

# pontnews&views

FREE monthly community magazine for Ponteland and district



Ponteland remembers  
a century of wars

.....  
Tributes paid to  
former councillor

.....  
Work starts on all  
weather pitch

## 280 acres of Green Belt land earmarked for development

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Produced by Cian creative pr





Photos by Trevor Walker, Skyline Studios

# Christmas shoppers enjoy Merton Hall fashion show

**Christmas shoppers enjoyed a night of glitz and glamour as Merton Hall was transformed for a fashion show complete with catwalk models.**

The shopping evening included stalls from Taylor's Pharmacy selling Christmas gifts and decorations, women's scarves, bags and jewellery from Sugar and Spice, jewellery from Stella and Dot, Forever Living by Aloe Vera and Scentsy room fragrances.

Clothing from Fashion Sense, of Newburn, was modelled by the ladies from Skyline, with a pop up studio provided by Skyline Studios.

The event was organised by Caroline Thompson, of Skyline Models in Newburn, and her mum Coun Christine Greenwell, operations manager of Merton Hall.

Caroline said: "It was a sell out with around 100 ladies enjoying mulled wine as they watched the fashion show and shopped - all under one roof. It was such a great success we hope it could become a regular event in the future. Watch this space!"

# County council planning to release 280 acres of Green Belt land

**A planning blueprint for the next 15 years has earmarked the release of more than 280 acres of Green Belt land surrounding Ponteland for development.**

Northumberland County Council's core strategy proposes the release for development of 202 acres by 2031 and a further 79 acres after that date.

This includes 17 acres for housing (up to 640 homes), 138 acres for education, playing fields, leisure and open space, and 47 acres of previously developed land (the current site of leisure centre, education and fire station) for mixed use.

The area earmarked is SE of Ponteland between Callerton Lane, Rotary Way and Cheviot View, as well as the Clickemin Farm site at the other side of the A696 and the former police hq. The plan also envisages a bypass running NE of Ponteland from the A696 just north of the airport to Milbourn Lodge.

The land owned by developer Lugano at Birney Hill, which is the subject of a planning inquiry in January following refusal of planning permission for a 280-home scheme by NCC, is not included.

The draft core strategy goes to the council's policy committee meeting on November 27th for approval to go out to a three month consultation process starting on December 12th.

But it has already been met with a hostile reaction from campaigners against Green Belt development.

MP Guy Opperman said: "This is an attack on the very character of Ponteland and Darras Hall... I am at a loss to understand why they are planning to remove so much land from the Green Belt. The amount of the land they want to strip out from the Green Belt is enough for 5,000 new houses. It is a terrifying prospect."

Coun Allan Hepple, NCC's Policy Board Member for Planning, Housing and

Regeneration, responded: "We have identified that there is a need to release Green Belt land in some places where the current boundary prevents the sustainable growth of the settlement.

"Of the land proposed to be released from the Green Belt around Ponteland over the plan period to 2031, 56 hectares of the 82 hectares, so almost 70%, is identified for education, playing fields, leisure and open space. We need to be clear and reassure residents this will not include housing.

"The draft local plan, which has had input from the community, will be discussed in detail by councillors in the coming weeks. Following this all communities in Northumberland will have the opportunity to comment on the plan during a period of public consultation."

For more information on the core strategy proposals, visit [northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3443](http://northumberland.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3443)



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# Ponteland remembers a century of wars

*By Muriel Sobo*

**Hundreds of Ponteland people of all ages came together on Remembrance Sunday to honour the men and women who were involved in conflicts over the last 100 years, but most especially those who never returned.**

There are 40 names on the Ponteland Memorial for the Great War and another 24 for WWII. Today, it is hard to imagine the carnage, the numbers involved, the families destroyed, the personal loss, the sheer hardship and grief.

There was a very smart turnout of the uniformed organisations and the parade was headed by Flight Lieutenant Sheedy of the 733 Newcastle Airport Squadron with the Army Cadets and 733 Squadron following.

Reverend Peter Barham led the service after the playing of the last post and the two minutes silence, assisted by Rev Tim Thorpe and Rev Joan Ross. Deputy Lieutenant Caroline Pryer laid the first wreath on behalf of the Queen, followed by the Mayor, Carl Rawlings, on behalf of Ponteland, and then dozens of organisations active in the village laid their own wreaths.

Many of the participants in the service streamed in to see the excellent display of memorabilia in the Memorial Hall mounted by the Town Council. The crowds had to queue to see it, some moved to tears and many with their own stories.

There was a wonderful display of embroidered cards sent from the soldiers at the front and then a photo of a burly soldier in full highland dress caught my eye. Joyce Rawlings explained he was

her grandfather, a soldier in the Highland Light Infantry, who fought through the major battles of the Great War and survived them all. He suffered after his return from the effects of gas.

This year was and felt like a very special commemoration: 1914-2014.





