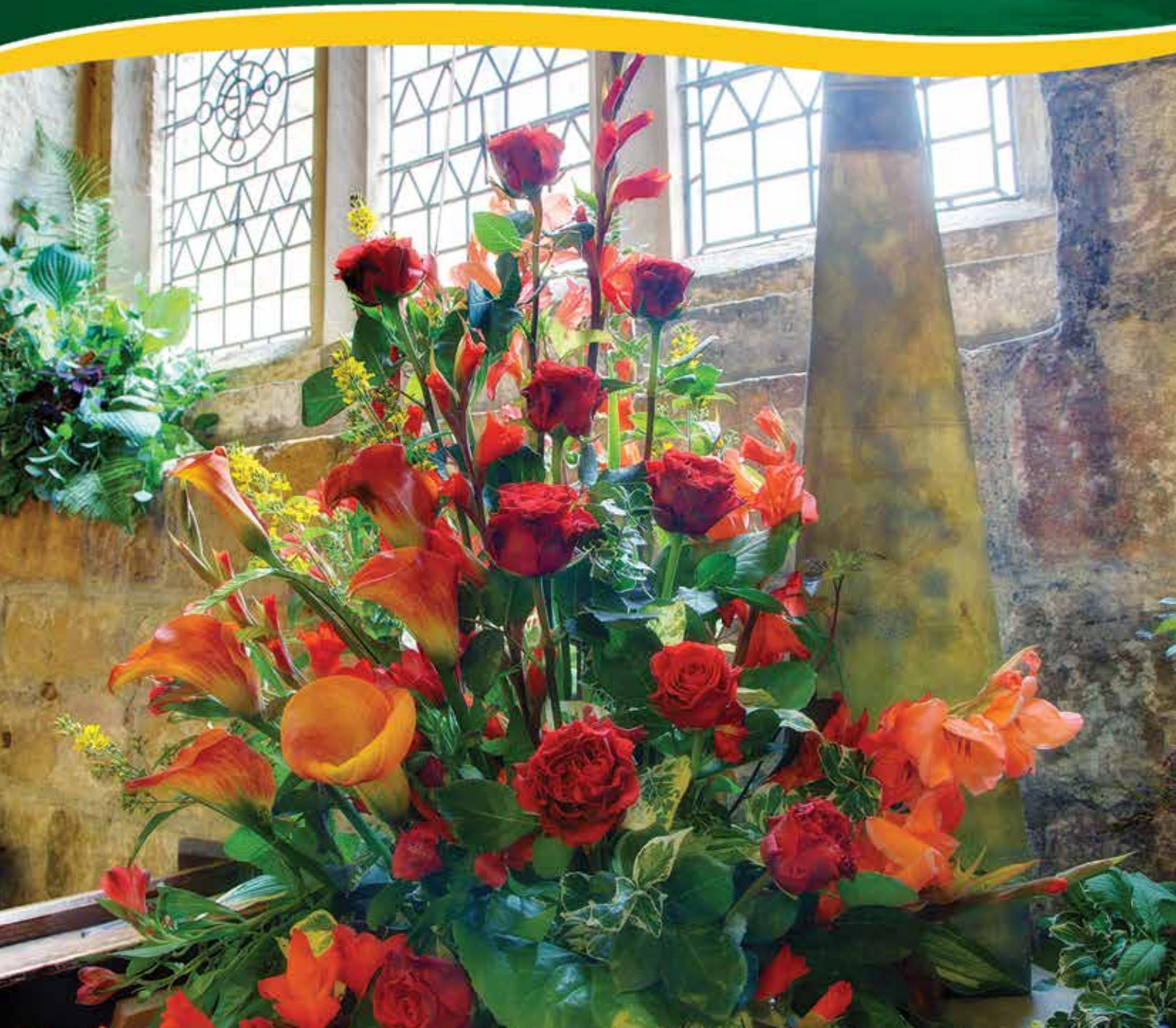


pontnews&views

FREE monthly community magazine for Ponteland and district



Ponteland's 'A team' off
to top universities

Airport expansion plans
could create 2,200 jobs

Organisers prepare for
duck races and flower show

Floral arts festival raises £5,500 for good causes

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Floral arts festival raises £5,500 for good causes

**Ponteland Summer Festival, which
took place in St Mary's Church and
church hall, was a great success.**

Over four days at the end of July at least 2,000 people visited the flower festival, art exhibition and displays about the Lindisfarne Gospels, raising £5,500 which will be divided between the RNLI, West End Refugee Service and the Church Hall.

There were also special services, concerts and refreshments.

Reverend Peter Barham said: "Many people gave a huge amount of time and effort and we had a wonderful festival. The Lindisfarne Gospels have continued their work, bringing Glory to God and to St Cuthbert."

