

pontnews&views

FREE monthly community magazine for Ponteland and district



Families brave the showers
for park party

Kirkley hosts national
tandem rally

Survey reveals downsizers'
demand for new homes

Defiant middle school pledges to go it alone



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Families brave the showers at Party in the Park

More than 2,000 people braved the showers to enjoy the 14th Party in the Park, raising funds for local charities.

Attractions included Richard Coates Middle School Choir and Orchestra, Ponteland Community Wind Band, the local Rock Choir, the Whistling Sheep ceilidh band and the Jill Errington Dance School.

The annual event is organised by the Christian Churches together in Ponteland - St. Mary's, St. Mathews Catholic Church, Ponteland Methodist Church and United Reformed Church - to create a social gathering for the families and children of Ponteland and to support local charities.

Organiser Barry Shaw said: "The fun fair and the bouncy castle were popular, as were the pony rides, tea tent and barbecue. The Air Cadets brought a flight simulator and the Army Cadets had an archery range.

"Our thanks also go to our sponsors Newcastle International Airport, the Town Council and Ponteland Churches Together. Despite the weather, preliminary indications point to a financial success which will be as usual to the benefit of our local charities."

Cover shot: Hannah Smith, two from Leigh on Sea in Essex, visiting her grandparents in Ponteland. Pic by The Image Farm.



Ben Gibson, four, from Ponteland, enjoys a sit in the fire engine



Kallum Murray, 11, from Ponteland, gets up close with a bearded dragon



Be alert to fraud

PC Lee Davison, Ponteland Rural
Neighbourhood Beat Manager



There have been 34 crimes reported for the Ponteland and surrounding area in May.

These break down to the following offences:

- One burglary to dwelling - Darras Hall (computer equipment and cash stolen)
- Two burglary other than dwelling - Darras Hall (pedal cycle and gardening equipment stolen)
- Six fraud offences
- Two thefts - Ponteland and Darras Hall (trailer with ride on lawnmower stolen)
- Two damage to dwelling – Ponteland
- Six damage other (recurring issues of damage caused at the skate park and leisure centre)
- Two make off without payment – Ponteland
- Three shoplifting (one at Sainsburys, two at the Co-op)
- Two assaults
- Two harassment offences
- Three sexual offences
- Two public order offences
- One possession of pointed article

Fraud alert

There have been recent reports of fraud in the area where people have been contacted via phone, and further details passed giving the impression that the person's bank account has been targeted and to transfer funds to a new account.

On occasion the sums involved have been into tens of thousands. Please be alert to any suspect activity:

Never disclose your PIN or online/telephone banking log-in information or card reader codes to anyone, even if the caller claims to be from the bank or police. Remember, banks will never call and ask you to disclose these security details.

If you receive a call requesting your PIN, card details or online/telephone banking log-in information, end the call immediately.

If you receive a suspicious or unexpected call, always verify the caller by taking their phone number and getting it checked independently.

Ensure elderly relatives and neighbours are aware of the fraud and crime prevention advice.

For up to date advice members of the public can contact Action Fraud - the UK's national, government led, fraud reporting centre which offers advice, support and prevention advice on fraud including fraud types, trends and current national scams - www.actionfraud.co.uk - access via Northumbria Police website - Action Fraud.

School run traffic problems

A further plea to motorists and parents when dropping off and collecting children from school. Please ensure that there are no obstructions to other motorists or pedestrians when parking near schools.

Please show consideration to elderly residents as there have been issues reported where children have been causing nuisance and distress to elderly residents on Thornhill Road. The pavement to front of the bungalows is for resident access and service use only.

Parking issues remain a problem throughout the village. Be aware that council enforcement officers are patrolling the area. Police have also been advising motorists and sending warning letters.

Community Speedwatch

CSW volunteers monitored more than 900 vehicles in the area throughout May. This resulted in 57 warning letters to motorists.

Police surgeries

Local police surgeries will take place on the following dates:

- Sat 2nd July 9.30am – 10.30am Merton Hall, Ponteland with CSO Paul Cotterill
- Sat 2nd July 11am – 12noon Coop, Broadway with CSO Paul Cotterill
- Sat 16th July 10am – 11am Waitrose, Ponteland with PC Lee Davison
- Sat 16th July 11.30am – 12.30pm Belsay shop with PC Lee Davison.