# Diary recalls memories for former POW Jesse

By Muriel Sobo

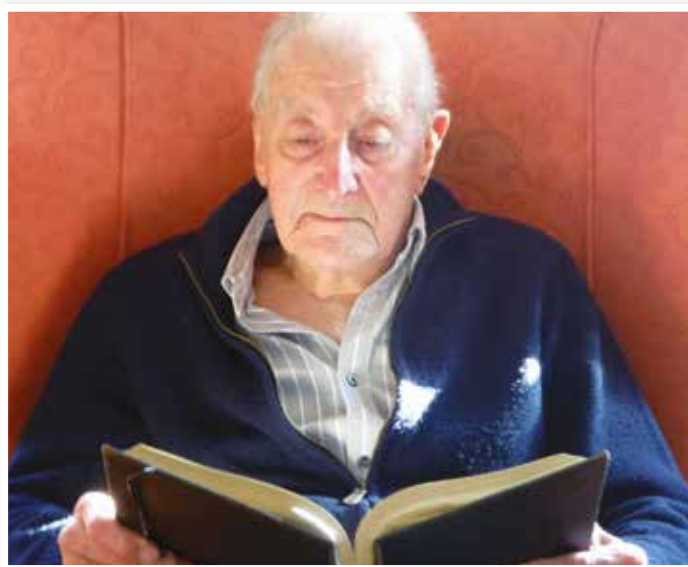
**Living quietly in a retirement flat in Ponteland, Jesse Whiting reads his own diary of the four years he spent in different locations as a Prisoner of War of the Germans.**

He joined the Northumberland Hussars just before war was declared in June 1939 and was captured in Crete after the disastrous retreat of the army from Greece in April 1941.

He kept a daily diary recording the arrival of Red Cross food parcels, letters from home and the daily work and recreation of the prisoners. He filled a number of notebooks, sent them home, his father typed them up and then threw away the originals!

But he now has a book of 400 pages describing his daily life till his return home in May 1945. What a read!

Many memories for 94-year-old Jesse.





## FORMER COUNCILLOR ALAN CHILTON

The Mayor gave a tribute to former councillor Alan Chilton who had sadly died on November 9th. Alan had been a Town Councillor for ten years and had also served on the former Castle Morpeth Borough Council. There had been numerous tributes paid by his friends and former colleagues since the news was received. Alan had been a good friend, neighbour and colleague to many and he would be sadly missed. The Town Council stood for a minute's silence to remember Alan. See obituary on page 20.

## GRANTS

### Ponteland RFC – request for grant towards hosting the Ponteland Beer Festival in 2015

A grant application had been received from Ponteland Rugby Club for funds towards the cost of hosting the Beer Festival in 2015. The event held in 2014 had been very well organised and was attended by over 1,000 people. It was envisaged that the range of food and drink would be widened in 2015. The Council was pleased to support the 2015 event and agreed a grant of £250.

### Ponteland Memorial Hall

The annual request for a grant towards the upkeep of the Hall had been received. The Council agreed a grant of £6,300 which had already been included in the budget as part of the budget exercise.

## PROJECTS REPORT

Councillors were informed about vandalism at the skate park which had been reported to

police and was being investigated. Removal of the graffiti was being dealt with. The replacement of some of the fencing at the West Road bordering the park had been agreed as part of the project list for 2014-15. The Clerk reported on quotes received for the work and awarding of the contract.

### Demolition of Bird Hide at Fox Covert Lane

The Council agreed a quote to demolish the bird hide on Fox Covert Lane which was in a poor state. The Friends of Ponteland Park and various other organisations consulted had no problem with the structure being removed and the area would be allowed to become a wildlife spot.

## COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

The Mayor reported on a letter received from the NCC Lead Executive Director which suggested that the grant received by NCC in respect of localisation of Council Tax Benefit would not be passed down to parish and town councils again next year. A copy of the response received by the Mayor was also circulated. It was reported that there appeared to be 31 principal authorities who did not pass the grant whilst hundreds were doing so.

## WAR REMEMBRANCE WORKING PARTY

The Chairman of the Working Party, Councillor Peter Cowey, referred to the recent exhibition of War Remembrance. He stated that over 500 people had visited the exhibition held on November 8-9 and the council had received some excellent feedback. He wished to express sincere thanks to all those who had helped with the exhibition including the Working Party, those who had helped to set up and dismantle the exhibition, those who had acted as stewards and provided refreshments and members of the public who had loaned items and provided information on their relatives etc. He also wished to thank the Clerk Kath Mavin and also Caroline Thompson who had pulled the exhibition together and carried out extensive research. The Mayor asked if any Councillors had any ideas for any future events to note them down and they would be considered at a future debrief meeting. The Clerk reported on the excellent sales of the booklet produced by Muriel Sobo 'We Will Remember Them'. All copies had been sold and the proceeds would be donated to the Royal British Legion. The Council wished to express their appreciation to Mrs Sobo for the production of the booklet that had been so well received.

## ENVIRONMENT WORKING PARTY

The Working Party had met on October 20th. The Council confirmed their recommendations to carry out some hedge works at Coates Green, to fund the cost of tree guards around the memorial trees in the park and to cover the lower planters at Merton Way with a maintenance free surfacing.