Photos by Trevor Walker



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Sat 28th & Sun 29th September

This is a must for any animal enthusiasts out there. The Zoo School is open for children aged 9-15 and is a two day event costing £60.00

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Chloe Hall passes on the good news after getting three A*s and an A grade



April Covington, Beth Forsyth and Jessica Leslie



Ben Wainwright, Jordan Barnes and Jonathon Lakey



Eppie Gibb, Ellis Walton, Lisa Golding, Heather Crowe and Chloe Hall

Ponteland's 'A team' off to top universities



Hard working Ponteland High School students are heading to some of the UK's top universities after securing top A Level results.

Over half the entries gained the top three grades (A*-B), with 24 students gaining two or more A* or A grades.

Among them were Bryony Clear Hill, who got an A* in biology and geography and A in mathematics and general studies and who will be reading Geography at Oxford. Beth Forsyth, who received an A* in biology and maths and A in further maths, chemistry and general studies will read Natural Sciences at Cambridge.

Ben Wainwright (A* in mathematics and physics and A in further maths and

chemistry) is off to Imperial College to read Mechanical Engineering and will be joined there by Chloe Hall and April Covington who have both been successful in securing places to study Medicine, each gaining three A*s and one A grade.

Meanwhile Jordan Barnes is off to Lancaster to read Natural Sciences, having gained three grade As and an A*.

Other students will be heading off this autumn to study a range of courses including accountancy, architecture, electrical engineering, English literature,

law, modern languages, primary education, pharmacy and psychology at universities across the country.

Headteacher Kieran McGrane said: "These excellent results are thoroughly well deserved and are testament to the hard work of our students, along with the high quality support of their parents and teachers. This year group have added real value to the school during their time in post-16 study and we wish them well as they progress to the next stage of their career and professional lives."

Photos by Keith Robertson

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PROJECTS REPORT

West Road easy access

Negotiations are continuing with Northumberland County Council Highways to find a resolution to this issue.

Refurbishment of second timber footbridge

It is hoped that work will commence shortly. Advance warning signs will be displayed in the park.

Skate park

Verbal confirmation of planning approval for the skate park has been received and written permission is awaited. It is hoped that work could start in the near future once written approval is received.

BRAINSTORMING SESSION

Following a suggestion by Councillor Sue Johnson, a brainstorming session for Town Councillors was held on July 24th and a report of that meeting was circulated to the Council. The session dealt with issues such as improvements to the website and communication with residents. A number of suggestions made were voted upon. The most popular items related to conducting constructive sessions at Waitrose, the Co-op etc together with county councillors, improvements to the website, involving residents in producing the wish list, councillors attending public events and the use of surveys. Councillors were asked to submit any suggestions relating to these items to Councillor Johnson and told work would continue on the items raised at the session.

NEWCASTLE AIRPORT – MASTERPLAN

Newcastle Airport had recently produced their third Masterplan which would cover the period up to 2030. A three month consultation period was underway which ended on 31 October 2013. A public meeting was to be held in Ponteland at the Memorial Hall on Thursday August 29th at 7pm with a roadshow held in the week commencing August 26th at Ponteland Library.

The Council agreed to establish a Working Party to examine the Masterplan comprising of the Mayor and Councillors Butcher, Greenwell and Rawlings to meet in time to submit a report to the October meeting. A full copy of the Masterplan is available in the office. See article on p8.

NEWCASTLE & GATESHEAD COUNCILS – CORE STRATEGY AND URBAN CORE PLAN FOR GATESHEAD AND NEWCASTLE

Information had been received from the above Councils regarding progress of their plan. A submission draft is now ready for final consultation from September 9th until October 21st.

The document is available online at onecorestrategyng.limehouse.co.uk/portal and in libraries and civic centres in Newcastle and Gateshead.

HIGHWAYS WORKING PARTY

Information had been received from the County Council regarding the re-consultation about the proposed 'No Waiting' restrictions at Middle Drive, Broadway and Darras Road and the prohibition of driving except for access to off street premises at Linden Way, Ashdale, Lynwood Close and Woodvale. Comments were required by August 19th and Town Councillors agreed they were satisfied with the proposals.

ENVIRONMENT WORKING PARTY

The Working Party met on July 29th and the Council approved the following recommendations:

- The damaged picnic bench in the park was to be replaced and a further bench suitable for wheelchair users would be situated further along towards the Darras Road bridge on the more level grassed area.
- A request for a dog waste/ litter bin on Western Way had been received via County Councillor Veronica Jones. A report had been considered by the Working Party and it was decided to not agree to this request at the present time.
- Councillors agreed to empty the five planters at Merton Way and refill with new top soil and membrane. A planting scheme would then be considered.
- The boardwalk at the Oxbow meadow is in a dangerous

condition and the Council noted the removal of the structure and endorsed the replacement at an estimated cost of £1,500. The appointment of a contractor was delegated to the Clerk.