Contact the Ponteland Neighbourhood Team

Tel. 101 ext-69569

Email. easttynedale.npt@northumbria.pnn.police.uk



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Isolated middle school pledges to go it alone after restructure

The governors of Ponteland Community Middle School have pledged to proceed with the move to academy status this autumn as the only school of nine not part of a proposed new two tier structure.

Northumberland County Council's director of education Andy Johnson published a report to the May 24th meeting of the Cabinet setting out two systems of education sitting alongside each other, based on the individual governing bodies' response to the initial consultation.

Under the plans Belsay, Stamfordham and Whalton first schools and PCMS would have remained unchanged, while Darras Hall, Ponteland and Heddon St Andrews first schools would have converted to primary schools and Ponteland High School to an 11-18 secondary school. The changes would all be in place by September 2019.

But since then, Belsay, Stamfordham and Whalton first schools and Richard Coates CE Middle School have decided to instead also convert to primary schools, leaving Ponteland Middle School isolated as the only school in the local partnership outside the new system should the two tier restructure go ahead.

This is subject to a final decision to be taken in July by NCC's cabinet at the conclusion of a second consultation on the statutory proposals.

In a determined message to parents on June 20th, the governors of PCMS pledged to go it alone to ensure parents will continue to have the option of three tier education for their children.

Their letter said: "We want to reassure parents and the wider community that PCMS is 'here to stay' and will continue to offer and deliver an outstanding educational experience for your children.

"Our Academy Order has given us the opportunity to secure the future of PCMS which otherwise under the Council's two-tier proposals would have seen PCMS, the best academically attaining school in Ponteland, condemned to closure despite the strong opposition displayed by parents from schools within the Ponteland Partnership.

"The transition to academy status is a very challenging but exciting time for the school, and subject to PCMS meeting all the requirements from the Department of Education we are aiming to formally convert to an academy on 1st October 2016.

"We have an extremely positive outlook on the future, and we see that the award of an academy status will enhance the education provision within the Ponteland area. Working in partnership with parents and a range of stakeholders, we aim to explore opportunities for developing a sustainable education model – one that our community is both entitled to, and involved in shaping."

The latest consultation documents from NCC confirm that "... parents would retain the choice of selecting a 3-tier educational pathway for their children".

This is because parents will under the new dual system be able to choose whether at Year 5 to move their children from a primary school to Ponteland Middle School.



The latest visual from NCC for a new combined primary and secondary school.

But there has been a warning from the headteacher of Ponteland High School Kieran McGrane that up to 70 pupils leaving the middle school at the end of Year 8 may not be able to get a place at PHS as the school will have taken in additional pupils at Year 7 from outside Ponteland to fill the places of children who instead go to PCMS.

The county council has pledged funding for school transport to other high schools, which could include Morpeth, Newcastle and Prudhoe.

Parents accuse council of ignoring their wishes

Campaigning parents who set up a Facebook page which has more than 1,000 followers have continued to lobby against the proposed education restructure during the formal consultation period which ended on June 23rd.

They have accused the county council of ignoring their wishes after figures were leaked showing the overwhelming majority of parents who took part in the initial six week consultation in April/May objected to the restructure. Only 6% of the 1,200 parents who completed the questionnaire supported the closure of Ponteland Middle School.

MP Guy Opperman last month warned the authority against going ahead with the restructure if it does not have public support, saying: "If local people are opposed to these plans it would be a real mistake for the county council to go ahead."

A Northumberland County Council spokesperson said the authority was unable to comment on the figures during the statutory consultation process.

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Survey reveals high demand for new homes for downsizers

A survey of housing needs has revealed significant demand for smaller properties in Ponteland parish for homeowners looking to downsize.

More than 1,250 people took part in the survey by Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan Group, representing a response rate of almost two-thirds of households in Darras Hall, over a third in Ponteland but only 4% from the rural area.

Of the respondents, 77% were aged over 50 and 67% did not have a mortgage, with just over half living in a four or five-bedroomed home.

Almost a fifth said they intended to move within the next five years, with 35% citing having too many bedrooms as the reason and 30% due to retirement. Of these, 69% wanted to remain within the parish and 61% wanted to move to a detached bungalow.

The favoured house size was two bedroom (39%) and three bedroom (37%) but when asked what issues might prevent them moving, the biggest problem identified was lack of a suitable property (56%).