### Highways Working Party

The Highways Working Party had met on October 10th. The Council agreed a recommendation to apply for planning permission to install an information sign on Meadowfield Industrial Estate. It was hoped that businesses on the estate would contribute towards the cost of the sign.

## NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

Coun Dodd referred to the Core Strategy which would be out for consultation from mid December. He said he was also starting to make progress with regard to dealing with the parking problems at the back of Merton Way.

## MAYOR'S REPORT

### Mayor's Diary

The Mayor reported on expenditure made from the Mayor's allowance since May 2014. A list of events and meetings attended by the Mayor during October was circulated to the Council.

### Reports by Town Council Representatives on Local Organisations

Reports were presented by councillors who had attended various meetings including the Northumberland Association of Local Councils AGM and a joint meeting with the County Council and Town and Parish Councils held in Hexham. Councillors were informed that the Ageing Well in Ponteland group had arranged a Winter Warmer event to be held on November 22nd at St Mary's Church Hall between 8.30am and 12.30pm. The Hopper bus would be available to transport people to and from the Hall.

*This report is based on the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on November 12th.*

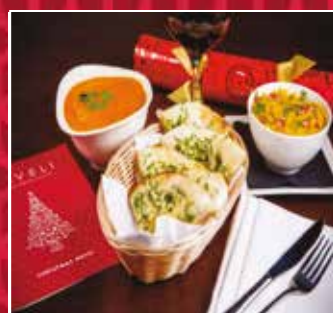


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# Your letters

The Editor  
Dont News & Views



**After last month's call to disband it, support for  
Darras Hall Estate Committee in this month's letters...**

## Think carefully before campaigning to disband the Estate Committee

**As a former member of Darras Hall Estate Committee I was concerned to read of John Worth's 'campaign to disband the Estate Committee'.**

Whereas I can appreciate his frustration, I do think residents should be made aware of the implications of such action.

When a resident purchases a property on the estate they are required to sign the Deed of Accession, thus agreeing to comply with the terms and conditions of the Trust Deed. One of these states that the Trust Deed must be administered by a committee of residents and that if no committee is formed then the Trust Deed becomes null and void.

The estate's unique qualities derive from the terms of the Trust Deed and for it to be dissolved would change the character of the estate forever – and not necessarily for the better.

One example of this is that the majority of plot sizes are restricted to a minimum of a quarter acre. However without the protection of the Trust Deed local planning regulations would apply, i.e. 10 houses per acre.

Another example would be the type of property being built – other than the restrictions set out in the Byelaws, the style and size of the property is down to an owner's personal taste and budget and not the decision of the committee.

Whatever we might think of current development on the estate the prospect of the alternative is not appealing.

As previously stated, the committee is there to administer the Trust Deed and can only do so within the constraints of that document. Instead of condemning its members as ineffectual, residents might like to make themselves more familiar with the limitations within which the committee has to operate.

I don't suggest that the committee is perfect; far from it, and it is currently going through a period of change, but I do believe that a more positive understanding of the facts would be appreciated instead of the usual criticism that is levelled at it.

As residents we value this estate but as residents we have a responsibility towards it as well. Let us as a community find ways

to work together to improve this situation rather than just condemn it.

**Sheenah Coyne**  
*Greenacres, Darras Hall*

## Only get rid of the Estate Committee if you want houses cheek by jowl

**Has John Worth ever volunteered to work for the Estate Committee? That is right, volunteered, because apart from the hard working administrative staff, no payment is received for the time given to help apply the Trust Deed to potential building projects.**

What would John Worth, in his wisdom, replace these volunteers with?

The predominantly Labour council in Morpeth, who appear to care not one jot for what happens outside their heartland of Ashington?

Does anyone honestly think they care about an area in which they don't live? Check out the condition of our roads to assess how much they value our opinion. I have never checked, but would they resurface half a road in Ashington like they did with Middle Drive?

Darras Hall residents volunteer their time because they value the area in which they live. They don't volunteer for respect or kudos because there is very little forthcoming. I have always said 'Those who can, do, those who can't, criticise' and John Worth is a prime example. I was a volunteer for about four years some time ago.

If you want houses cheek by jowl as in other areas, go ahead and get rid of the Estate Committee, but if you care as much for your neighbourhood as the volunteers on the Estate Committee, please give them a little support. I think they have earned at least that.

**Katrina Woodrow**  
*The Drey, Darras Hall*

## Thank you for a special Remembrance Weekend

**I just wanted to say a huge thank you to Ponteland Town Council for organising the special exhibition of World War memorabilia which was staged in the**

## Memorial Hall over the weekend of November 8th/9th.

From first entering the coffee lounge it was obvious just how much work staff and councillors had done in collating and displaying the items.

I understand that a few weeks ago they were a little concerned at the response from the public in providing sufficient items for display, but in the end there was more than enough to hold everyone's interest and I loved the manner in which they were displayed – mainly by 'family'.

There were many immensely moving accounts of bravery and the sight of actual items retrieved from the WWI trenches was intensely moving.

I was fortunate to spend most of the weekend there as The Rep had been invited to sing some of the songs from our forthcoming production of Oh What A Lovely War in the last week of November.

