tenor), Lydia Newlands (Piano) and Principal Guest Bradley Creswick (Violin). Tickets costing £12.50 from Mackley & Steven Opticians, 25 Main Street, Ponteland (tel. 01661 823374) or DA Curd (tel. 0191 340 6372).

Memorial Hall Charity Concert

A concert in support of Children North East will be held in Ponteland Memorial Hall at 7pm on Saturday October 26th featuring The Grainger Singers: Conductor Michael Scott, Deputy Jean Thomson, Accompanist Ann Makepeace. Soloists tbc. Raffle draw by Guy Opperman MP. Bar available. Tickets costing £8 available from Mackley & Steven, 25 Main Street, Ponteland and Newcastle Building Society, Broadway, Darras Hall. Supporting the poor and the afflicted.

Ponteland URC Christmas Fayre

Our annual Christmas Fayre is being held on Saturday November 9th at Ponteland United Reformed Church, Broadway, Darras Hall. Doors open at 10.30am and admission is free. All the usual attractions, including: Bric-a-Brac · Raffle · Gifts · Jewellery · Christmas Cards · Cake stall · Provision/Perfumeries · Café · Tuck Shop · Bottle Tombola · Floral Decorations · Books and CDs · Games to play · Toiletries · Games · Toys. Music from Sandy and Jim. Do join us for an enjoyable family day out. Contributions to all stalls welcomed. Contact: Jane Dunn on (01661) 825688 or F. Milligan on (01661) 823489.

The Northumbrian Ranters

This group of talented musicians formed five years ago including fiddle, cello, harps, guitars and keyboards is playing at the Britannia Hotel by Newcastle Airport, at 7pm on Sunday November 10, joined by The Ceilidh Band. Tickets costing £7 are available from Mackley & Steven, Main Street, Ponteland. Doors open at 6pm.

Ponteland Photographic Society

Ponteland Photographic Society meets every Monday at 7.30pm in Merton Hall. Anyone interested in photography is always very welcome to join this friendly group; we offer a varied and interesting programme which will be summarised at our first meeting before seeing a selection of recent images by committee members. Come and see what we have to offer without any obligation to join, and do visit our website pontelandphotographicsociety.co.uk

Ponteland Netball Club

Do you play netball? Come and join us for a fun and sociable workout. All levels welcome. Every Monday from 8.30pm to 9.30pm at the Sports Hall, (behind) Ponteland Middle School. Contact pontnetball@gmail.com or 07867 483551.

Carpet bowls every Friday

Carpet bowls at 7.30pm every Friday at Ponteland Methodist Church. New members would be most welcome, why not come along and give it a try – it's a good way of helping the winter along. Contact is Mrs Barbara Hogg on (01661) 824652.

Ponteland Runners

Do you run and would you like to run with others? Ponteland Runners is a very friendly club and welcomes all newcomers. We offer a variety of sessions throughout the week for social runners who like to run for fun and fitness through to competitive runners who train to improve their times. The cross country season has started and we welcome any runners who would like to participate in this series of races. For further information about the club and our sessions visit www.pontelandrunners.org.uk, find us on Facebook, contact secretary@pontelandrunners.org.uk or call Sue Heppell on (01661) 821547.

Ponteland Tri

This is a brand new Triathlon England affiliated triathlon club in Ponteland. We are currently training two level 2 triathlon coaches and will be offering tri specific sessions in the new year. If you've ever fancied trying a tri, this is the perfect opportunity to give it a go. We are part of Ponteland Runners and share the run sessions. For more information about the club and our sessions visit www.pontelandtri.org.uk, find us on Facebook, contact secretary@pontelandrunners.org.uk or call Sue Heppell on (01661) 821547.

