

# pontnews&views

FREE monthly community magazine for Ponteland and district



Gaming guru Giselle  
awarded OBE

Lauren and Leah represent  
region at national beauty pageant

Meet Yuvi the young  
people's champion

## Barrow boys (and girls) raise record amount for charity



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## Wheelbarrow Race raises £2,000 for charity

**Ponteland's historic New Year's Day Wheelbarrow Race raised a record £2,000 for charity.**

St Oswald's Hospice in Newcastle and national testicular cancer charity Ballboys will benefit from the proceeds from entry fees, sponsorship and donations on the day.

With 42 entrants, there were three races around the mile long circuit from the Blackbird Inn – men's, ladies' and juniors.

The event began with a short parade of fancy dress barrows led by the 'Lord of the Manor' and Miss Northumberland Galaxy.

Daniel Herlbauer and Graham Crammond won the men's race, completing the course in an impressive 6min 36sec,

with Joanna Shellcross and Micki Herlbauer winning the ladies' race and Lewis and Poppy Samson finishing first in the junior race.

Ponteland 41 Club and Ponteland Rugby Club organised the event. Spokesman Andy Anderson said: "We were delighted with the turnout and the record fundraising total. We would like to thank all those who participated and the clubs that supported the event, including Ponteland Rugby Club, Elswick Harriers and The Barn. The Blackbird Inn gave us great support, donated several prizes and provided an outdoor barbecue and bar on the day."





# Help us to help you



PC Lee Davison, Ponteland Rural  
Neighbourhood Beat Manager

## There have been 33 crimes reported for the Ponteland and outlying area for December:

- Two burglary to dwelling (Eachwick/Whalton)
- One aggravated taking of a motor vehicle (Ponteland)
- Two theft from motor vehicle - tools taken (Darras Hall)
- One theft by employee (Darras Hall)
- Three damage to motor vehicles (Ponteland/Darras Hall)
- One damage to door (Darras Hall)
- Three assaults (Ponteland/Kirkley Hall/Albemarle)
- Nine shoplifting (Ponteland/Darras Hall)
- One damage to dwelling and one further damage (Belsay)
- Two harassment
- Two sexual offences

- One breach of non-molestation order
- Four Action Fraud reports.

A number of arrests have been made for the above offences and some charges laid.

Following on from correspondence received regarding burglary and crime prevention measures mentioned in last month's issue, can I clarify advice is to address routine activity if you are away from home for a length of time. This can include having a keyholder regularly visit and make the property looked lived in, fitting timers and alarms, and not advertising your absence on social media.

I would encourage residents to continue to look out for one another – especially elderly or vulnerable neighbours. Report suspicious persons or vehicles and be aware of cold callers.

There are various ways you can support policing, including:

- Community Messaging – a monthly

update of crime, ASB behaviour and other campaigns in your area

- FarmWatch – countywide news and updates including reports of suspect vehicles and appeals for information
- Community Speedwatch – volunteer scheme providing a visible deterrent to speeding motorists who can expect a warning letter or visit from police.

NCC's parking enforcement vehicle will be introduced this month to monitor the school keep clear restrictions. Offending drivers will be issued with a Penalty Charge Notice.

Our next police surgery is being held on Saturday 13th February from 9.30am to 10.30am at Merton Hall, Ponteland with CSO Paul Cotterill.

Contact the Ponteland Neighbourhood Team:

Tel. 101 ext-69569

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# Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan

## Help shape the future of Ponteland by completing the Ponteland Housing Need Survey

The purpose of this survey is to assess local housing need within Ponteland Civil Parish to identify the range and affordability of new housing to meet those needs.

The questionnaire has been sent to every household in the Civil Parish, delivered with the February edition of Pont News & Views. You can also access it online at [pontelandneighbourhoodplan.co.uk](http://pontelandneighbourhoodplan.co.uk)

By taking a few minutes to complete the Housing Need Survey now, your views and opinions can help to shape the type and arrangement of any new housing provided. Please complete the relevant sections, even if you have no current unmet needs, and return this document in the pre-paid envelope provided by March 14th.

The more responses we receive, the more useful and accurate the findings will be. Please be assured all the information given will remain confidential; individuals and households cannot be identified from any of the information you provide.