MEETING WITH THE HEADTEACHER OF PONTELAND MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Council agreed to a request for a meeting with the headteacher of Ponteland Middle School to discuss her proposal for a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA). All Councillors would be invited to attend.

COMMUNITY TRUST

The Mayor gave a brief report on initial discussions about forming a Community Trust as an independent company. It was hoped that the relevant officer from the County Council would attend a meeting to explain what was involved in more detail.

MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor had written to the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge congratulating them on the birth of their son. A reply had been received and was circulated to Councillors. It was agreed that this reply would be displayed on Merton Hall notice board.

This report is based on the minutes of the Ponteland Town Council meeting held on August 14.



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OPTOMETRISTS & CONTACT LENS PRACTITIONERS

Airport masterplan predicts £650m boost to NE economy

Bosses at Newcastle International Airport have published ambitious long term expansion plans which would see the transport hub support an additional 2,200 jobs and add another £650m a year to the regional economy.

The 2013-2030 masterplan highlights potential future development requirements, including extensions to the terminal, additional aircraft and car parking and improved

access, alongside the creation of additional offices, hangers and warehouses on the southside.

It envisages increases in air traffic from 62,200 to 87,500 and in passenger numbers from 4.4m to 8.5m.

The airport currently supports 7,800 jobs across the region and by 2030 this will rise to up to 10,000, according to the document, while the completion of the new Southside Development has the potential to deliver thousands more.

In 2012 the airport delivered £646m to the regional economy and by 2030 it is estimated that this figure will double to up to £1.3bn.

Chief Executive Dave Laws said: "We want to provide an improved airport, to encourage new routes and attract new customers. To do this we need to develop additional infrastructure, such as improvements to the terminal, better car parking and access, and the development of the southside, which will help diversify the airport business and secure new income sources.

"We've launched a consultation process in order to hear everyone's view on our plans, and once all the responses have been reviewed we will consider whether any changes need to be made."

As part of the masterplan consultation, the airport is organising a series of public meetings and roadshow events.

The full document, details about public meetings and contact information for the consultation process can be found at www.newcastleairport.com/masterplan



Ponteland Golf Club

"One of Northumberland's finest! Excellent catering & bar facilities."

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

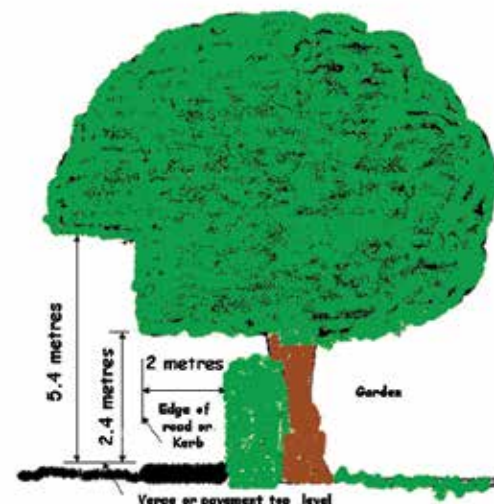


Please maintain your hedges and trees

Homeowners are being encouraged to ensure they are properly maintaining hedges and trees which overhang footpaths, verges or roads.

Ponteland Town Council has issued this sketch showing the minimum clearance you should maintain.

The authority has also thanked all householders who go even further and cut the grass in front or adjacent to their house and plant flowers.



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ADVERTISING FEATURE



Fighting Fit!



North East gym group and Savile Row tailor launch in Ponteland

A North East nutrition and health expert and a Savile Row tailor are to launch alongside each other in a bid to offer some affordable style, fitness and glamour to the residents of Ponteland.

James Milburn, an award-winning nutritionalist and former UK athlete, will launch his most recent venture The Outfit on September 2nd and has urged those serious about fighting the flab and getting fit and healthy to attend the new facility on Merton Road.

To celebrate the launch James is offering free goal-setting sessions and sample classes, led by his crack team of personal trainers, and has challenged residents of Ponteland and beyond to get in touch.

With over ten years' experience, and thousands of clients on his books, James Milburn knows what the public needs to get fit and healthy.

The one-time sports coach and sports science graduate has warned overly-westernised eating habits and lack of dedicated exercise and knowledge about the bodies we live in can lead to a myriad of health problems and has promised that his industry knowledge will get the region's

biceps bulging again when The Outfit officially opens its doors.