I met and spoke with many of the local councillors including the ex-Mayor, Peter Cowey, who came up with the idea for this exhibition over two years ago, and of course our current Mayor, Carl Rawlings.

There was a great community spirit during this weekend which, of course reminded us all of the men from Ponteland and elsewhere who gave their lives in both wars.

So, once again, 'thank you' to Town Clerk Kath Mavin and all at Ponteland Town Council.

**Ted Henderson**  
*Chairman  
Ponteland Repertory Society*

## Child's bag found near playpark

**I found a small silver and pink child's bag beside the play park on Callerton Lane, Ponteland, on Sunday October 12th and would like to return it to its young owner.**

If you think it belongs to your child can you contact me via Pont News at [pontnews@cian-pr.co.uk](mailto:pontnews@cian-pr.co.uk) or by calling (0191) 3408422.

**Name and address supplied**

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.

**January issue deadlines:** Delivery of the January issue will start on Friday January 2nd. The deadline for all copy and adverts is Wednesday December 10th. Businesses should be aware that all bookings for advertisements must be paid in full by the deadline to ensure placement in the January issue.





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# Peter Tyson

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# What's on...

## Ponteland Wildlife Group of the Northumberland Wildlife Trust

On Tuesday December 2nd, in an illustrated talk entitled 'Moths and Howick's Dark Secret', Stuart Sexton will present a beginner's guide to identifying garden moths. Stuart lives in Howick and has held a lifelong interest in birds, moths and butterflies. All are welcome to attend the meeting which starts at 7.30pm at St. Mary's Church Hall in the village. £2 per person including refreshments.

## Ponteland U3A

On Wednesday December 3rd our monthly meeting will be a Christmas celebration with entertainment by our choral and music performing groups. We also have a faith tea. We meet in St Mary's church hall on the first Wednesday in the month at 2pm. Visitors are welcome. No charge. Interested in our activities? Come to a monthly meeting or visit our website at [www.u3asites.org.uk/ponteland](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/ponteland) or ring the membership secretary on (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 December 6th.

## Ponteland Methodist Church Christmas Fayre

The annual Christmas Fayre will be held on Saturday December 6th, opening at 10am in the Church Hall. Stalls will include cakes, produce and preserves, plants for indoors and out, books, toys, cds, dvds, jigsaws, new stall, cards, wrapping paper etc, a chocolate tombola and raffle, along with children's games. Bacon butties with other refreshments will be available throughout the morning.

## Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

Our speaker on Monday December 8th is Prof John Derry whose talk is entitled 'Elizabeth I'. Meetings are usually held on the second Monday of every month in the lounge of Ponteland Memorial Hall, Darras Road, at 2.30pm. Contact Secretary Brian Edlin on (01661) 820198.

## North East England Group of the Alpine Garden Society

Our meeting on Monday December 8th is the AGM, followed by a seed exchange where members can buy seed to sow in the New Year and a social with seasonal refreshments. If you are interested in Alpines please come along and find out what we do throughout the year. Visitors welcome, charge £2.50. Our meeting takes place in St Marys Church Hall, Thornhill Road, Ponteland, and starts at 7.30pm. Details from Terry Teal at [t.teal@btinternet.com](mailto:t.teal@btinternet.com) or (0191) 4132574.

## Ponteland Village WI

On Tuesday December 9th we welcome Sharron Durrant of The Sage for a Christmas choir evening. We are a recently formed WI with warm, friendly and welcoming members and meet on the 2nd Tuesday each month at 7.30pm in St Mary's Church Hall. New members and visitors are welcome for a girly night with a difference. For more information email: [pontelandvillagewi@hotmail.com](mailto:pontelandvillagewi@hotmail.com) or on our Facebook page at [facebook.com/PontelandVillageWI](https://facebook.com/PontelandVillageWI)

## Darras Hall WI

Our meeting is being held on Thursday December 11th at 2pm in the URC meeting room. The speaker will be Claire Watson-Laney from the Northumberland Sausage Co. based at West Woodburn. Developed by Claire, these are world class sausages - and our monthly competition is for a pig, in any medium, so visitors are welcome to attend what should be a 'piggin' interesting afternoon.

## Ponteland Methodist Church Christmas Concert

The Christmas Concert will be held on Saturday December

13th at 7pm in the church. 1914 - A Christmas Miracle will be performed by Eileen Glenton and Eddie Gratton accompanied by George Hetherington. Seasonal refreshments will be served at the end of the concert. Tickets priced at £7 each can be reserved with Syd Cowan (01661 824459) and paid for at the door on the night. During 2014 Ponteland Methodists have celebrated 200 years of Methodism in Ponteland.

## The Bridge

The Bridge is a relaxed, informal church service where everyone is welcome. We meet most Sundays in Ponteland Methodist Church Hall at 9.45am. We use contemporary music, visual media, personal stories and short talks to help us discover how the Christian faith is relevant to our lives today. We are family friendly with activities for kids up to year 6. All are welcome to our services on Sunday December 14th, and our New Year's Eve Family Party from 5pm to 7pm. For more info email: [thebridge.ponteland@gmail.com](mailto:thebridge.ponteland@gmail.com) or phone (01661) 822057.