### Why is this important, why should I get involved?

This is a key stage in the Neighbourhood Plan, giving you and your family the opportunity to influence the outcome of your own Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan, to help to resolve some key and potentially controversial issues.

### Can it make a difference?

Yes, if everyone takes a few minutes to complete this survey, it will have a tremendous impact. All responses will be analysed and will be used as evidence in forming the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan, which will directly contribute to the decisions that will be made about housing in Ponteland.

### What is Neighbourhood Planning, and what purpose does it serve?

The Localism Act 2011 provided a new statutory regime for neighbourhood planning with Neighbourhood Planning Regulations as part of the legal framework to which any neighbourhood

plan must comply. Neighbourhood planning is a way of communities being actively involved with the future development of their local area. Neighbourhood Plans provide local communities with the opportunity to plan for their future needs within a clearly defined designated area. They give more power to communities by being involved at a local level in the planning system, getting the right kind of development based on local needs, and voted on by a local community referendum. This will enable those who live and work in a designated area to choose the type and range of new homes, offices and shops to be built and what they should look like.

### Who is organising the survey and why?

The Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, a team of local resident volunteers working on behalf of the Town Council, has organised this survey to identify local needs. This enables the local community to decide its own vision for Ponteland going forward and most importantly, to determine future planning policy in a way which is currently not permitted. However, legislation dictates that those policies will ultimately need to align with the broader Core Strategy for growth and development in Northumberland.

### Who will analyse the results?

An independent survey analysis company has been engaged.

### Will this make a difference?

Neighbourhood planning seeks to empower communities to manage and enable development in their local area. This is achieved by creating locally specific planning policies to manage development in their area or granting permission by legal order for sites that the local community would like to see developed in a particular way.

### What has Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group achieved?

For the past three years the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has followed a process set out in the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations:

- Identifying the scope of the plan
- What it aims to achieve and include
- Collecting of appropriate evidence
- Consulting with the community, stakeholders and other consultees
- Analysing comments
- Preparing draft topic papers including planning policies accompanied with community aspirations or projects
- Analysing evidence.

### What it can't do?

A neighbourhood plan can't set standards for issues such as: green belt boundaries; housing allocations; housing numbers; highway matters or quality of roads. These are matters for the local planning authority and highways department at Northumberland County Council.

### What is still to be achieved to complete the Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan process?

- Review the evidence base to date
- Identify other work to be accomplished for a robust neighbourhood plan
- Proceed in consultation (six weeks) with the local community, stakeholders and other consultees
- Submit to Northumberland County Council, consultation period of six weeks
- If approved, an independent examiner is appointed to check for soundness
- If approved, plan will go to a local referendum
- If approved, the completed plan becomes part of the statutory development plan for the area.

# Gaming guru Giselle awarded OBE

Gaming guru Giselle Stewart has been awarded an OBE in the New Year's Honours.

Giselle, of Darras Hall, received the award for services to the computer games industry in the North East.

The mother-of-two, UK Corporate Affairs Director for Ubisoft, is also a board member of TIGA - the network for games developers and trade association representing the video games industry.

TIGA CEO Dr Richard Wilson said: "This is an outstanding achievement for an outstanding individual in an outstanding industry. Giselle has played a vital part in the education and skills world. This is a well-deserved honour and a reflection of the growing recognition of the importance of the UK video games industry."

Giselle, who lives on Middle Drive with partner Christophe, a clinical pharmacist, and their children Alea, eight and Toby, six, added: "I'm very honoured and proud that the hard work being done to promote the video game industry in the North East is being recognised."

"Development studios in the North East are home to hundreds of hugely talented creators, working on some of the most successful games and video game franchises in the world. My aim is to continue to work hard on initiatives that will develop this expertise, and support the industry to reach its full potential, so that the North East and the UK in general will continue to be seen as one of the best places to invest to make games."



OBE recipient Giselle Stewart, pictured with children Alea and Toby on a family holiday.



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# Ponteland Community High School Report

## Molly and Elliot debate at the Estonian youth parliament

By Jolie Ince (Year 13)

Year 13 students Molly Hall and Elliot Barker debated with international delegates at the Estonian National European Youth Parliament.