James said: "We look at people from a cellular health point of view. You are what you eat, and the more efficiently you look after your diet the easier it becomes to achieve your fitness goals. Whether you're an elite athlete or a new mum looking to lose weight post-pregnancy, we'll treat you in exactly the same way; with courtesy and without judgement.

"Our personal approach means we are on hand to offer round-the-clock nutritional and fitness advice and support."

Meanwhile, his lifelong friend Vishal Malhotra's latest Sebastian Snow tailoring facility will offer the very best in men's tailoring on the same site.

Vishal dresses individuals who are interested in heritage but who seek to combine tradition with a contemporary flourish.

Sebastian Snow offers a bespoke service, with our suits made on Savile Row by head cutter Martin Nicholls who has fitted for Daniel Craig and Jude Law. Our celebrity clients include Amir Khan, whose wedding outfit was made and designed by us.

Vishal said: "Our clients vary from heads of industry to sports stars but one thing they all have in common is that they appreciate quality and have refined tastes. With the North East being my home I was always going to open in some capacity and I feel that the market in the region is growing and now is the right time to open our next business.

"The beauty of Sebastian Snow is that we make to order, we can make a bright pink suit to a classic navy. Young or old, we cater for everyone."



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www.sebastiansnow.co.uk
www.jamesmilburn.co.uk

Your letters

Praise for developers and the Town Council and support for a retail landlord in this month's letters...

Praise for Peel House redevelopment

I feel the need to congratulate house builders Bellway on the attractive way they have handled the renovation and redevelopment at Peel House.

The existing building, formerly the District Council offices and a building of some architectural merit, has been retained and renovated. The bulk of the landscaping has been protected and continues to make a significant contribution to Main Street, the setting of the Pele Tower has not been compromised, and on-site car parking is well screened.

The ugly office extension has been demolished and replaced with a picturesque assembly of gables that enhance the view from this direction, using materials that reflect important historic buildings in this vicinity. It is unfortunate that McCarthy and Stone failed to adopt a similar approach.

Residents on this north side will for now have to look out on a singularly unattractive car park. It is hoped that the County Council will respond to Bellway's efforts and come forward with an equally good set of proposals to renovate the rather drab grey space.

John Hague
High View, Ponteland

Plenty to be positive about in Ponteland

What a pleasure it is to drive through Ponteland on these summer days. The floral baskets by the main road are a stunning display of colour as indeed are the hanging baskets on Broadway and the big floral tub near Café Lowry.

I support Alan Mee in his letter last month. There is so much to find that is positive in Ponteland. For example there is the inviting Ponteland Park entrance on the main road, the attractive stone wall in the park by the river, the much used and improved play area, and the potential 'easy access' into the park.

Ponteland has become a town of which all residents can be justly proud. We are so fortunate to have a Town Council with vision and determination to push on

with improvements, despite some petty objections from negative stalwarts.

Eleanor Ramsay
The Rise, Ponteland

Floral display a real joy

Wow! Congratulations to the Town Council and all donors who have helped to make the flower displays in Ponteland the best ever.

It is a real joy to see the profusion of colour and the variety of plants displayed for the benefit of residents and tourists alike. Thank you.

Alma Prickett
Darras Road, Ponteland

'Unrealistic' to have shop and flat for £250 a week says landlord

I feel I must write to correct the misleading article regarding the closure of Ponteland News (August issue).

Anyone that knows about a lease renewal process knows that the landlord and tenant need to agree the new terms. My understanding in this case is that NO offer had been made on behalf of the tenant and it unrealistic to have a shop and a flat for £250 per week on the main commercial area of Ponteland. The tenant therefore chose to leave. As everyone knows, newspaper shops are becoming a thing of the past. They must diversify as have Mills etc.

I understand it must be inconvenient not to have a newsagent in the village which that has been established for over 50 years but I feel the tone and distortion of the business facts in the article are sadly misleading. The truth will come out at some point finally and people will remember your incorrect rant!

Marc Reay
Lyndhust, Fenham

Landlord is running a business not a charity

In response to last month's letters from June Atkinson, Susan Hope and in particular Muriel Sobo's article with its derisory tone.

If they feel so aggrieved at the landlord's actions, perhaps they might want to make up the shortfall in the new lease terms. The landlord is running a business not a charity.

As for loyal customers not knowing where to go for their papers; try Sainsbury, Waitrose, Mills or Martins - four choices; two of which deliver and all within walking distance.

While we all mourn and lament the loss of the newsagents, might I remind your contributors that this is the year 2013 not 1958. In essence, the Reays have made more than a valuable contribution to village life for decades and are therefore not answerable or accountable for their actions to anyone.

Phillipa Gifford
Medburn

Post Office boss concerned at loss of newsagent

As a partner in the ownership of Ponteland Post Office I too was concerned to hear that another small local business (Ponteland News) was closing.