## New Year's Day Wheelbarrow Race

Ponteland 41 Club's annual New Year's Day Wheelbarrow Race in conjunction with Ponteland Rugby Club starting from the Blackbird Inn at 12noon on Thursday, January 1st. See article on page 18.

## Embroiderers' Guild Ponteland Branch

No December meeting. On January 26th 2015 'Unfinished Treasures' - bring your oldest unfinished project for help and advice or to stitch and maybe complete. Memorial Hall, Darras Road, Ponteland, on the fourth Monday of the month from 2pm - 4pm. Non Guild Members £4 (inc tea/coffee). Contact [eg\\_ne\\_ponteland@btinternet.com](mailto:eg_ne_ponteland@btinternet.com) or (01661) 881395.

## Ponteland Photographic Society

Ponteland Photographic Society meets on Monday evenings at 7.30pm in Merton Hall. Come and see what we have to offer without any obligation to join, and do visit [pontelandphotographicsociety.co.uk](http://pontelandphotographicsociety.co.uk)

## Pont Badminton Club

Pont Badminton Club meets every Friday evening between 8.30pm to 10pm at Ponteland Leisure Centre. Adults of all ages will be assured of a warm welcome. Just come along or contact 07986 388822 for more information.

## Pasadena Roof Orchestra performance

Date for the diary: The Pasadena Roof Orchestra is performing on Sunday March 22nd 2015 at Newcastle Falcons Gold North Suite in support of CHUF. For more information contact Ponteland Charity Group on (01661) 823606.

## Kirkley WI

Kirkley WI usually meets on the first Wednesday of every month in the Oak Room, Kirkley Hall, at 7pm. New members and visitors very welcome.

## Ponteland WI

Our meetings are held in the Memorial Hall, Darras Road, at 7pm on the second Tuesday of the month. New members and visitors are encouraged.

## Searchlight

We are a group of Christians from the local churches who meet regularly to learn more about faith, and how it can help us live in today's world. Meeting on Thursday evenings in St. Mary's Church Hall from 7.30pm, until 9pm, we enjoy fellowship and friendship in an informal atmosphere. For more information, contact David Butler on (01661) 823664.

## Ponteland Creative Arts Group

We are a small and friendly support group for those affected by mental illness, their carers and family members. We meet in the Memorial Hall every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 1.30pm to 3.30pm to enjoy creative activities, try new things, socialise, share support and build confidence. For further information please contact Emma or Sarah on 07507 453144 or email [pontelandartsgroup@rethink.org](mailto:pontelandartsgroup@rethink.org) or just come along to the next session.



# Christmas message



From the Reverend Peter Barham, Vicar of Ponteland

The editor wants a Christmas message, but as I write it is only three days ago that we marked Remembrance Sunday. It was wonderful to see so many people gathered to remember, and also to learn so much from the exhibition in the Memorial Hall. Thank you everyone.

The first man from Ponteland who died in the trenches of the First World War was Lance Corporal John Wilkinson, who died before October was over. His father was a greengrocer in the village, so his loss would have been general knowledge. For him and his family, Christmas would never be the same again. In 1915 they would be followed by several more grieving families - we will mark their sacrifice as the year rolls on.

This Christmas we will remember the Christmas truce of 1914. This letter from Private Cunningham was printed in The Scotsman on 5 January 1915:

"On Christmas Eve the firing practically ceased. I think both sides understood we were going to have a day off. Through the night

we sang carols to one another, the German lines were only a hundred yards away, so we heard each other quite plainly...We had a most interesting day. The Germans got permission for our officers to bury some of their dead who were lying near our lines."

We know that the truce did not last, and the following year the military authorities on both sides made sure it did not happen again. But, for one day at least, a little light shone in the darkness.

There is an old saying: "It is better to light a candle than to complain about the darkness." Across this world, many good people - of all faiths and none - do their best to bring light into the world.

Christian belief is that God sent His Son into the world. He came to Bethlehem, a town under occupation, to be born in poverty to a couple who, these days, would best be described as refugees. The bible tells us that: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness will never overcome it."

One hundred years ago our village churches will have supported those who went through the darkness. That is still our task - to share the light. All the churches in the village, working together, invite you to worship and celebrate this Christmas. We know that the light still shines.