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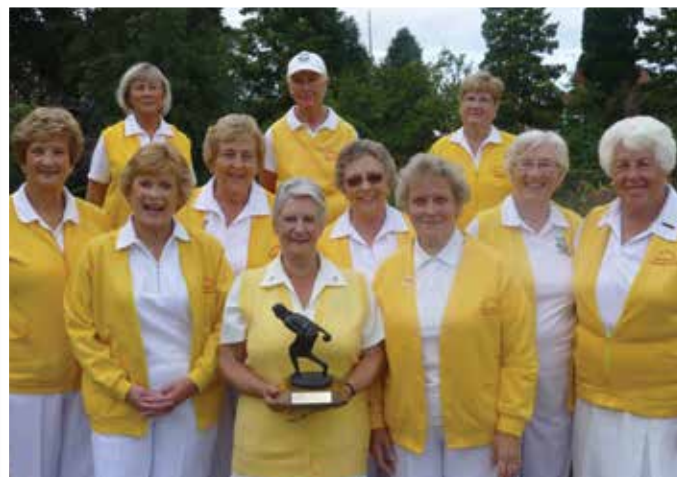
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Lady bowlers hit a treble

By Muriel Sobo

The lady bowlers at Ponteland Bowling Club have achieved triple success in the county competitions this last season.

The first win was the Top Club Trophy, also known as the County Double Rink, with the club's best eight players. They played rounds against Alnwick, Burradon and Amble before beating Hexham in the final.

Margaret Cowan won the Two Woods County Champion of Champions trophy in a nail-biting final, coming from behind but eventually winning the crucial point, while Elizabeth Emmerson was the runner-up in the Four Woods Champion of Champions.

The club has welcomed ten new lady members who learned their skills in the lovely warm weather of this year on a beautiful, well maintained bowling green. Look out for the dates of next year's taster sessions and you will be welcome to have a go. Come and join us.

Pictured are: (back row l-r) Liz Emmerson; Jenifer Nixon; Margaret Turner (middle row l-r) Pam Varley; Ann Rutter; Marina Catchpole; Gloria Staplyton and Margaret Cowan (front row l-r) Di McDonnell, June Nichol and Lorna Telfer.

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New dentist joins as practice continues to expand



A new dentist has joined Higgins & Winter to meet the burgeoning demand of the rapidly growing practice.

Emma Hand has a special interest in restorative dentistry and facial aesthetics/rejuvenation procedures including wrinkle relaxing and dermal fillers.

Having practised for 13 years since qualifying from Newcastle Dental School, Emma is highly experienced in restorative dentistry, and has also recently completed a two year postgraduate training course in cosmetic dentistry in Manchester.

Higgins & Winter partner Kevin Higgins said: "With patient numbers continuing to grow we needed a third dentist and Richard and I are delighted to have secured someone with Emma's experience and enthusiasm.

"We can now expand our range of dentistry services to include facial aesthetics such as wrinkle relaxing and dermal fillers which, combined with restorative dentistry, can truly transform your appearance and boost your confidence."

Richard Winter added: "Emma is currently taking on new patients and we have extended our opening hours to offer appointments from 8am to 8pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday to fit in with the busy lifestyles of many of our patients."

For more information on traditional and cosmetic dentistry services available, contact Higgins & Winter by email or telephone or visit the website.

Higgins & Winter
Dental Practice

(01661) 872979

higginsandwinterdental.com

info@higginsandwinterdental.com

**Higgins & Winter Dental Practice,
17 Bell Villas, Ponteland, NE20 9BD**

Opening Hours

Monday 9am-5:30pm, Tuesday 8am-8pm,
Wednesday 8am-8pm,
Thursday 8am-8pm, Friday 8am-4:30pm



Planners reject bid to turn home into dental surgery

Plans to convert an early Victorian villa into a dental practice in a conservation area have been rejected by council planners.

Onkar Dhanoya had applied for a change of use at 31 Bell Villas, which would have included a new vehicular access and parking area. The double fronted property, which has been in residential use since it was built c.1840, is located opposite the Sainsbury supermarket.

The plans sparked 37 objections from local residents, Ponteland Town Council and Ponteland Civic Society. An increase in traffic congestion, loss of trees and wildlife and permanent changes to the character of an original Ponteland property were among the concerns. The Northumberland County Council planning department report said: "31 Bell Villas...is not listed but is considered a non-designated heritage asset because of the retention of Victorian and Edwardian features. The property is situated ... within the conservation area.

"The proposed vehicular access would remove a significant portion of plinth wall and hedge along the frontage of the main thoroughfare of this area. It is considered that this frontage makes an important contribution to Ponteland's streetscape and its removal would detract from its character and appearance.

"The plan to remove the garden area and replace it with nine car parking spaces would adversely affect the garden setting of the site and have a detrimental impact on the property itself."

There were no letters in support of the application.