Molly took part in an environmental debate while Elliot spoke in an economic debate at the event, which aims to engage students interested in politics, debating and public speaking.

Ponteland High School has won through to the national session five times in the last seven years, where delegates become alumni of the EYP and eligible to take part in international sessions. Our students have previously represented the UK at events in Rotterdam, Prague, and Nice, while the Chair of EYP UK and the North East Regional Session Organiser are both former PCHS students.

Assistant headteacher Dave Hicklenton, who has supported EYP students for over ten years, said: "The selection process and the debating itself takes students outside their comfort zones. The opportunities students have had over the years have been tremendous and I am very proud of the alumni who have gone on to work with European companies, with the European Parliament and in the House of Commons as a direct result of their participation in the competition."



## U14 netball team crowned county champions

Our U14 netball team will be representing Northumberland in the regional schools netball championships this weekend after winning the county tournament.

The players won all of their section matches and after beating Queen Elizabeth High School in the semi-final went

on to play in a very closely contested final against King Edward VI School, Morpeth.

At full time the match was tied at 4-4, meaning a sudden death situation. A fantastic 'golden goal' from Evie Gallagher ensured Ponteland finished the day as county champions.

The winning team are: Ruth Owen, Evie Gallagher, Katie Crozier, Naomi Garner, Kate Grix, Elaina Graham, Amy Donald, Alex Eden and Hannah Kirtley.



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# Lauren and Leah in Florida beauty bid

Two Ponteland schoolgirls are competing in a beauty pageant next weekend for an all expenses paid trip of a lifetime to Orlando, Florida.

Lauren Pattinson, 14, is a finalist in the Miss Galaxy UK contest and will be on the catwalk alongside regional winners aged 14 to 18 from across the country at the national finals at the Park Hall Hotel, Lancashire, on Saturday February 6th.

The Ponteland High School student, who lives with mum Deb in Thornhill Road, was named Miss Teen Newcastle Galaxy in September and has since been fundraising for a number of good causes in the region.

They include helping to raise more than £3,000 at the RVI's Tiny Lives Xmas party at St James' Park, giving out sleeping bags, hot drinks and food to the homeless in Newcastle with the Shining Stars group, and taking part in a charity evening at The Postbox for toddler Kian Musgrove, who needs urgent lifesaving cancer treatment in the US.

Lauren secured the support of Ponteland solicitor Iain Nicholson, whose practice collected clothes and food and

donated £200 for blankets and sleeping bags for her work with Shining Stars.

She will be joined next weekend by Year 9 colleague Leah Middleton, 13, of Limestone Lane, Ponteland, who is competing for the Junior Miss Galaxy title against other girls aged 12 to 14. Leah has also been working hard over the past four months, fundraising and attending events for organisations including cancer charity The Christie.

Lauren's mum Deb, a photographer, said: "Lauren has never won a beauty contest nor ever competed in one, so she is looking forward to the experience no matter what the outcome. She would love to thank all her sponsors who have helped to sponsor her and make this a possibility."

Leah's mum Sarah, a business development consultant, added: "Leah has done amazingly well to get through to this stage – I am so proud of her."



Budding beauty queens Leah Middleton and Lauren Pattinson.  
Photos by Imogen Kate Photography.

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# Your letters

The Editor  
Pont News & Views



**The county council is under attack for two planned relocations in this month's letters...**

## Leave our library alone

**The county council is at it again – taking away the heart of our village relocating the library to the leisure centre.**

I have no concerns about the leisure centre – I love it and use it and feel privileged we have such a fantastic facility in our village, but come on NCC leave our library alone.

It is the hub of our village near to the shops including the Post Office and chemists, café and hardware store. All the businesses in Merton Way cater for our community; it's a day out to visit the library, pop for lunch and pick up a bit of shopping.

It is a place to meet and talk to people (which some do not have the opportunity to do if they live alone). If they proceed and relocate the library to the leisure centre it will lose its personality, connections and most of all its people.

It's a very long walk to the leisure centre for some people, so they will no longer be able to visit. At present I am able to walk and drive, but looking into the future no way would I be able to walk to the leisure centre.