For the local community and small businesses in the area it is essential we retain a thriving commercial element to the village that delivers services the local people require.

While it was never our intention to sell newspapers within the post office we have been asked by a number of our customers if we would consider selling and deliver newspapers. While this would not be our core business if sufficient numbers of local residents come forward, subject to its viability, we will seriously consider their request and provide this service.

Joe Milne - Ponteland Post Office
Merton Way, Ponteland

Doggy bags not my idea of a gift

I have had the extraordinarily good luck to have hired a magic skip.

Despite being fed only soil and clay it has daily delivered at least one generous portion of pre-packed dog exhaust. If anybody out there would treasure such a gift, without the cost and responsibility of dog ownership, I will be happy to pass details of the skip provider on to them via the editor.

Mike Brown
Woodlands, Ponteland

What's on...

Ponteland Wildlife Group

Ponteland Wildlife Group welcomes you to the opening night of the new season on Tuesday September 3rd at St Mary's Church Hall in the village, starting at 7.30pm. Dr Val Tuck, Regional Ambassador for the British Trust for Ornithology's Garden Birdwatch initiative, will talk about this worthwhile scheme. The £2 admission fee, payable at the door, includes refreshments. The following meeting is on Tuesday October 1st when Steve Speak's talk is entitled 'Archaeology in the Landscape' - same place, same time.

Ponteland U3A

Ponteland U3A's monthly meeting is on the first Wednesday of the month at 2pm in St Mary's Church Hall. Visitors are welcome to come along, no charge. On September 4th Ray Shirley's subject will be 'Sums aren't what they used to be'.

Carpet bowls restarts Friday September 6

The new session of carpet bowls commences 7.30pm on Friday September 6th. 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. Venue is Ponteland Methodist church. Contact is Mrs Barbara Hogg on (01661) 824652.

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 September 7th.

Rotary Duck Races: Sunday September 8

This annual event takes place on Sunday September 8 in Ponteland Park and new this year are 'Boat Races for home-made boats, for children 5 - 11 years old.' Boat building plans are available from duckrace@outlook.com. Local schools have been given all the information and are invited to take part.

Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

Our speaker on Monday September 9th is Mrs Marion Anderson who will talk on 'Wicked and Worthy Women of the North East'. 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 England Group of the Alpine Garden Society

The North East Group of the Alpine Garden Society would like to introduce you to our new season of talks. Our first meeting on Monday September 9th will be about 'Growing and Showing' alpine plants and dwarf bulbs in pots, presented by our guest speaker Cyril Lafong. Part of the talk will include types of pots, compost, growing from seed, pricking out, re-potting, plant preparations and his experiences showing alpinists for exhibition at the SRGC and AGS Shows. This first talk will be taking place in St Mary's Hall, Thornhill Road, Ponteland. The doors open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start. Refreshments provided. The charge for visitors is £2 per meeting. Details from Terry Teal at t.teal@btinternet.com or (0191) 4132574.

Ponteland Photographic Society

Ponteland Photographic Society is pleased to announce the start of its new season which begins on Monday September 9th 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 September 9th from 8.30pm

to 9.30pm at the Sports Hall, (behind) Ponteland Middle School. Contact pontnetball@gmail.com or 07867 483551.

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. The new season commences on Tuesday September 10th. Why not give us a try? If you are interested please contact the Secretary Janet Musson on (01661) 824880.

Merton Hall

Brunch & Bingo will take place on the second Thursday of each month starting on September 12th. Why not stay after the coffee morning and join us? 9.30am - 11.15am coffee morning 30p per mug or cup free refill. 12noon - 1pm BRUNCH price will depend on what you eat and drink. 1pm - 2pm BINGO - £1 for three games. Our next trip is Royal Quays September 19th at 10am. For more info on all of the above please call (01661) 872917 or pop in on a coffee morning - Monday to Saturday from 9.30am to 11.30am. Finally, a thank you to all who put their green tokens in Merton Hall's box in Waitrose, raising £217.

Darras Hall WI

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday September 12th at 2pm in the URC Hall when we will be learning the 'History of Greggs Bakery', with 'an old cookery book' as the title of the competition. Visitors are most welcome to come along, listen to the talk followed by tea and biscuits.

Ponteland Parish Flower Show: Saturday September 14

The 36th Annual Show will be held in Ponteland Memorial Hall on Saturday September 14th with the show open to the public from 1pm. The presentation of trophies will be at 4pm followed by the auction of produce and the raffle.

Railway film show at St Mary's Church Hall

Saturday September 14th at 3pm and 7.30pm - Railway and archive films celebrating 150 years of the London Underground. St Mary's Church Hall, Thornhill Road. Admission free.