The survey also asked questions about

transport and shopping, which revealed nearly two-thirds would like to see a connection to the Metro system and 97% said they shopped in Ponteland – almost evenly split between for the main shop and top-up shopping.

The findings in the report will be used as part of the Neighbourhood Plan Group's submission to Northumberland County Council for Ponteland Civil Parish. This will be subject to a six week consultation and scrutiny by an independent examiner. If passed it will go to a full referendum and if more than 50% of voters support it, the plan will be adopted and become part of Local Development Plan for the area.

For more information visit pontelandneighbourhoodplan.co.uk

Meanwhile, the county council has launched a public consultation on modifications to the core strategy of the local plan - the final stage before it is submitted for review by an independent

inspector.

Changes in Ponteland, subject to a separate consultation in the autumn, include removal of a five hectare site just off the airport roundabout safeguarded for employment use and the addition of a two hectare site at Prestwick Park allocated for additional office development.

Housing numbers have remained the same, as has the proposal to remove the 70-hectare triangle bordered by Callerton Lane, Mayfair Gardens, Fairney Edge, Cheviot View and Rotary Way from the green belt for future development. However more detailed proposals for that area have been removed and the strategy shows more generally what uses would be.

The consultation runs until July 27th and for more information visit: northumberland.gov.uk/Planning/Planning-policy/Plan.aspx#localplan-corestrategy

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Steve Harper opens new school library

Former Newcastle United goalkeeper Steve Harper joined a Mad Hatters Tea Party as he officially opened Darras Hall First School's new library.

Staff and children dressed up for the Alice in Wonderland themed celebration, led by Key Stage 1 and English Co-ordinator Chris Eblett.

The mobile unit was donated by a school governor and parents assisted with painting and decorating and the donation of hundreds of books. The school had not previously had a dedicated library space.

A storytelling chair has also been purchased and local authors and a former headteacher will be among the visiting storytellers.

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Your letters

A plea to dog owners and thanks for the return of a watch in this month's letters...

Dog fouling in Ponteland Park

A recent random walkabout brought 11 sightings of dog fouling in several areas of our lovely park.

Despite the Town Council providing nine bins for general and dog waste in the park, this small scale survey is a poor reflection on, no doubt, a minority of dog owners who frequent our park.

Dog fouling is unpleasant and unsightly to come across. It can be caught on footwear, wheeled items e.g. bikes, pushchairs etc, but of more significance could prove to be dangerous.

Toxocariasis is caused by a parasite that lives in dogs' digestive systems. Eggs are released in the faeces of infected animals and contaminated soil. Toxocariasis can cause serious illness and blindness, including seizures, breathing difficulties, painful eyes which left untreated, can lead to permanent loss of sight.

Come on dog owner residents in Ponteland. Do your bit to keep our park safe and clean for the safety and enjoyment of all park users.

Councillor Christine Caisley
Ponteland Town Council



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Derek's watch returned after letter in Pont News

I'm just following up on behalf of my friend Derek Burns, aka Derek the Butcher from Merton Way Butchers and The Diamond Inn.

One of the local residents Craig was waiting for his wife Mary to arrive at The Diamond and perused the articles in the publication. Craig read with interest the letter sent in from the lovely Mr Liddle at Barclays Bank and informed Derek that his watch had been found.

Derek was overwhelmed that someone had gone to this extent to reunite him with his treasured possession and has asked me to inform you of his appreciation of not only just the bank colleague but also the community spirit of the person who handed it in at the time.

He thanks Pont News & Views greatly also for taking the time to publish the article that enabled him to take ownership of a valued item once again.

Leanne Beswick on behalf of Derek Burns
Green Acres, Darras Hall

Do you have information on Prestwick Carr?

I am attempting to identify owners of plots of land within the Prestwick Carr, which extends over 1,000 acres between Ponteland, Dinnington and Prestwick.

Owners paid 'Drainage Boards' to maintain and improve the Carr's water courses. I have found information about the ratepayers in the Drainage District's predecessors, the Internal Drainage Board and Drainage Board from the 1940s to 1975, at the Northumberland Archive at Woodhorn Museum in Ashington.

In 1975 the then Drainage Board was included into Northumbrian Water Ltd and renamed the Prestwick Carr Drainage District, eventually abolished in 1984. I have found little information after 1975.