We must fight to keep our village with as many possible facilities right in the heart where long standing local people live. Support your local library and let's beat the county council.

**Mrs Jane Haddon**

Thornhill Road, Ponteland

## Sign petition to try and stop County Hall relocation

**It is time to have a voice. Do you want Northumberland County Council to spend £40m+ on a new County Hall?**

This is your money; they are selling off and closing down community assets. Why? Is it to raise funds for a new county hall which will be situated in the far north east corner of the county with no major road or rail links?

County Hall in Morpeth is central and straight off the A1. If it's not broken don't fix it!

If, like me, you want to try and put a stop to this, please write to the Local Government Ombudsman at PO Box 4771, Coventry, CV4 0EH or go online and fill in a complaint form at

[www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk) or sign our e-petition at [change.org/p/local-government-ombudsman](http://change.org/p/local-government-ombudsman)

Remember everyone over the age of 18 can sign this petition. This is our last chance to try and stop this from happening.

**David Greenwell**

Station Cottages, Ponteland

## Thanks to caring young people for helping elderly man after fall

**So often we hear only negative comments about young people and none of the positives.**

Not long after midnight on New Year's Day, four young adults found a frail, elderly man lying on the unlit garden path of his home. But for their subsequent actions he may not have been found until daylight.

They phoned for an ambulance and informed neighbours who went to help. The ambulance was very quick in arriving and the man was soon on his way to hospital.

These caring young people are a credit to their parents but, most of all, they are a credit to themselves. Well done and thank you.

**Pam MacKenzie**

Fairney Close, Ponteland

## Tribute to former councillor Bill

**I was sorry to receive the sad news that former Ponteland councillor Bill Cuthbertson had died after a long and brave fight against ill health.**

I met Bill when he was elected to both Ponteland Parish and Castle Morpeth Borough Councils. Although we were in different political groups, we got on well.

Bill was a very able, friendly man with good organising abilities. During his time as a councillor, he served as Chairman of the Parish Council and also, with his wife Valerie as Mayoress, he was Mayor of the Borough Council for the civic year 2001/02.

Bill was a local man who had been a police cadet and then served in the Military Police during his National Service. He then served in police forces abroad before returning to the UK and completing his police career as a Superintendent in the Northumbria Police.

Many local people will have fond memories of him.

**Frank Harrington**

Fairney Edge, Ponteland

**March issue deadlines:** Delivery of the March issue will start on Monday February 29th and be completed by Friday March 4th. The deadline for all copy and adverts is Monday February 15th. If you are aware of any missed properties please contact the editor at [pontnews@cian-pr.co.uk](mailto:pontnews@cian-pr.co.uk) or call (0191) 3408422. Businesses should be aware that all bookings for advertisements must be paid in full by the deadline to ensure placement in the March issue.

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.

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# What's on...

## Ponteland Wildlife Group

The Wildlife Group which will meet on Tuesday Feb 2nd at 7.30pm in St Mary's church hall will hear Dr Mike Pearce talk about the lead mining industry in the North Pennines and its wildlife and Duncan Hutt from Northumberland Wildlife Trust will update us on the experimental and innovative build at the Hauxley Reserve. Admission is £2 and includes a buffet supper.

## Ponteland U3A

Our AGM on Wednesday February 3rd is followed by entertainment and a faith tea. We meet in St Mary's Church Hall at 2pm on the first Wednesday of the month. Visitors are welcome; no charge. Come to a monthly meeting, visit our website at [u3asites.org.uk/ponteland](http://u3asites.org.uk/ponteland) or ring the membership secretary on (01661) 822225. Our next meeting will be on March 2nd, when Peter Weighill will offer slides and music on the Mighty Mississippi.

## Kirkley WI

We are pleased to look forward to having a local businesswoman from Penny Pieces as guest speaker at our meeting on Wednesday February 3rd at 7pm in the Oak Room at Kirkley Hall. There will be opportunity for members to enter our regular competition titled 'Five Old Coins'. Guests and new members are always welcome to come along to our monthly meetings.

## Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

Our speaker on Monday February 8th is Revd Tim Thorpe whose talk is entitled 'Coming of the Rails'. Meetings are usually held on the second Monday of every month in the lounge of Ponteland Memorial Hall, Darras Road, at 2.30pm.

## North East England Group of the Alpine Garden Society

On Monday February 8th our guest speaker Jeanie Jones will speak on 'Arunachal Pradesh'. Jeanie is a member of the SRGC and, particularly keen on primulas, she has travelled widely to see them and other alpine plants. Our meetings take place in St. Mary's Hall, Thornhill Road, Ponteland. The doors open at 7pm for 7.30pm start. The charge

to visitors is £2 per meeting. Details from Terry Teal at [t.teal@btinternet.com](mailto:t.teal@btinternet.com) or (0191) 4132574. Our Spring Show will be held on Saturday April 2nd at The Wentworth Leisure Centre, Hexham, NE46 3PJ.

## Friends of Kirkley Hall

Friends of Kirkley Hall would welcome members of the public to talks to take place in February and March. On Wednesday February 10th at 2pm Duncan Wise will speak about how we obtained 'Dark Sky Status' which has firmly put the county on the map as one of the best places anywhere to stargaze. Wednesday March 16th at 7pm sees Mike Pratt, Chief Executive of Northumberland Wildlife Trust, reflect on wildlife, landscape and conservation past and future. Places at these talks, which take place at Kirkley Hall, can be booked by ringing Brenda Park on (01661) 853489 at a cost of £5 for non-members.

## Ponteland Business Network

Ponteland Business Network's next business breakfast meeting will be at the usual venue, the Diamond Inn, from 7.45am to 9.45am on Friday February 12th. All local businesspeople who live or work within the NE20 and NE18 postcodes are welcome to join. The £10 cost includes a bacon butty or croissant and tea/coffee. For more information contact Brian Russell at [pbn@profitabilitygroup.co.uk](mailto:pbn@profitabilitygroup.co.uk)

## Plant Heritage North East Group

Plant Heritage North East Group will be in the Memorial Hall at 2.30pm on Saturday February 13th for a talk on 'Fungi in Your Garden' by Dr Gordon Beakes of Newcastle University. All are welcome.

## Ponteland Community Partnership

Come to a meeting and share your ideas, concerns and expectations for improving the quality of life in our community. All are welcome. Our next meeting is at Ponteland Town Council offices at 7pm on Wednesday February 17th. More information from [pontelandcommunitypartnership.co.uk](http://pontelandcommunitypartnership.co.uk) or Hon Secretary Shirley Hill at [shirleyahill@o2.co.uk](mailto:shirleyahill@o2.co.uk)

## Ponteland Local History Society

Our next meeting is on Thursday February 18th at 7.30pm at St Mary's Church Hall, Thornhill Road, Ponteland, when speaker John Moreels' subject will be 'Nostalgic views of the North'.

## Ponteland Embroiderers Guild

On Monday February 22nd we have 'The Guild Collection' talk by Kate Allport. Meetings are held in the Memorial Hall, Darras Road on the 4th Monday of each month, from 2pm to 4pm. You can become a member, or join us for a meeting as a visitor (cost £4). Contact [ponteland.eg@btinternet.com](mailto:ponteland.eg@btinternet.com) or tel (01661) 881395.

## Ponteland Civic Society

The first meeting for 2016 of Ponteland Civic Society will be held on Monday February 29th at 7.30pm at St Mary's Church Hall. Our speaker will be Richard Pears, whose talk is entitled 'Georgian Gems, The Architecture of William Newton (1730-98)'. There are many fine buildings designed by this local architect, including Howick Hall and Newcastle's Assembly Rooms. Each meeting followed by tea and biscuits and chat. Visitors are most welcome, for whom there is a nominal charge of £2.

## Audio Book Group

The group is for people who have visual impairment or face barriers in reading printed books. It is an opportunity to share books, listen to different authors or old favourites, and hear other people's views. Each month members take home an audio book, then return to the next meeting for an informal and relaxed discussion lead by the group leader. We meet at Ponteland Library on the first Monday of each month from 10.30am-12noon. Membership is free. Contact Ros.Markham@[northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:northumberland.gov.uk) or (01661) 823594.