Ponteland Floral Art Club

At our meeting on Tuesday September 17th at 7.30pm at Ponteland Memorial Hall there will be a demonstration by Catherine Gledhill of Huddersfield (National) entitled 'Sumptuous September'.

Harvest Evensong: Holy Saviour Church, Milbourne

Thursday September 26th at 7pm - Harvest Festival at Holy Saviour Church, Milbourne. A traditional Harvest Evensong with favourite harvest hymns.

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.

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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 and not exceed 150 words.

October issue deadlines: The October issue will be delivered on Friday September 27. The deadline for all copy and adverts is Friday September 13. Businesses should be aware that all bookings for advertisements must be paid in full by the deadline to ensure placement in the October issue.

Duck races and parish flower show this month

September sees two of the biggest events in Ponteland's annual calendar – the duck races and the parish flower show.

The Rotary Duck Races take place on the afternoon of Sunday September 8th in Ponteland Park. New this year are 'Boat Races for home-made boats, for children 5 – 11 years old.' Boat building

plans are available from duckrace@outlook.com and local schools have been given all the information and have been invited to take part.

The following weekend sees the 36th Annual Parish Flower Show in Ponteland Memorial Hall with the show open to the public from 1pm on Saturday September 14th.

The presentation of trophies will be at 4pm followed by the auction of produce and the raffle. This year Ponteland Memorial Hall Leek Club is incorporated into the show, bringing with it additional trophies for leeks and onions.

Entering the 126 classes in the show is quite simple. Schedules are available at a number of outlets in Ponteland including the Library and Post Office and in the neighbouring parishes.

Staging of exhibits is from:-

7pm until 9pm on Friday September 13th

8am until 11am on Saturday 14th.

There are classes for Flowers, Fruit and Vegetables, Children, Cookery, Handicrafts, Wine, Art and Photography.

If you are unable to locate a schedule please get in touch with Syd Cowan on (01661) 824459.

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URC worshippers celebrate 40th anniversary

By Margaret Milligan

A most successful weekend was held at Ponteland United Reformed Church celebrating the 40th anniversary of the dedication of our church.

It began with an informal open day on July 20th, highlighted by the formal 'cutting of the ribbon' by the Mayor of Ponteland Peter Cowey for the new seats situated on the grass at the front of the church on Broadway, there for the use and enjoyment of the community.

On Sunday 21st, members and friends gathered for a service of recollection and thanksgiving led by the Revd Joan Ross. We were delighted that our former ministers Philip Gray, Kevin Watson, Donald Gaddes and many friends joined the congregation for the weekend of celebrations.

Photo by Keith Robertson

Businesses invited to new breakfast club

The inaugural meeting of the Ponteland Business Network Breakfast Club will take place on Friday September 13th at the Diamond Inn.

Brian Russell, of Russell and Co. Chartered Accountants of Meadowfield, Ponteland, said: "The Breakfast Club is an informal meeting aimed at Ponteland business people. The Business Network has been working hard over the past four months to address the problems that members of the business community are suffering from. One is that of communication.

"Our aim is that this event and those to follow will help people come together and create an environment for inter-trading. Our research shows there are over 500

businesses based in Ponteland but we know we don't know all of these people yet!"

"The Breakfast Club is an informal meeting aimed at Ponteland business people..."

Matt Gray, of carpet flooring specialists Bonner and White and one of the founders of the Ponteland Business Network, added: "The main objective of this meeting is just to get people talking to one another. We are convinced that there are huge opportunities for business to business trading.

ROTARY CLUB GIVES £11,000 TO CHARITY

Ponteland Rotary Club distributed nearly £11,000 to charity last year.

This included £1,000 to the Rotary Foundation, £450 to the Wheelchair Foundation, £750 to Save the Children Fund, £500 to Smile Train, £500 to the Great North Air Ambulance, £300 to 'Daft as a Brush' (a charity which provides free transport to and from hospital for cancer patients), £1,000 to Diabetes Research at Newcastle University and £500 towards the Ponteland Memorial Hall Restoration Fund. The Rotary Club thanked everyone who has supported its fundraising activities.

PONTELAND PARK BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

The bridge in the park next to the Scout Hut is to be replaced.

The work was scheduled to start on August 19th and last for about four weeks. During this time the Fox Covert area including the wild meadow and dipping platform can only be reached from Fox Covert Lane. Access to the rest of the park will be from Main Street, West Road and Memorial Hall car park.

NEW SUNDAY SERVICE TO NEWCASTLE LAUNCHES SEPTEMBER 1

Stagecoach have announced that they are to run hourly Sunday bus services between Darras Hall, Ponteland and Newcastle from September 1st.

