

pontnews&views

FREE monthly community magazine for Ponteland and district



Green belt protest boards
taken down

.....
Anxious wait for Britain in
Bloom verdict

.....
Police warning over car
thieves on mopeds

**Charity open
garden event raises
over £5,000**



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Open garden day raises £5,000 for charity

More than 500 visitors enjoyed an open garden event at Coldcotes Moor Farm which raised in excess of £5,000 for charity.

Ron and Louise Bowey opened up its 15 acres of landscaped grounds and woods on Sunday, August 6th in support of the charities associated with the National Garden Scheme.

The farm has a courtyard garden which leads to an ornamental walled garden, orchard, vegetable garden, flower garden and rose arbour, and to the south there is a lake and field walks and a woodland walk to the west. For younger visitors there was also a play area to entertain them.

Ron said: "We had a very successful day with 522 adults and around 30 to 40 children raising around £4,000 on the day. We also have a JustGiving website which has raised over £1,000 from those who would have liked to come but couldn't make it. So a total of over £5,000 was raised.

"The rain was forecast for 4pm but arrived early at around 2.30pm which sadly will have deterred a few people and stopped us exceeding the previous total of 670 people. Despite this all those who came reported having a good time."

Photos by The Image Farm.



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Beware would-be car thieves on mopeds

By PC Darren Fisher



Introducing your new Neighbourhood Police Officers for the Ponteland area, I am PC Darren Fisher and my colleague is PC Ingrid Clayton.

Here is your monthly crime and disorder update. There have been 36 crimes recorded during the period from July 21st to August 21st for Ponteland and the surrounding area:

- six assaults
- four thefts (shoplifting)
- one theft from person
- one theft in dwelling
- three thefts (other)
- six thefts from motor vehicles
- two thefts of motor vehicles
- one burglary dwelling
- two burglary other than dwelling
- two criminal damages
- three damage (other)
- two fraud offences
- two malicious communications
- one public order offence.

Anti-social behaviour

There have been 15 reports of anti-social behaviour in the Ponteland area during the above time period. We continue to conduct high visible patrols in the relevant area and will take positive action where offenders can be identified.

Crime prevention

For residents and contractors working in the area, please check your vehicle has been secured properly if left unattended and place all valuables out of view. There have been incidents of youths riding on mopeds within the housing estates acting suspiciously, checking driveways and unattended motor vehicles. It only takes a matter of seconds if the keys are left within for the vehicle to be stolen. Double check that your vehicle has been locked and report any suspicious activity.

Speeding

Community Speedwatch members have highlighted over the recent weeks an issue particularly on Middle Drive, Darras Hall, of a number of vehicles that are exceeding the speed limit. Those vehicles which have been identified will be dealt with accordingly. We are looking at measures to educate and deter speeding offences.

School run parking

The school term will commence in September and we are wanting to send out a message to parents/carers on school drop off/pick up to consider where they park. Do not park obstructing driveways/school gates/bus stops/laybys and also nearby junctions. There are options available, i.e. free car parks/Blackbird Inn and Waitrose which can be used respectively within the relevant times.

If you have any concerns or issues then email easttynedale.npt@northumbria.pnn.police.uk or please call us on 101.



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Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan



Important announcement on the forthcoming Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan Referendum 28th September

Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan has now passed Independent Examination. All of the recommendations made by the Examiner have been accepted by the Steering Group, Town Council, and Northumberland County Council. Preparations are being made for a local Referendum in the designated area of Ponteland Civil Parish.

During the next few weeks, if you are on the electoral role, you will receive a polling card for voting at the Referendum to be held on 28th September 2017.

This is rather like an election. However, instead of voting for a person you vote either YES or NO as to whether you think the 32 planning policies in the Neighbourhood Plan should be used by Northumberland County Council to help decide planning applications in Ponteland parish.

You can vote at your local Polling Station between 7am to 10pm on the 28th September or arrange for a postal vote which must be returned to the County Council by 28th September 2017.