## Ponteland Ladies' Choir

Are you interested in joining a friendly group of singers with a young, enthusiastic conductor? We meet at Ponteland Methodist Church on Mondays from 7.15pm to 9pm in term time. No audition needed. Contact Brenda on (01661) 821704 or Rosie on (01661) 871663.

## Rotary Club of Ponteland

Rotary Club of Ponteland meet every Tuesday at Ponteland Golf Club. The meetings alternate between lunch times (1st & 3rd Tuesdays) and evenings (2nd & 4th Tuesdays). New people of all age groups and both ladies and gentlemen are very welcome. If you would like more details please contact Alan Hall at [alanhalleef@msn.com](mailto:alanhalleef@msn.com) or on (01661) 860284.

## Line dancing

We meet every Wednesday at 7pm in St Mary's Church Hall. We have lots of laughs, friendship and exercise to music. The cost is £20 for ten sessions. Dancing is at Beginner and Intermediate level. New dancers are always welcome, free taster session offered. Contact Rosemary Gray on (01661) 822493.

## Wednesday evening bridge at Merton Hall

If you enjoy relaxed games of bridge, you will be welcome at Merton Hall each Wednesday from 7pm to 9pm until next Easter. You do not need to bring a partner. Why not come along to try us out? We play Acol and Chicago scoring.

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

## Women's World Day of Prayer

Women's World Day of Prayer will be holding their annual service on Friday March 4th at 2.30pm in the URC on Broadway, Darras Hall. This year the ladies of Cuba have compiled the service and everyone is warmly welcomed to attend. There will be a delicious afternoon tea to follow.

## North East Music Festival

The Grand Opening by High Sheriff of Northumberland Mrs Lucy Carroll at the Gosforth Park Suite, Newcastle Racecourse, on Friday April 22nd with drinks reception at 7.15pm. Featuring Anna Reay and her band. Tickets costing £20 from JG Windows on (0191) 2321356 or online via Eventbrite. The Grand Finale follows at 7.30pm on Saturday April 23rd at St Nicholas Cathedral, Newcastle, with Trelawnyd Male Voice Choir and Dishforth Military Wives Choir. Tickets from £12 from Blackwells Bookshop on (0191) or 2326421 or online via Eventbrite. Both concerts in aid of the Great North Air Ambulance and other regional charities. See advert on p16.



## MINUTE'S SILENCE

The Town Council stood for a minute's silence in memory of the former chairman of the Parish Council Bill Cuthbertson, who had sadly recently died.

## PUBLIC QUESTION

A letter and petition was received from a resident who asked the council to consider reinstating a late night bus service to Ponteland from Newcastle.

## PRESENTATION BY NORTHUMBERLAND FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Assistant Chief Fire Officer Mark McCarty and Ponteland Station Manager Paul Gowland briefed the Council on a proposal to replace the existing full size appliance at Ponteland with a smaller, cheaper vehicle offering better manoeuvrability. The ACFO was asked if this would result in a reduced service to Ponteland and the Council was assured that the smaller vehicle was capable of doing everything that the existing appliance did. The Council agreed to support the proposal.

## GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Town Council agreed a grant of £200 following an application from Great North Air Ambulance for assistance towards the provision of the service, which had attended

four incidents in the Ponteland area in the last 12 months.

## BUDGET AND PRECEPT FOR 2016-17

The Town Council approved the draft budget for 2016-17 and agreed to levy a precept request of £380,587 on the County Council, which represented a 2% increase on a band D property. This included £8,639 for projects and councillors were asked to submit proposals to the clerk by the end of January. A meeting will be arranged to decide on priorities. The Council also considered a report on reserves and it was agreed to increase allotments rents by £1 across the board. Cemetery fees and charges will soon be considered by the Cemetery Committee and a tree reserve will be established in April.

## SUBSIDY FOR NUMBER 74 BUS SERVICE

The Town Council agreed to subsidise the Saturday late night service for the 74 bus from Matfen to Newcastle via Ponteland, Medburn and Stamfordham jointly with Stamfordham and Matfen Parish Councils at a cost of £95 per night. The County Council and operator Go North East will help promote the service, and there will be a review after 12 months.