Ponteland strikes gold again at Northumbria in Bloom

Civic leaders have struck gold for the second year running in the Northumbria in Bloom Awards.

Ponteland received the gold award in the best small town category at a ceremony held at the Stadium of Light, Sunderland, last Tuesday.

There were golds too in the special awards categories for Athol House, Ponteland Bowling & Tennis Club and Prestwick Allotments, and a silver gilt for The Diamond Inn.

Meanwhile Mary Short was one of five shortlisted in the 'Outstanding contributions to Northumbria in Bloom by private individuals' category for her work at Athol House.

Ponteland was among 73 places visited by Northumbria in Bloom judges in the spring and summer.

See a full report and pictures in the November issue.

Rotarian's award for 33 years' service

By Stewart Blair

Ponteland Rotarian Spenser Mullins has been awarded with the Paul Harris Fellowship after more than 30 years' service.

Spenser has wholeheartedly involved himself in the many activities of the club throughout his long period of membership, which began in 1980.

The award marks his organisation of the very popular Opera Gala Concert for many years and for enticing a wide range of engaging speakers to inform and delight the members of our club at its weekly meetings.

Retiring President John Hancock performed the honours at the 'ins and outs' dinner held at the Beresford Arms.

John handed over to Peter Lowry on this very enjoyable but vitally important occasion and Alan Hall was elected Senior Vice President (President Elect) and Stephen Hall Junior Vice President while Treasurer Allen Younger and Secretary Stewart Blair remain in office for another year.

John Hancock presents the Fellowship to Spenser



Ponteland Golf Club

**"One of Northumberland's finest!
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Golf North East, 2008

Both playing & social memberships are currently being offered at Ponteland Golf Club. Membership categories start from the age of 10 and there is a range of payment options currently available for both ladies and gentlemen. There is currently no waiting list for ANY category. The club is actively looking to recruit young adults and has recently introduced intermediate membership categories with no joining fee for 18 to 29 year olds.

For information contact:

Secretary Greg Waugh at:

secretary@thepontelandgolfclub.co.uk

Tel: 01661 822689



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Boxing legend launches new Ponteland tailors

Two-time world boxing champion Amir Khan visited Ponteland as a thank you to his wedding tailor as he opened his latest branch.

The former IBF and WBA Light Welterweight champion came for the VIP launch of the Sebastian Snow outlet on Merton Way by Savile Row tailor Vishal Malhotra.

The 33-year-old, from Kingston Park, tailored Khan's suit for his wedding in May as well as suits for Newcastle United players Steven Taylor, who was also at the launch event, and Shola Ameobi.

Vishal said: "I am so proud to be returning home to Newcastle to open my second Sebastian Snow store. We are really looking forward to welcoming everyone through the doors."

He will be working alongside his long standing colleague, Martin Nicholls, who has also dressed some of the nation's top stars including Daniel Craig and Jude Law.

The store, equipped with a bar, TV and seating area, opened to the public on September 9 as part of a joint venture with Vishal's business associate James Milburn, who has launched the adjoining fitness gym The Outfit.

Opening hours for the Sebastian Snow outlet are Monday to Saturday, 10am until 7pm.
See the website at www.sebastiansnow.co.uk

Vishal is pictured holding his son Sebastian with partner Lisa Scott, stepson Finley and Amir Khan. Photo by Trevor Walker

EDITOR COMPLETES GREAT NORTH RUN WITH A PERSONAL BEST

Pont News editor Chris Jennings completed a wet and windy Great North Run on September 15th in 1hr 52min to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer Support.

The father-of-two's inspiration for the fundraising venture was the loss of his wife Joanne to the disease in February last year aged just 41 after a brave two year battle.

If anyone would like to sponsor Chris they can do so online at justgiving.com/chris-jennings73 or by sending a cheque payable to Macmillan Cancer Support to Chris Jennings, 5 East Boldon Road, Cleadon Village, SR6 7SH.

CHARITY TEA RAISES OVER £500 FOR HOSPITAL APPEAL

A charity tea hosted by the Ladies Section of Ponteland Bowling Club raised £505 for the Great North Children's Hospital.

The event was organised by President Joyce Pringle and fundraising activities included 'guess the name of a hand-made doll', 'guess the weight of a decorated fruit cake' and the sale of homemade crafts.