This referendum is the community's opportunity to decide whether they support the Neighbourhood Plan which would then be used alongside existing planning policies to influence all future planning applications and decisions.

Why a Neighbourhood Plan?

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by a volunteer steering group on behalf of Ponteland Town Council. The Plan has 32 policies promoting:

- Sustainable Development Principles

- Protection of our Built Heritage
- Protection of the Natural Environment
- Growth of the Local Economy
- A mix of housing to meet local needs
- Community well-being
- Flooding and sustainable drainage
- Transport and movement.

What happens without a Neighbourhood Plan?

If more people vote No, than Yes, then planning applications will continue to be decided without using Ponteland Neighbourhood Plan.

Where can I view the Ponteland Plan?

You can view the Referendum Version of the Plan on the County Council's website at:
www.northumberland.gov.uk/ourplan

Or, a copy of the Plan can be viewed at:

Ponteland Town Council Office,
Meadowfield Court, Meadowfield
Industrial Estate during opening
hours Monday to Friday, 9.30am to
12.30pm.

Or further information can be obtained
by telephone on 01661 825092
Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 12.30pm

Or visit: www.ponteland-tc.gov.uk or
www.pontelandneighbourhoodplan.co.uk

**Please watch out for the polling
cards and make a note of the date.**

**Voting day
28th September 2017**



Protest boards taken down after county council withdraws core strategy

Protest boards which have been a prominent addition to the street scene in Ponteland for nearly four years have been taken down by green belt campaigners.

The move came in response to the decision by the new Northumberland County Council administration to withdraw the Northumberland Core Strategy Draft Plan at the council meeting on July 5th.

New county council leader Peter Jackson has indicated he does not believe development of the green belt is needed; the review of the long term planning blueprint for the county will include housing and employment numbers and strategic land use allocations it had proposed up to 2031.

This had included a projected increase in housing in the county of 24,320 plus another 2,000 houses at Dissington Garden Village. This would have meant more than 3,000 new homes for the Ponteland area, with 228 hectares of green belt land released for development.

Tony Noble from Ponteland Green Belt Group said: "Ponteland 'Say No' boards have served their purpose; they have been part of our lives for nearly four years and the use of the boards received national press coverage. We never envisaged that they would be needed for so long! At the height of the campaign there were over 150 boards on display.

"Withdrawal of the Core Strategy will ensure that the new administration has the time and the resource to undertake a review of the excessive housing numbers proposed across Northumberland and the unnecessary deletion of Green Belt. This is great news for Ponteland - the submitted Core Strategy provided no protection whatsoever for Ponteland residents - no Core Strategy is better than this Core Strategy.

"We have every confidence that the new administration at County Hall is going to listen to residents; this is the start of the process. We are hopeful that we will have an adopted Core Strategy that will not destroy our community.

"As a vote of confidence in the new administration to do the 'right thing', residents have made the decision that now is

the right time to take the boards down. Ponteland Green Belt Group will be closely monitoring the situation as we move through the review of the Core Strategy and the required Public Consultation process."

The review of the core strategy leaves major developments effectively in limbo. A county council spokeswoman said there was no progress to report on the following:

- the review of the core strategy
- the submission of the plans for the 2,000-home Dissington garden village to the National Planning Casework Unit (NCC indicated in March it was 'minded to approve')
- an indication from the NPCU whether the proposals by Banks Property for a 400-home scheme on Clickemin Farm (which NCC also indicated in March it was 'minded to approve') will be called in by the Secretary of State for decision or referred back to the county council for a final decision
- the determination of the planning application from Hellens Group to build 187 homes on a 22-acre site between Callerton Lane and Willow Way, from Callerton Court to Edge Hill, at the eastern edge of Darras Hall
- the £57m education and leisure scheme for Ponteland (the outline planning application which had previously been approved was withdrawn in June to enable review although NCC said the scheme would go ahead).