## FLOOD RESILIENCE PLAN

An action plan is to be prepared in response to a Flood Resilience Plan produced by Coun Adam Shanley to include advice for those at risk of flooding and the co-ordination of flood wardens.

## PONTELAND LIBRARY

The Town Council received a report from Ponteland Community Trust asking for support in its efforts to retain the library in its current position and develop a community hub facility on the same site. The issue will be discussed again at the February meeting.

## NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Coun Jones reported that she and county councillors Dodd and Armstrong had met with officers from NCC regarding the library situation and a response was awaited. It is also proposed to relocate Morpeth library.

## ADULT FITNESS PROPOSAL

The Council agreed to carry out a public consultation exercise on the installation of adult fitness equipment in Ponteland Park. Details are on the council website at ponteland-tc.gov.uk or can be viewed at the Council offices between 9.30am and 12.30pm Monday to Friday.

*This report is based on the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on January 13th.*

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# Yuvi the young people's champion

**Budding politician Yuvraj Chauhan has been given his first role as an 'elected' representative – aged just ten.**

The Newcastle Royal Grammar School pupil, from Errington Road, Darras Hall, impressed the audience at the Ponteland Question Time event held at the Memorial Hall in October when he confidently asked a panel including MP Guy Opperman a series of questions.

Event organiser Ponteland Community Partnership invited Yuvi (as he is known to his friends) to its next meeting to outline his own ideas for the future of the parish. And as under PCP's constitution only over-18s can be a member, he was offered the role of 'junior ambassador'.

Yuvi will be responsible for promoting activities already available in Ponteland for junior residents, finding out what junior residents would like to be available, and bringing forward practical ideas for the young people of Ponteland and the surrounding area.

He has already attended with his mother Pratima a meeting with Youth Service Manager Ashley Brown and PCP Chairman Alma Dunigan to discuss what facilities and activities are already available and some of his ideas for the future.

Yuvi will be inviting more junior residents to get involved in forming a "Junior Forum" to promote fresh ideas through the website [pontelandcommunitypartnership.co.uk](http://pontelandcommunitypartnership.co.uk) and hopes to launch a regular surgery at Waitrose to discuss with his peer group and parents young people's needs.

Alma Dunigan said: "The community partnership is delighted that Yuvi has taken on this role we are certain he will make an excellent ambassador; already he has given us fresh ideas to start 2016."

People of all ages who live or work in Ponteland are invited to attend PCP's meetings to help identify initiatives which will improve quality of life for the community. The next is at Ponteland Town Council offices at 7pm on Wednesday February 17th.

Taking control: Yuvi Chauhan with younger brother Viraj.



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# Memorial Hall set to become Toad Hall



By Lesley Eltringham, Ponteland Repertory Society



The Youth Theatre 'Preppies' rehearse as the animals in the 'Wild Wood'

We had a huge success with our last production of 'Oliver!' in November, with excellent audiences and reviews.

Our next production will be 'Wind in the Willows', a comedy by Alan Bennett, which we hope will bring some good laughs in the early Spring.

The show runs at Ponteland Memorial Hall from Wednesday March 2nd to Saturday March 5th at 7pm, with a Matinee at 2pm on the Saturday. Tickets are already on sale online - log on to the Ponteland Rep website at [pontelandrep.co.uk/whatson.html](http://pontelandrep.co.uk/whatson.html)

This novel turned play is well known to most people as a classic work of fiction. It is a delightful blend of charming characters and wit. 'Wind in the Willows' is brilliantly accessible to all ages and is rightfully often referred to as timeless.

We have found a diverse team of performers and stage geniuses to bring this classic to our Ponteland Repertory stage. Our Youth Theatre 'Preppies' will also be taking part in performances but with adults playing the main roles. Rehearsals have already started, with a lot of hard work ahead!

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## FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT

Fairtrade Fortnight this year is from February 23rd to March 8th and the theme is The Big Fairtrade Breakfast.

St Mary's Big Fairtrade Breakfast Brew will be held on Saturday February 27th in St Mary's Church Hall from 10am-12noon. Merton Hall Fairtrade Coffee Morning will be on Friday March 4th from 9.30am-11am.