Young golfers raise £2,000 for Macmillan

Four young golfers raised £2,000 for a cancer charity in a 72-hole challenge.

James Mole and Jack Wright, both 16, and Elliott Barker, 15, all junior players from Ponteland Golf Club, were joined by the club's assistant professional Richard Robson-Crosby for the 16-hour marathon.

The event was part of a nationwide fundraising effort for Macmillan Cancer Care in which teams of golfers across the country all played four rounds on the same day.

Ponteland Community High School students Elliott, of Greenacres, Darras Hall, James, of Cheviot View, Jack, of Church Chare, both Ponteland, and Richard, 21, started their first round shortly after 5am and completed the 72 holes at 9.15pm.

Between them they have raised over £2,000 with support from friends, family, teachers and members of the golf club.

Ponteland High School head teacher Kieran McGrane, said: "This is an outstanding effort by the boys, particularly in raising so much money for such a worthy cause. We are very proud of what they have achieved and their motivation for doing it."

Pictured (l-r) at the end of play are: Elliott Barker, Richard Robson-Crosby, James Mole and Jack Wright.



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Trading standards sound alarm on cold callers

Trading standards officials have issued a warning about cold callers targeting the elderly and vulnerable to hard sell intruder alarm systems.

The caller may claim to be from Crime Prevention UK or National Crime Prevention Research and responding to a recent crime or working with or for the local police service.

They offer a 'free' alarm system and/or advice on such systems or personal security then adopt hard sell tactics to sign people up to monitoring contracts.

The prices quoted for alarm systems vary from free to £6,000 or more. If the system is offered free of charge, there is an administration fee.

The companies are not registered with any of the Security Industry Regulatory organisations.

Residents concerned about cold calls offering a service concerning free security, fire and personal alarms should contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 08454 04 05 06.

New competition helps Duck Race raise record £2,800 for charity

Hundreds of families came along to support the annual Duck Race event at Ponteland Park – raising a record £2,800 for charity.

The highlight of the day, organised by Ponteland Rotary Club, is a series of races for adults and children in which 500 ducks are floated down the River Pont, with cash and other prizes for the winners.

But this year, for the first time, children were invited to make their own boats and race these competitively. Tom Storer was the proud winner of this contest.

Other entertainment included a bouncy slide, fairground organ, ball in the bucket competition, guess the weight of the lamb and sideshows.

The event, held on Sunday September 8, benefited from the help given by Ponteland Scouts, Ponteland High School pupils and Ponteland Young Farmers.

Ponteland Rotary President Peter Lowry said: "We are delighted to mount this family event each year. It is obvious that the young people attending it have a great day out. We think we may have raised more than £2,800 - almost certainly the largest total ever - which we will distribute to help deserving causes."

Boat race winner Tom Storer receives his prize from Ponteland Rotary Club president Peter Lowry. Cover shot: Drew and Jessica Slater of Ponteland. Photos by Trevor Walker.



Prize winners

First Children's Race

1st

Isobel Peat

Second Children's Race

Daniel Walker

Children's Boat Race

Tom Storer

First Adults Race

Matthew

Second Adults Race

Amanda Blair

Third Adults Race

Jackie Park

First Business Boat Race

Ramsey Services

Second Business Boat Race

Newcastle Airport

2nd

Rachel Gilhespy

George Oliver

Sam Burnett

Matthew

Sandy McIntosh

A Walker

Bank Top Garage

Henry Roberts Hairdressers

3rd

Amy Sparshott

George Oliver

Molly Storer

Oliver Baker

Mary M

John Scott

Ponteland Golf Club

The Badger



Can you help me with WI centenary book?

By Muriel Sobo

The oldest organisation in our village is the Ponteland Women's Institute.

It was founded in 1920 shortly after the Institutes were established in this country. The original foundation came from Canada. They quickly expanded countrywide and filled a need for women to work for the social good of the community.

They were linked to agricultural societies and it was inevitable that their founding President, the brilliant Lady Denman, later helped to organize the Women's Land Army.

The first President of Ponteland WI was Mrs Tryphena Langton, the Reverend Langton's wife, and she held the post for the next 14 years until her husband retired and they left the village in 1934.

But does anyone know what she looked like? The only photo I have seen is one with their two girls on ponies outside the old, ivy-covered vicarage. Another photo of more than 60 members of the WI sometime in the 1930s does not name the women. Is Mrs Langton on this one?