If you can help can you contact me at johnoftanfield@yahoo.co.uk or 01207 238648.

John Grey
The Hayricks, Tanfield, County Durham

August issue deadlines: Delivery of the August issue will start on Thursday July 28th and be completed by Tuesday August 2nd. The deadline for all copy and adverts is Thursday July 14th. If you are aware of any missed properties please contact the editor at 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 August 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.

What's on...

Kirkley WI

Kirkley WI looks forward to a change of format at their meeting at 2pm on Wednesday July 6th when members have the opportunity to experience a guided tour of the zoo at Kirkley Hall, followed by a cream tea in the Orangery café. No meeting in August.

Ponteland U3A

Our speaker at the monthly meeting on Wednesday July 6th is Colin Buxton and his subject 'The Battle of the Somme'. We meet in St Mary's Church Hall at 2pm on the first Wednesday of the month. Visitors are welcome. See www.u3asites.org.uk/ponteland or ring (01661) 822225.

Ponteland Business Network

Ponteland Business Network's next business breakfast meeting is at the Diamond Inn from 7.45am to 9.45am on Friday July 8th. 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. Contact: Brian Russell at pbn@profitabilitygroup.co.uk

Eland Green Farm open garden

The garden at Eland Green Farm will be open in aid of The British Red Cross on Sunday July 10th from 11am until 4.30pm. There will be afternoon teas as well as music courtesy of The Cherry Pickers & also a raffle with some nice prizes from local businesses.

Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

At our meeting at 2.30pm on Monday July 11th in the lounge of Ponteland Memorial Hall, Darras Road, we have Steve and Carol Wilson Fools Gold Acoustic Music.

Ponteland WI

Ponteland WI meets in the lounge of Ponteland Memorial Hall at 7pm on the second Tuesday of the month. Our speaker on July 12th is from Tom & Joe's - Wylam Nurseries on 'Growing in Containers'. The competition is for a single rose. Visitors are welcome.

Plant Heritage North East Grand Plant Fair

The Plant Heritage North East Grand Plant Fair will be at Blagdon Hall on Sunday July 17th from 10am to 3pm. Home made teas and a treasure trail for children. Entry £3, free to children and Plant Heritage members.

Ponteland Rugby Club 50th anniversary fun day

Ponteland Rugby Club is holding a 50th anniversary fun day on Sunday July 17th

from 12noon to 4pm. Attractions include inflatables, rides, games, music, food and drink stalls and a bbq. See advert on p21.

Ponteland Community Partnership

Come to a meeting and share your ideas, concerns and expectations for improving the quality of life in our community. All welcome. We next meet at Ponteland Town Council offices at 7pm on Wednesday July 20th. Contact: pontelandcommunitypartnership.co.uk or shirley@reevehill.plus.com

Gardeners' Question Time

Kirkley Hall hosts a Gardeners' Question Time on Thursday July 20th at 7pm. Organised by Friends of Kirkley Hall, the panel covers a wide variety of backgrounds. John Guy is known to many and is Head of Horticulture at Kirkley Hall, Debbie Crombie is Head Gardener at the National Trust property at Gibside and Nigel Lawton is Head of the Plants Department at Heighley Gate Garden Centre. Questions and samples can be brought on the night or sent in beforehand. Question Time will be preceded with a glass of wine or fruit juice which is included in the ticket price of £5 for non-members. Tickets can be ordered by ringing Brenda Parke on (01661) 853489 who will also give details of how to send in questions for the panel.

Embroiderers' Guild Ponteland Branch

Monday July 25th 2pm - 4pm Memorial Hall, Darras Road. Join us to explore new stitches with folios on loan from the Embroiderer's Guild collection. Non-members £4. For further information contact ponteland.eg@btinternet.com or (01661) 88139.

The Bridge @ Ponteland Methodist Church

Church with a difference. Most Sundays at 4pm in the church hall. All welcome. Kids' activities provided. Dates in July: 3rd, 10th (all age worship in church garden), 24th, 31st. For more info: thebridge.ponteland@gmail.com or find us on Facebook.

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.

Inner Wheel Club of Ponteland

We meet every Tuesday each month (except August) at 2pm in Merton Hall. We have

a speaker, break for a cup of tea etc. then conduct our business arranging coffee mornings, fund raising activities and visiting other clubs in the district etc. We are a friendly group and any lady interested in finding out more can contact Eleanor Carr on (01661) 871768.