The services will run from Darras Hall at 10.23 then 11.30 and then hourly until 16.39. The new services combine with the existing 74A services to give good access to Newcastle on Sundays. To view the timetable go to: stagecoachbus.com/PdfUploads/Timetable_42519_X77-X78-X79.pdf and also see the advert on page 16.

Meet the Mayor...

It's a good job Peter Cowey is a keen jogger. For he certainly has a lot of running around to do as Ponteland Mayor. Pont News & Views caught up with him to find out just what his role entails.

His desk is piled high with lengthy reports to read – from Newcastle Airport's 2013-2030 Masterplan to county strategic planning policies. But as Mayor you need to be properly briefed before chairing important meetings with colleagues.

Coun Cowey spends up to ten working days a month on Town Council business, answering hundreds of emails, attending meetings and appearing at public engagements and community events.

As well as responsibility for parks, play areas, flower beds, allotments, bus shelters, dog

waste collection, gritting, bus shelters, bridleways, notice boards and seats, the authority has had to take on new roles from the County Council. Last year it was public toilets; this year the management of Prestwick Cemetery.

Coun Cowey, a former IT manager who turns 70 in October, has to keep himself up to date with progress on all work and projects the Town Council is involved in, and other public and private sector activity which could affect the parish.

He has also recently taken on the chairmanship of a new working party on behalf of Ponteland Business Network which is tasked with setting up an independent community trust for the area which can bid for funding grants.

It's a far cry from a description he once heard of the Mayor's role as 'meeting once a month and turning up for the odd photo opportunity'.

Coun Cowey said: "When this remark was made to me I decided to see for myself exactly how much time I spent working for the Council. I found I spent anything between six and ten working days a month on Council business, working mornings, afternoons, evenings and weekends.

"It feels a thankless task. Occasionally you get a 'well done' but generally people only say something if they have a complaint. We have a hard working group of people at the Town Council who sit on a number of committees looking after many aspects of life within Ponteland.

"We are all unpaid and just try to keep the Council going in its mandatory duties and managing the extra responsibilities coming our way with no additional funding. Is it any wonder all 12 Town Council candidates were unopposed at the last election?"

"But we all enjoy serving the community, improving the environment, supporting local organisations and consulting with public and private sector partners such as the County Council and developers in the town's best interest."

Next month: Meet the youngest ever Ponteland Town Councillor Adam Shanley



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*The extra journeys have been added on a trial basis but we'd like to make them permanent. We just want to see that the buses are needed so all you have to do is...hop on board! Use it or lose it, as the saying goes.



Turtle sculpture for retiring teacher

More than two decades of dedicated service by a Ponteland teacher have been recognised with the unveiling of a special sculpture in the school garden.

Every child at Darras Hall First School created a piece of mosaic for the turtle – a leaving present to Claire Morgan who retired last month after 21 years there.

The name Myrtle was chosen by pupils after a competition to name the new addition to the award winning outdoor garden, which Claire helped develop.

Claire, whose roles at the school also included being in charge of PE, said: "I felt the time was right to retire, although I will miss the children a lot. The good thing is that I live in the area so I'm still part of the community and I'll enjoy bumping into some of the pupils I've taught and their parents from time to time."

Photo by Keith Robertson

George completes cycle challenge in grandfather's memory

A Ponteland schoolboy has raised £830 for mental health charity Mind in memory of his grandfather after completing a 100km cycle challenge.

George Hunter, 15, of Darras Hall, took on 'Ride B' in the Virgin Money Cyclone event on June 29, which started and ended at Newcastle Falcons Rugby Club in Kingston Park.

The latest effort by the Year 10 student at Ponteland High School took his total fundraising for the charity to more than £3,000.

George said: "It was fun and I am really pleased I did the cyclone - it was a great way to remember my grandfather. I have my GCSE exams coming up next year, and if I can study for these and train at the same time, then I would like to cycle the 104 mile ride next year."

As part of his fundraising, George gave talks to two Year 6 classes at Ponteland Community Middle School, one of which included his sister Rose.



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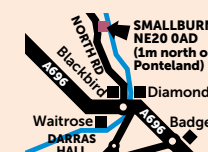


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Inconsiderate parking remains a problem

By PC Rob Anderson
Ponteland Community Beat Manager



In the period between 12th July and 11th August we have had nine crimes recorded for the Ponteland area.

These break down to the following offences:

- One theft from a shop
- Five thefts
- One possession of drugs
- One theft from a motor vehicle
- Two assaults.

Enquiries are ongoing and arrests were made for the assaults, one of the thefts and the drugs offence.