## Churches Together in Ponteland

### United Reformed Church, Broadway, Darras Hall

**Sunday December 21st, 10am**

Carol Praise and Readings

**Christmas Eve, 3.30pm**

Christingle Family Service

**Christmas Day, 10am**

Christmas Day Celebration

**Sunday December 28th, 10am**

Approaching New Year

### St. Mary the Virgin, Ponteland

**Sunday December 21st, 10am**

The Story of Christmas

**Christmas Eve, 3pm and 4pm**

Family Carols

**Christmas Eve, 7pm**

Carol Service

**Christmas Eve, 11.30pm**

Midnight Mass

**Christmas Day, 8am**

Holy Communion

**Christmas Day, 10am**

Festal Communion

### Methodist Church, Ponteland

**Sunday December 7th, 10am**

Carol and Parade Service

**Sunday December 14th, 6.30pm**

Bridge Christmas Special

**Sunday December 21st, 6.30pm**

Carol Service

**Christmas Eve, 11.15pm**

Midnight Communion

**Christmas Day, 10am**

Christmas Day Service

### Methodist Church, Milbourne

**Sunday December 21st, 6.30pm**

Carol Service

**Christmas Eve, 11.15pm**

Communion

**New Year's Eve, 11.30pm**

Watch Night Service

### St Matthew's R.C., Ponteland

**Christmas Eve, 5pm**

Carols and Mass

**Christmas Day, 10.30am**

Christmas Day Mass

### Holy Saviour, Milbourne

**Sunday December 21st, 11.15am**

Carol Service

**Christmas Day, 11.15am**

Holy Communion

### Waitrose, Ponteland

**Saturday December 13th**

Carols outside Waitrose 10.30am

### Coates Green, Ponteland

**Wednesday December 17th**

Carols on the Green 7pm

Carols on the Green with the Airport staff (if wet in St Mary's). Proceeds to Christian Aid. Refreshments served afterwards in St Mary's Church Hall.

**UNITED SERVICE ON CHRISTMAS  
EVE AT 7pm - ST. MARY'S  
PONTELAND**

You are warmly invited to these services.

# Work underway on community all-weather pitch

**Work is underway on a £450,000 all weather pitch at Ponteland Middle School which will be open to the whole community.**

The top soil is being removed and replaced on the school's meadow at the bottom of the school site, to make way for a 9-a-side, all weather pitch available for the Ponteland schools, local football clubs and community.

The pitch project began in November 2012 when representatives from Ponteland United Football Club, Sport England, Football Foundation and Ponteland Middle School met to talk about their greatest wish for Ponteland community.

Alan Shearer visited the school in January 2013 and said 'Don't try; do it!' Two years, and many meetings later, the school has raised the £447,000 needed.

The Friends of PCMS organised a ball at the Gosforth Marriott in March to raise the final amounts. The school has spoken with archaeologists, architects, planners, ecologists, conservationists and gained a mitigation licence to undertake a 30 day trapping exercise for newts just in case any decided to hibernate on the field or between goalposts.

The school's eco team created refugia and hibernacula by the pond area to encourage the newts to remain by the pond and now the pitch is ready to be started. It will be a 10 or 12 week



build depending on weather conditions and it is hoped to be able to use the pitch after half term. The school thanks all supporters in helping them realise their dream and provide a lasting legacy for the school and its community.

Pictured (l-r) are: Harriett Barrett, President, Ponteland High School; Mr Baggett, Assistant Headteacher, Ponteland Middle School; Ruth Owen, Headgirl Ponteland Middle; Mr McGrane, HT, Ponteland High School; Hugo McGowan, Headboy, Ponteland Middle; Rosie Clearhill, President of Eco Team, Ponteland High School. Photo by Morpeth Herald.



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# Community supports emerging Neighbourhood Plan

## Who we are?

Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared by a steering group of seven volunteers and five councillors on behalf of the Town Council. If it is adopted in a local referendum it will have the power to influence local planning and the future needs of the community.

Residents attending a four day consultation event held at the Memorial Hall at the end of September were asked to consider the Group's vision and a series of objectives.

## What did the community highlight as their concerns?

- Importance of Character Statement, maintaining the Green Belt and keeping the strategic separation between Ponteland and Newcastle International Airport.
- Build housing that we need; use Brownfield sites, area prone to flooding & flash floods, maintenance of the river, watercourses, ditches, infrastructure overload.
- Regeneration of shopping facilities at Merton Way and Broadway with possible relocation of Industrial Estate.
- Manage traffic congestion; improve public transport, parking, cycle ways, and possible relief road.
- Healthcare over capacity, greater use of school facilities for all age groups.

## What's next?

The Community Consultation Report and Analysis Document is now available on our website, the next stage is to identify from this document draft planning policies and recommendations for projects, some of which may exceed the lifetime of this Draft Neighbourhood Plan.

The Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan Group has commissioned two pieces of work which started in early November and will be completed by the New Year. See actions on next column.

- First an Independent Planning Consultant has been appointed to review all the evidence and progress made since 2012 to make sure the process is sound, robust and has followed the guidelines required. This will give time for any amendments in the New Year.
- Second, a Business Confidence Survey for Merton Way, Main Street and the Broadway has been commissioned.
- Discussions with stakeholders will continue throughout the preparation of the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan.
- A Highway survey is being conducted by Northumberland County Council; the results will be shared with the Neighbourhood Plan Group.
- A supporters group will be formed in the New Year, for those residents who want more of an involvement with what is going on.

## How does that fit in with Northumberland County Council?

The proposals put forward in the latest Northumberland County Council Core Strategy Consultation do not necessarily reflect the views of the steering group, who will continue to work on behalf of the local community, to ensure development is delivered appropriate to local context, in the right place at the right time.

## What happens if they conflict?

That would mean the Ponteland draft plan would not be in line with Northumberland County Council.