Rotary Club of Ponteland

Rotary Club of Ponteland meet every Tuesday at Ponteland Golf Club. The meetings alternate between lunch times (1st and 3rd Tuesdays) and evenings (2nd and 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 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.

Ponteland Village Bridge Club

Would you like a friendly game of bridge? Ponteland Village Bridge Club meet every Friday evening in Merton Hall at 7pm. We play 20 boards of relaxed duplicate bridge. If you don't have a partner you can still come along, please telephone Pete Ford our Chairman on 07739 208308 and if possible he will fix you up with a partner.

Pont Badminton Club

Pont Badminton Club meets every Friday evening between 8.30pm and 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.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Duck Race

One of the biggest events in the annual calendar, Ponteland Rotary Club Duck Race takes place at Ponteland Park on Sunday September 4th. Full preview to follow in the August issue.

Ponteland Parish Flower Show

The 39th Annual Show will be held in Ponteland Memorial Hall on Saturday September 10th. There are 133 classes covering flowers, vegetables, fruit, children, cookery, handicrafts, art, wine, and photography. The schedule can also be accessed electronically at pontelandflowershow.co.uk and paper schedules with entry forms are available in Ponteland Library and various other locations in Ponteland, also in Heddon-on-the-Wall, Belsay and Dinnington. Children's entries are free. Any queries - please contact Syd Cowan at syd.cowan@btinternet.com or on (01661) 824459.



GRANTS

Request for annual grant towards ground maintenance costs – Holy Saviour Church, Milbourne

The Council approved a £350 grant towards the cost of ground maintenance for the churchyard following an application.

ANNUAL AUDIT 2015-16

The Council considered and approved the Annual Return which must be submitted to the external auditors by July 18th. A copy of the internal auditor's report was also considered. He had no issues to draw to the attention of the Council.

QUEEN'S 90TH BIRTHDAY UPDATE

An update report relating to various events that were still to be held in Ponteland to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday was presented to the Council. Events included a Treasure Hunt in the Park on Saturday June 11th. Merton Hall was also holding an event on June 11th. Party in the Park and Music in the Park would both have a royal theme and the Methodist Church was holding a tea dance on Saturday July 9th. The Council expressed gratitude to everyone who had been involved in the organisation of the various events.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECOVERY SERVICE

Information had been received from the County Council regarding proposed changes to the waste recovery service across several sites in the county including the one at Kirkley West Thorn that was used by residents of Ponteland. One suggestion was a reduction in the number of days the facility was open. It is anticipated that any changes will be made after the summer. There will be a formal consultation on this and the Council agreed to note the information and await the start of the consultation process which they would comment on.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Coun Dodd commented on the schools consultation, saying it appeared that Ponteland would have a combination of two and three tier education. There is to be a further consultation on the sports provision. Coun Dodd also reported that he had funds to do some work to the car park at the back of the Merton Way shops in an attempt to stop the abuse of this facility. He will be working with the county council and the Town Council's Highways Working Party on this issue. It appears that the regeneration of Merton Way is no longer included in the Core Strategy. Coun Dodd is in contact with county council officers regarding the structure that had been erected in Brewery Lane.

This report is based on the minutes of a meeting of Ponteland Town Council held on June 8th.

Rep kids hold debut solo show

By Lesley Eltringham

Ponteland Rep's youngest members are holding their debut solo show in July, when they will perform a selection of theatre, comedy sketches and scripted scenes from well known productions.

For only £1 you can enjoy some of the best known scenes from Alice in Wonderland, Fiddler on the Roof and Laundry Girls which The Preppies have directed and devised themselves.

With over 40 members, The Preppies are Ponteland's youngest theatre enthusiasts, and have already made their talent felt in the Rep's productions Wind in the Willows and Oliver!

The Preppies Youth Theatre show is being held on Saturday July 9th at Ponteland Memorial Hall and starts at 6.30pm. Tickets can be bought at the door. Do come and join us for an entertaining evening supporting our local youth theatre.




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Kirkley hosts national tandem rally

More than 250 tandem riders from as far afield as Germany and Holland are to attend a national rally being held at Kirkley Hall in August.