I'm collecting material from WI members now so that the full story of its progress over 100 years is available for the centenary, not far away in 2020. If anyone has information or photographs I could copy, please contact me at muriel.sobo@talktalk.net or on (01661) 871969.

It is amazing what contacts are possible, sometimes countrywide, through the local press.

Adam, 23, sets out vision for village

In May the youngest ever Ponteland Town Councillor was elected. In a question and answer session for this month's Pont News Adam Shanley explains what motivated him to enter the political arena.

How did you first get involved in politics?

I officially joined the Conservative Party this year but was active with the party during university. I am the first member of my family to be active in politics.

Why did you want to become a Town Councillor?

I was really encouraged to get involved in the Town Council by a very good friend Councillor Rob Punton, amongst others who saw me speak to an audience one night against the proposed development on the green belt and who know how much I love Ponteland and thought I could do the role justice.

Who are your biggest political influences?

My political heroes are Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan; two towering figures in history. However, my parents have perhaps had the biggest political influence on my life, despite not sharing any of my views. Seeing them work hard and achieve is something I want for everyone.

What is your educational background?

I was educated in Newcastle and have a degree in Modern Languages and Business.

What do you do for a living?

I am the Project Manager of a translation company in Northumberland.

Where do you live?

I live with my parents in Darras Hall and have a brother and a sister, both of whom find it bizarre that I am active in politics.

What other interests do you have outside politics?

I am very interested in modern languages and writing.

What do you believe are the top priorities for the Town Council and Ponteland?

The top priorities for Ponteland must be about protecting our green belt and preserving our village as a great place to live. The Town Council is there to support residents in any way it can in ensuring they have access to good local facilities, that the precept the Town Council receives from Ponteland Council Tax payers is spent as responsibly and effectively as possible and in supporting the things that lie at the heart of our community such as Ponteland Park, Merton Hall, the Memorial Hall, etc.

What role do you see for yourself in the Town Council?

I really want to be a strong voice in making Ponteland a better place to live, whether that is in improving local facilities or in any other way that is within my jurisdiction as a Town Councillor. One thing that I am particularly driven towards at the moment is our application for Green Flag status for Ponteland Park that I have taken charge of; something that will really help to put our park on the map and which I am determined to win for Ponteland.



My views are always well heard in the Town Council despite being so young and I think we have a great variety of demographics and experiences on the Council that really reflect the village we live in today.

Why do you think so many young people are not interested in politics?

I don't feel that young people are interested in politics with a capital 'P'; mainly they feel disenfranchised by the political class and all the major political parties. However I think that young people are very interested in the environment, transport, local services, immigration, etc. So the issues have us all talking, it's just the political process that makes people of my generation fall away from it all I think.

What is your personal vision for Ponteland?

I want to see people living and breathing more of Ponteland. There are a fantastic number of facilities, clubs and groups in our village for people of all generations to get involved in. Supporting the local economy is also essential; often people will go outside of Ponteland to spend their money, which is understandable, however with empty shells that were once thriving cafes/shops etc. it really drives home the message that supporting our local economy is so important for our village. In Alnwick where I work, for example, there are schemes to support local produce that I'd like to see replicated in Ponteland.

New care warden service launched



A new care warden service offering nightly visits to older village residents is being launched by Ponteland home care specialist Diagonal Alternatives.

Diagonal Alternatives is a Ponteland-based company which provides services enabling older residents to live independently and safely in their own homes.

They range from telecare equipment which can be used to raise help in case of an emergency, to assistance getting out and about, to temporary or permanent live-in support from a nurse-led team of home care professionals.

Partner Bob Nelson said: "Lots of people have told us that they do not require a comprehensive care service, but would appreciate the security of a visit in the evening to make sure all is well. We are launching a new service which will do just that.

"Senior residents of Ponteland and Darras Hall can have the reassurance of a nightly visit from our staff, who are all ex-police officers, and are all vetted and trained to our very high standards.

"Families who live at a distance can have the reassurance that their senior family members are secure, and see a friendly face every evening."



The new service is being launched at an open event at Merton Hall on

**Thursday October 17th
from 10am to 2pm**

Please come along to find out how
Diagonal Alternatives can help you or your
older relatives live independently and safely.

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