Our Report & Analysis on the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan Community Consultation gives the group a clear mandate from the residents to continue with the process using the current Local Plan (CMDP) and presenting that for inspection next year.





# Beware bogus callers and rogue traders

By PC Rob Anderson  
Ponteland Community Beat Manager



## In the period between October 14th and November 13th we have had ten crimes recorded for the Ponteland area.

These break down to the following offences:

- Two thefts from shops
- Two thefts
- One common assault
- One taking a motor vehicle without the owner's consent
- One fraud by false representation
- Three damages to property.

Enquiries are ongoing in relation to the outstanding offences.

We have had some rogue traders to an address in Ponteland. Enquiries are ongoing at present regarding two males who have attended the house, accepted

money to conduct a gardening job and then make off without carrying out the work.

In addition to this there have been some men pressure washing drives in the Darras Hall area and requesting cash payment. The jobs haven't been carried out to the customers' satisfaction and they have alerted police to the men and their practices.

If you have anyone visiting your house who you believe may be either bogus callers or rogue traders please refuse their services and contact the police, taking as much notice as possible of their appearance and vehicles they may be in.

Please remember to alter the timer switches in your house as the nights start to draw in or leave a light on if you are going out.

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 10am - 11am  
December 13th - Waitrose, Ponteland
- PC Rob Anderson 11.30am - 12.30pm  
December 13th - Co-op, Broadway
- CSO Paul Cotterill 9.30am - 10.30am  
December 20th - Merton Hall, Ponteland
- PC Lee Davison 11.30am - 12.30pm  
January 3rd - Belsay village shop.

We also have engagement days at these venues and dates:

- 10am to 12noon December 10th  
Merton Way, Ponteland
- 1pm to 3pm December 10th  
Broadway, Ponteland.
- 1pm to 3pm December 18th  
Stamfordham/Belsay/Matfen

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The start line at last year's race. Photo by Nick Clark: [www.nickclarkimaging.com](http://www.nickclarkimaging.com)

# Gauntlet laid for Wheelbarrow Race

**Fit barrow boys and girls are being sought to take part in Ponteland's annual New Year's Day Wheelbarrow Race.**

The historic event last year raised more than £900 for cancer charities and this year funds raised will go to MacMillan Cancer Support.

In recent years the men's race has been dominated by two local families. Last year Dan Pybus, 15, and Oscar Redman, 16, won for the third year running - again beating their fathers Andy Pybus and Alan Redman, who had won five years running from 2007 to 2011, into second place.

The event, organised by Ponteland 41 Club with support from Ponteland Rugby Club, takes place over a mile-long course which starts and ends at the Blackbird Inn, with a men's race, ladies' race, junior race and fancy dress barrow parade.

Anyone wanting to take part should contact 41 Club Secretary Andy Anderson at [andrew.anderson@which.net](mailto:andrew.anderson@which.net) or on (01661) 871844.

# Thriller night at Eldon Square for dance squad

**A newly formed dance squad performed to hundreds of shoppers at Newcastle's Eldon Square in their first ever gig.**

Future Bound has been formed by a group of students aged eight to 17 from the Jill Errington School of Dance and Drama in Ponteland selected from auditions.

The invitation to perform their Thriller Flash Mob on Halloween came as a result of an email they sent in to the shopping centre's management.

Find out more about the dance school at [jillerrington.co.uk](http://jillerrington.co.uk)





# Good neighbours receive RHS awards

By Muriel Sobo

**Ponteland residents were recognised for their talents and commitment to the local environment with awards from the Royal Horticultural Society's 'It's Your Neighbourhood' campaign.**

These are in addition to those announced earlier in the Britain in Bloom section when Gold awards went to Athol House, the Bowls & Tennis Clubs and Ponteland in the small town category, and Silver to the Diamond Inn.

This time, in a presentation at the Memorial Hall, the garden at the Peel House apartments, the Friends of the Park, and the Prestwick and the Diamond Allotments at the rear of the Diamond, properly called the Maureen Clark allotments, all featured in the awards.

Ron Dunn, who has been improving the river and its banks through the centre of the village, was also awarded. Ron suffered a severe fracture in March and has been frustrated at not carrying on but says he will be back working just as soon as he can. Congratulations for the hard work of everyone involved!



Photo by Keith Robertson

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# Fond tribute to dedicated former councillor

**Popular former Ponteland councillor Alan Chilton has died aged 78. His daughter Jane penned this tribute.**

Alan Chilton - he liked a grand entrance, he was born on Christmas Day 1935; and he chose a grand exit, dying on Remembrance Sunday. He would have loved that - he will never be forgotten!

He was Sunderland born and bred, and never lost his passion for the city - then a town - and the club, Sunderland AFC.

His school years were as a boarder at Barnard Castle School - where he had lifelong happy memories of school. Loved his sport - won the Barnie Run, a cross country sprint which he broke the school record and held it for years. He was a winger in rugby, played at county level. He loved the game despite the fact he managed to eventually injure almost every part of his body - his ankle, nose, knees, back, you name it he had the scars to prove it. But his love of the game suited who he was as a person - he was a team player; fast; strong; and determined but always had a smile and a cheeky quip - characteristics he took through life.