It is the first time The Tandem Club's UK National Rally has been held in Northumberland since 1990, when it was hosted by Corbridge.

The week-long event includes a welcome party, number of rides, a trip to Beamish Museum, outward bound activities, and evening entertainment including a last night ceilidh and hog roast.

Members will stay in a makeshift campsite on a field in the grounds in tents, caravans and campervans from August 6th to 13th.

Event organiser Vanessa Bulloch, from Gosforth, said: "We are expecting up to 300 people. We have half a dozen coming from Holland and someone from the Rhineland in Germany – they will arrive on the ferry. We also have a family cycling up from Somerset, where last year's national rally was held.

"We always hold a rally in the UK and another abroad – next year we are in the Ribble Valley."

The Tandem Club was formed in the UK in 1971 to provide unobtainable spare parts and technical advice on maintenance, and now boasts a worldwide membership of more than 5,000 enthusiasts.

Tandem riders interested in taking part should visit tandem-club.org.uk

Local Tandem Club members Rick and Rachel with their children at Kirkley Hall. Photo by The Image Farm.



KIRKLEY HALL
CONFERENCES | WEDDINGS | EVENTS

The Marratones

Thursday 14th July, 7pm for 7:30pm (doors open from 6:30pm)

A combination of great hits from the 60s all the way up to current dancefloor fillers! £11.95pp



The Proms on the Lawn

Friday 15th July, 7pm for 7:30pm

We are hosting our very own night at the proms, with live music from Ellington Colliery Band ranging from modern hits to old classics! £11.95pp



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Children walking in the air after meeting snowdog

Children at Ponteland First School are taking part in one of the biggest ever mass participation art events to be held in the North East.

Great North Snowdogs, inspired by the animated short film, The Snowman™ and The Snowdog, is a large-scale public art event featuring the lovable Snowdog character.

The project will see a sponsored sculpture trail with a series of individually designed Snowdog sculptures, painted by both well-known and undiscovered artists, for ten weeks during this autumn and winter complete with a trail map and dedicated app.

Once the trail ends, the sculptures will be auctioned at a glittering event in December, to raise funds for St Oswald's Children's Hospice. A separate trail of smaller Snowdogs, created by local schoolchildren and community groups will also be exhibited, celebrating the talent of the young people of the region.

Students at Ponteland First School were introduced to their Snowdog in a special unveiling assembly hosted by Nick Powell, Project Administrator at St Oswald's.

Year 3 teacher Carly Frame said: "We are very excited to be involved with the Great North Snowdog project. The children are enthusiastically creating their own designs and there was a real sense of excitement when our sculpture was unveiled."

Schools and businesses wanting to get involved in Great North Snowdogs can visit greatnorthsnowdogs.co.uk



Children pose with teacher Carly Frame and their Snowdog



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Campaigning children meet MP

Children taking part in a national campaign which promotes quality education across the globe enjoyed a visit from Ponteland MP Guy Opperman.

Send My Friend to School, run by the UK coalition of the Global Campaign for Education, has brought together thousands of children from across the UK to lobby world leaders.

Year 6 pupils at Richard Coates Middle School have been

researching the campaign and created a message board for the MP.

Mr Opperman said: "It was great to see the children at Richard Coates Middle School so inspired and enthusiastic about this important issue. Increasing community awareness of the state of education internationally is very important and the pupils are doing a fantastic jobs of highlighting the importance of education for all."

MP Guy Opperman with the Year 6 pupils from Richard Coates Middle School. Photo by The Image Farm.

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Ponteland High School rowers win Vaux Trophy at Durham Regatta

Three Ponteland High School rowers were in the winning team which secured the Vaux Trophy at the 183rd Durham Regatta.

The trophy, donated by the family of the famous local brewery, is presented annually to the winners of the J14 coxed quad category.

The Tyne United crew for the event included Ponteland High School's Max Forrest, Fraser Hutt and Will Viney, and Michael Bessent and cox Ethan King from St Thomas More School in Blaydon.

With a large entry for the competition, the Tyne United crew had to compete in a round of heats in order to qualify for the semi-final stage of the competition. Victories in their semi-final and the final earned them the trophy.

The regatta, which took place on the weekend June 11th and 12th, also saw victories for Will Viney and Michael Bessent in the J14 double sculls and Michael Bessent in the J14 single sculls.