Inconsiderate parking is still a problem in Ponteland. In April 2012 the County Council took responsibility for parking restrictions in Northumberland and it is overseen by their Enforcement Officers who will issue fixed penalty notices to vehicles and drivers committing offences.

Police officers no longer issue tickets for parking restriction offences but we do issue fixed penalty notices for obstruction. Please be considerate when you park your vehicle. Please don't obstruct the pavements, access to resident's driveways and drop kerbs used by wheelchairs and

pushchairs. Have a thought for the people who live where you're parking and consider how you would feel if someone parked across your road access.

Some of you may have noticed articles about the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan or spoke to members of the steering group at the Party in the Park in June. This is your chance to have some input into the plans and possible facilities for Ponteland in the future.

There are numerous clubs in existence in the town for our mature residents but a clear lack of facilities for the younger element. We are awaiting the proposed building of the skate park but there is still no confirmed date for starting.

The Headmaster at Ponteland High School has allowed use of the school playing fields so please encourage your children to take advantage of this. Youth disorder in Ponteland and Darras Hall is quite low compared to most of the Northumbria Police area but we still receive calls so your assistance in this would be greatly appreciated.

If you have any positive ideas regarding other facilities, clubs, open ground, etc where we can provide something for the

young Ponteland element please contact myself and I'll pass the details on to the Neighbourhood Plan team.

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 Rob Anderson 14th September 10am-11am Waitrose, Ponteland
- PC Rob Anderson 14th September 11.30am-12.30pm Co-op, Broadway
- CSO Jill Ruddick 21st September 9.30am-10.30am Merton Hall, Ponteland
- PC Lee Davison 5th October 11.30am-12.30pm at Belsay village shop

We also have engagement days at these venues and dates:

- 11th September 10am-12noon Merton Way/1pm-3pm Broadway
- 24th September 1pm-3pm Stamfordham/Belsay.

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

Editor running for charity again

Pont News editor Chris Jennings hopes to raise thousands of pounds for Macmillan Cancer Support by taking part in his second Great North Run.

If you would love to try Zumba but think it may be too energetic for you why not try Zumba Gold. Lower impact, easy to follow Zumba rhythms whatever your level of fitness.

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Ponteland United Reformed Church
Thursdays 9.30am-10-15am

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Last year Chris was in a team of four which raised over £9,000 for breast cancer charity Breakthrough. Chris, 40, completed his first ever half marathon run in 1hr 53min and hopes to beat that time on Sunday September 15.

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, Cleaton Village, SR6 7SH.

Chris is pictured at the nine-mile point in last year's Great North Run.



ADVERTISING FEATURE



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Live independently with Independent Living Showroom...

Living independently in our own homes is something that we all crave but sometimes with age or disability this becomes difficult. Nobody wants to leave their homes but on occasion this becomes the only option due to ill-health or restricted mobility.

Independent Living Showroom, based in Kingston Park, Newcastle, encourages people to stay in their homes for as long as possible and helps many individuals and families across the North East do just that. They believe that instead of leaving your cherished home, why not create a harmonious environment that helps you to get around that little bit easier and helps you remain independent?

One family the team helped were Mr and Mrs Smith and their son James. 16-year-old James has Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy so uses a wheelchair full-time to get around. Doors in average houses can be a little narrow so the Smith's decided to have their doors widened to accompany the mobility equipment to help their son move more freely. They also had a bedroom extension and a state-of-the-art wetroom installed.

Mrs Smith said: "The extension is fantastic, James now has a large living area within his bedroom complete with an en-suite wetroom with a top of the range showering WC. His bedroom now has lovely level access doors that open out onto a decked area in the garden via a low level threshold. This came in very handy when James had 15 friends over for an "end of school" party!

"The showering WC James decided on was a Geberit Aquaclean 8000+. He loved its sleek look and the added functions which can be controlled by a remote control which he thinks is very cool."

"All of this has given him greater independence and a lot more privacy, which is essential now he is becoming a young man.

"The showroom has everything from stairlifts to accessible kitchens and what's better is that you can try before you buy.

The team are so lovely and accommodating and we never felt pressured into buying anything."

Independent Living Showroom was born after Stairlift provider, Dolphin Lifts and Mobility, and specialist adaptation company, Shape Adaptations, joined forces in 2012.

The interactive public showroom is the biggest and most varied of its kind in the region and aims to assist less-abled people and the elderly in the North East. It stocks a wide range of equipment from leading manufacturers such as Stannah, Otolith, Meditek, AKW and HomeAdapt.

Paralympic Team GB star, Stephen Miller, officially opened the showroom last year and it now acts as a centre for support and guidance for customers, carers, families, professionals and businesses.

For more information please visit:
www.independentlivingshowroom.co.uk
Twitter: @DolphinandShape

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