After National Service with the RAF he started his lifelong career with Cadbury Schweppes, a company he worked for until he retired in the 1990s. He was totally loyal to the company and was

a very popular boss with his young team - who loved working for him. He was fun and fair, while at the same time firm. He was enthusiastic and driven and that helped inspire his staff.

The love of his life was Edwina, who he was married to for almost 38 years. Alan always said when Edwina walked into a room, heads turned. He loved Edwina in life and also in death. When Edwina sadly died, very unexpectedly, aged just 61, he always said he felt robbed. But he didn't become bitter, again his strong character carried him through and he carried on with his life - but even to the day he died he never stopped talking about her. He often said: "There isn't a day goes by that I don't think of Edwina."

Alan was also a much loved father to Paul, Jane and Catherine, their partners Susan, Ian and Andrew; and his six grandchildren - William, Matthew, Tom, Ellen, Adam and Josh.

He had a tremendous sense of duty and service - his drive and commitment in work drew him into politics and local government in his retirement. He served as a councillor with Castle Morpeth Borough Council and Ponteland Parish Council and tried to improve life for residents in his beloved Prestwick and Ponteland. He was extremely dedicated to his council duties and would always be out campaigning or dealing with his constituents' concerns.

Alan also helped set up Prestwick Residents' Association to help improve life for those in the small village where he lived for 42 years.

Passionate, extremely funny, cheeky, loyal, dedicated to his family and all in all a lover of life. That pretty much sums up Alan Chilton. A 'character' - that's how he would like to be remembered.

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On the campaign trail...Alan Chilton with former Hexham MP Peter Atkinson.



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# Kick your sugar habit

Millions of Brits are hooked on the sweet stuff, but help is at hand

**H**ere's a statistic to put you off your three o'clock cake and biscuits:

According to the *British Medical Journal*, **one third of UK adults have high blood sugar.**

## Is this you?

Do you have a sweet tooth? Can't resist the lure of chocolate, sweets and fizzy drinks? Are pies, pastries and crisps your secret snacks of choice? Either way, the sugar hidden within these daily pick-me-ups is creating a nation of addicts.

"Blood glucose levels become low between meals and while we sleep. This creates a natural need for us to seek out a 'fix' to restore balance. Modern sugar-laden foods cause dramatic spikes in our blood sugar, causing frequent highs and lows, leading to cravings for yet more sugar, which damages the body and leads to insulin resistance," advises nutritionist, Babi Chana BSc Nut Med.

## Essential mineral offers hope

"People who do more exercise are less likely to store sugar as fat and will be able to restore their blood sugar balance more efficiently. Also, choose

foods that release sugar slowly (low GI), such as wholegrains, legumes, nuts and seeds, while reducing fast release foods such as white breads and cakes.

"In addition to a healthy diet and exercise, increasing your chromium intake is a sensible option for blood sugar control. Chromium works in harmony with insulin, to maintain healthy circulating levels of glucose in the bloodstream. Chromium helps to avoid the 'highs and lows' of hunger patterns and improves satiety to feel fuller for longer," Babi explains.

Chromium is a mineral found in natural foods, but it is in short supply in the modern British diet.

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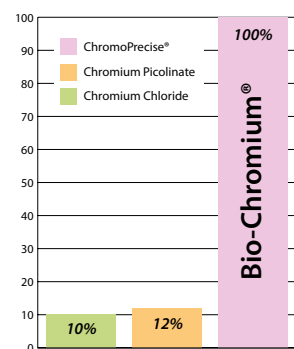


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# Big result for Ponteland youth football team

**Ponteland United's under-11s Cobras football team has received a welcome result with a new sponsorship deal.**

Local businessman Peter Joynson, of Darras Road, Darras Hall, has given the red card to the old strip and agreed to sponsor the Cobra's new kit for the current season in the Gateshead Youth League.

Peter's son, 10-year-old Henry, has played at Ponteland Utd for the last few years but he and many of his team-mates have outgrown the old strips.

Peter, director at technology company Synergi IT, said: "They're a great set of lads but their last strip was past its best. With the team doing so well it was only right that they should have the kit to reflect their confidence and team-work. I'm delighted to support my local team."

The under-11s won their league last year and recently went through to the third round of a local cup - on the new strip's first outing.



## Ponteland Leisure Learning celebrates 20 years

*By Muriel Sobo*

**This group, with almost 350 members, is the biggest social organisation in the village and is aimed at those not in full time work.**



Celebrations marking 20 years of a very successful branch of the U3A included a lunch in the Memorial Hall, an illustrated booklet about the multiple activities on offer and now the planting of an oak tree, *Quercus robur*, in the park.

There are many groups catering for interests from art to walks and anyone with specialist skills is encouraged to share them with others.

On Wednesday December 3rd at 2pm the U3A's monthly meeting at St Mary's church hall will be a Christmas celebration with entertainment by choral and music performing groups and a faith tea. For more information visit the website at [www.u3asites.org.uk/ponteland](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/ponteland) or call the membership secretary on (01661) 822225.

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