The trophy and winners' tankards were presented at the awards ceremony held at Durham Gala Theatre on the Sunday evening by the Mayor of Durham, Eddie Bell.



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Introducing the new look ...



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IN PRACTICE

Strolling down Main Street, maybe to do a little shopping at Waitrose, you may have noticed there is something a little different about the Geoff Steven & Sons practice now.

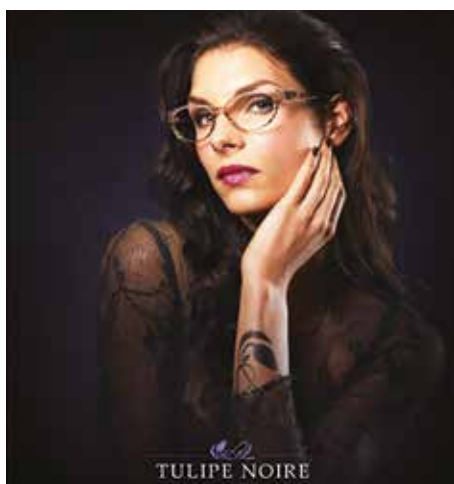
In celebration of 70 years in practice, the Ponteland branch has had a complete refit. Beautiful décor and displays of stylish frames lends an atmosphere of relaxation

- **15% off all frames for the day**
- **Join us for fizz and canapés**
- **Special selection of fabulous designer frames**

Come and join us for fizz and canapés, while browsing a fine range of beautiful frames with a special 15% discount on the day. Geoff Steven (now retired) will officially open the newly refurbished practice at 12 noon.

and enjoyment whilst patients choose their new frames from the wide range on offer.

Geoff, Mark and Christopher Steven would like to extend a warm invitation to all residents of Ponteland and Darras Hall to celebrate 70 years in practice and the refurbishment of the Ponteland shop on **Saturday 23rd July 2016.**



We stock stylish, popular brands such as **Oakley** and **Rayban**, **William Morris**, **Silhouette** and many more. We also seek out special ranges such as **Tulipe Noire** (left) and **Walter & Herbert** (right).

In 1672 the Tulipe Society in Holland offered a prize of 100,000 guilders for the discovery of a large black tulip, something which had never been accomplished and was considered impossible.

Tulipe Noire symbolizes this drive for perfection. The designers dedicate their time to achieving the ultimate ladies eyewear.

Walter and Herbert: In September 1946, two young entrepreneurs partnered to create Optoplast Manufacturing. In the 40 years that followed, Walter Conway and Herbert Thorn enjoyed great success as they developed technology such as the PIMO machine, an innovation that would shape the way spectacles were manufactured worldwide.

Today, James Conway and Daniel Thorn are continuing this legacy. Using seven decades of industry experience,



they have created their own collection of frames using materials and techniques that would make Walter and Herbert proud **and are the only frames to be manufactured in the UK.**

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Record number of players get county call-up

A record number of players have been called up to play for the county this year as the sport of badminton enjoys an upsurge of interest in Ponteland.

Phil Hall has coached the players since they were Year 4 pupils at the local first schools, and now holds training sessions at the leisure centre.

He said: "I've been coaching the sport in the area for nearly ten years and have seen interest amongst juniors and adults increase significantly in that time.

"This has led to an upsurge in juniors representing the county; we now have nine and it's the first time the village has had as many county badminton representatives."

For more information on Ponteland Badminton Club visit: northumberlandbadminton.org/clubs/ponteland/

Pictured are county badminton players: (back row l-r) Matthew Grant; Jamie Grant; Tim Bodani; Lucy Dodd; Jack Tilbury and (front row l-r) James Dodd; Rachel Bogan and Gabriel Rodda.



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Street party celebrates Queen's 90th birthday

By Helen Lever (Linden Way resident)

The residents of Linden Way in Darras Hall held a street party in honour of the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations.

The age range of neighbours taking part spanned from four to 90 and many of the neighbours did not know each other, yet had lived on the same street for many years. An all too familiar reality for many people today.

Our street party, held on June 11th, certainly changed all that though - and without a doubt new and great friendships were made that night. So great was the event, all the neighbours have requested an annual street party! We can't wait until next year.

Not even the rain could dampen our spirits. Every neighbour brought food and drinks and the chat, laughter and fun continued, with the children of the area out playing games, football and bike riding together up to 11pm.