St Matthew's Big Fairtrade Breakfast Brew is on Saturday March 12th in St Matthew's Church Hall from 10am-12noon. The United Reformed Church will also be having a Fairtrade Stall after Sunday Worship during Fairtrade Fortnight as will the Methodist Open Door Café.

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# NORTH EAST MUSIC FESTIVAL

## *The Grand Opening*

Mrs Lucy Carroll, High Sheriff of Northumberland 2015/16

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**7.15pm Drinks Reception for 8.00pm**

**Friday 22nd April 2016**

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# NORTH EAST MUSIC FESTIVAL

## *The Grand Finale*



**Trelawnyd Male Voice Choir**

**Dishforth Military Wives Choir**

**Under the Direction of Musical Directors**

**ST NICHOLAS CATHEDRAL NEWCASTLE**

**7.30pm Saturday 23 April 2016**



**ANN ATKINSON**

**Closing Ceremony**

**Dr Caroline Pryer, Deputy Lieutenant of Northumberland**



**RUTH SLADDEN**

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# Tickets on sale for Ponteland charity group's music festival

Tickets have gone on sale for a new music festival being organised by Ponteland High School Charity Group.

The Grand Opening of the North East Music Festival will be conducted by the High Sheriff of Northumberland Mrs Lucy Carroll at the Gosforth Park Suite, Newcastle Racecourse, on Friday April 22nd, with a drinks reception at 7.15pm. Anna Reay and her band will be performing and Dr Caroline Pryer, Deputy Lieutenant of Northumberland, will conduct the closing ceremony. Tickets costing £20 are available from JG Windows on (0191) 2321356 or online via Eventbrite.

The Grand Finale follows at 7.30pm on Saturday April 23rd at St Nicholas Cathedral, Newcastle, with

Trelawnyd Male Voice Choir and Dishforth Military Wives Choir. Tickets from £12 from Blackwells Bookshop on (0191) 2326421 or online via Eventbrite. Both concerts are in aid of the Great North Air Ambulance and other regional charities.

The two city venues have been chosen ahead of local venues to maximise the potential audiences and sums raised.

Buses will run from the Memorial Hall each night costing £3 return and tickets are also available from secretary Bruce Grant at grant.darras@gmail.com or (01661) 823606.

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# Three national awards for NE Alpine Garden Society



Alan Furness with his award winning Celmisia. Photo by Don Peace.

## Three members of the Alpine Garden Society's North East group have received national awards.

Alan Newton, of Ponteland, was presented with the 'Anna Griffith Memorial Trophy' for achieving the greatest number of wins at the London Alpine Show 2015. He also received his 6th Gold bar for showing.

Alan Furness, of Wooley, Hexham, was awarded the 'Kath Dryden Award' for meritorious works with a single genus, for propagating, identifying and promoting nationally. The plant in question is the Celmisia, a native of New Zealand with silver leaves and daisy like flowers. Alan also received his 13th gold bar for showing.

Barry McWilliams, of Hebron, Morpeth, was awarded the 'Local Group Award' for outstanding services for the local group. Barry has organised the plant and seed sales for many years; edited the newsletter and opened his garden, which has featured on 'Gardeners World', to the public and promoted alpine gardening in the region.

All three are long serving members of the North East of England Group of the Alpine Garden Society which meets monthly at St. Mary's Church Hall, Ponteland. The awards were presented at the group's AGM.

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## Hew will be remembered with affection

*By Margaret and Fred Milligan*

### The village will remember Hew Elliot Wright, who has died aged 72.

Hew worked in Thompson's Bakery at Little Farm on the West Road, now redeveloped. He had always been encouraged to reach his potential and spent much time in the library researching local history.

Together with his mother, Dr Grace Wright, he was a member of the Local History Society. He was one of the first residents of the CARE village, moving there in 1984 and living there until its recent closure.

Hew was a unique person and well known in Ponteland village, where many people would stop to chat to him and



Hew pictured with Peter Beardsley opening the landscape garden at Care Village in 2008.

he always took an interest in people and local affairs.

He was a special member of the congregation at the Ponteland United Reformed Church on Broadway. Hew will be remembered with affection - a life well lived.



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