Following on from such a great evening, we would love it if Pont News would print a photo of our event.

Editor's note: Happy to oblige!



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Longer opening hours and refurbished meeting room for Memorial Hall

Ponteland Memorial Hall has new extended opening hours and a refurbished meeting room following the appointment of a new hall secretary and award of a Lottery grant.

The new opening hours, which follow Trish Hardy's arrival as new hall secretary, will from July be Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 2pm to 4pm. Contact can still be made with the hall outside these hours by email at infopmh@yahoo.co.uk and by telephone on (01661) 822603 (answering machine available).

Having received a generous grant of £10,000 from the Big Lottery Fund, the hall now has a refurbished rear meeting room which can seat up to 25 and is ideal for meetings of smaller groups and associations. A new unisex fully accessible toilet is adjacent to the meeting room. Facilities for making hot drinks are also available.

Rental charges for the room have been kept low to encourage groups and associations to consider this facility as their meeting place.

The Annual General Meeting of the Hall Committee will be held at the Memorial Hall on Thursday 28th July at 7pm and local residents, particularly those who might be interested in becoming involved in the management of the hall, are welcome to attend.



Kumon students honoured at awards ceremony

Hard working Kumon students were awarded medals and certificates by Ponteland Mayor Carl Rawlings at a ceremony at the Memorial Hall.

The pupils from the Kumon Ponteland and Gateshead Low Fell study centres were recognised at the Advanced Student Honour Roll awards event on June 4th, which 300 guests attended.

Kumon Maths and English Programmes enable children to develop their independent study skills and confidently tackle advanced work beyond the international standard for their age. The students receiving awards have all reached and surpassed the Kumon International Standard.

For information on Kumon at Ponteland or Gateshead Low Fell, please contact Liz Burrin at ponteland@kumoncentre.co.uk or call (01661) 823273.



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Ponteland U16s win back-to-back county championships

Ponteland Rugby Club's under-16s have been crowned county champions for the second year running.

Trailing 15 - 3 at half time to Percy Park under-16s in the County Cup Final at Druid Park, Ponteland U16s stepped up several gears in the second half to score three unanswered tries by Ollie Gowing, Zak Thompson and James Mould - all of which were converted by Ryan Gerrard to give a final score of Ponteland 24 Percy Park 15.

Northumberland County President Ken Fraser presented the cup and Ponteland Rugby Club President Tony Murphy presented the Dr Nicholson Trophy to Paul Gerrard, Andy Reeman and the boys for what has been another very special season, having won the county under-15s cup last season.

Next season the players will move up to play Colts rugby.

The cup-winning U16s team is pictured with coaches Paul Gerrard (left) and Andy Reeman (right).

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Ponteland Leisure Centre,
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Would you like to help a person with dementia?

Volunteers are being sought for a new service being launched in Newcastle to support people with dementia.

Called 'Side by Side', the community support service is being run by Alzheimer's Society Newcastle and is designed to help sufferers to undertake hobbies and interests and enable them to have a happier and more fulfilling life.

The charity is looking for volunteers who would be interested in working with people with dementia one-to-one in Newcastle, for example supporting someone to go shopping, attend an exercise class or visit their local leisure centre or library.

Volunteers would need to be able to commit to at least a couple of hours on a weekly or fortnightly basis for a minimum of eight to 12 months, following the relevant checks, and training will be given.

Anyone interested in volunteering can contact Louise Borrell or Fiona Swindell at newcastle@alzheimers.org.uk or on (0191) 298 3989.



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Enjoy starters such as the Murgh Haryali which has fewer than 250 calories and the Chicken Tikka Masala with fewer than 450 calories. When combined with our signature lower carb cauliflower 'faux' rice, you can enjoy a curry with conscience...every day.

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Jesmond-based nutritional therapist and weight loss coach Helen Buchan told the Journal:

"Given all the wonderful health-giving spices that go into Indian food it ought to be a healthy option but, alas, it so often isn't.

"The dishes I sampled had the emphasis on healthy, good quality, raw ingredients. Sauces were packed full of

fabulous health-giving ingredients like coconut oil, ginger and fresh coriander and relied on powdered coconut and almond to lightly thicken rather than flour or cream.

"It is healthy delicious food that will not expand your waistline."

Read more from Helen at www.feelamazing.co.uk

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