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Anxious wait for Britain in Bloom judges' verdict

After months of work and preparation, the verdict of Royal Horticultural Society judges on Ponteland's Britain in Bloom entry is being anxiously awaited.

It is the region's hope for the small town category in the national competition, having won gold medals for the past five years in the regional Northumbria in Bloom contest.

A group of volunteers led by former Mayor Robin Ramsay MBE and former town councillor Joyce Butcher has spent months working on the entry, supported by various local organisations, numerous local businesses and the high school, including weeding, litter picking, general tidying up and the creation of stunning floral displays.

Ponteland Mayor Alan Varley said: "The response from the businesses, organisations and the community has been overwhelming this year.

Ponteland Town Council would like to thank our contractors, Iain Clough, Michael Champion, Jim Scott, and Derek and Calum Sherlock.

"A big thank you must go to former councillors Joyce Butcher and Robin Ramsay, who despite stepping down from the Town Council in May have provided a great deal of help with both entries which is much appreciated."

Judges for the small town category Kate Dagnall and Brendan Mowforth were taken on a tour of the town, including the park, Broadway in Darras Hall and the centre of Ponteland on August 9th.

There are 78 finalists, from Aberdeen to St Helier in Jersey, all being assessed across three key criteria: horticultural achievement; community participation; and environmental responsibility. An awards event will be held in Llandudno, North Wales, on Friday October 27th.

Pictured (l-r) are Robin Ramsay MBE, RHS judges Kate Dagnall and Brendan Mowforth, Joyce Butcher and Ponteland in Bloom volunteer David Goodchild. Also the floral display on Coates Green.



4

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Your letters

The Editor
Pont News & Views



Thanks for help with the Britain in Bloom entry and concern at a bus route change in this month's letters...

Thank you for help with Britain in Bloom entry

On behalf of Ponteland in Bloom may I give a big thank you anyone who helped with the entry?

Our thanks must include to the organisers and volunteers for projects such as the Bridle Path, Sally's walk, wild meadow murals (by High School) for the sensory garden.

Also the many businesses who supported the venture either with their own display or financial support. Displays provided by various house owners in their front gardens were an integral part of the show.

The final weeding and tidying up by volunteers (including Town Councillors) and litter pickers was a tremendous help in completing our work. Last but by no means least we need to recognise the effort and support provided by the Town Council, the clerk, staff and contractors which was essential in getting Ponteland up to such a high standard.

It has been wonderful to be part of such a scheme which is fully supported by the community and the many compliments have been much appreciated. Judging both for Northumbria and Britain in Bloom has now been completed. We await the results which hopefully will be good.

Once again my grateful thanks to all who have given so freely of their time to support this splendid work.

Robin Ramsay MBE
Ponteland in Bloom

New bus route no good for RVI appointments

Last week my wife, who walks with a zimmer frame, had an appointment

at the RVI at the Richardson Road location.

We were alarmed to see that buses on this route when going into Newcastle no longer go along Queen Victoria Road and down St Thomas's Street.

The bus company plugs the point that buses now stop in Claremont Road, convenient for the RVI, but certainly not convenient for the Richardson Road part of the hospital. In fact, the said stop could be the best part of a mile from the Richardson Road entrance.

Previously, the bus went along Queen Victoria Road with a stop around the corner in St Thomas Street, directly opposite the main gate to the RVI. In St Thomas's Street one could get a bus stopping outside the main Richardson Road entrance. What could be simpler?

I hope Ponteland Town Council will investigate the current route and recommend returning to the previous route.

Incidentally, we waited in the rain on Thursday August 3rd for the 09.41, but after 30 minutes had to ask a neighbour to take us to the RVI for the appointment, which my wife has had to wait some weeks.

Maurice Hall
Sandringham Way, Ponteland

Estate Committee should target lazy drivers and gardeners

Dear Darras Hall Estate Committee, you guys seem very keen to fight crusades against builders and hound people for their payments; personally I wish you'd put the same effort into the trivia of the estate.

We seem to be acquiring more and more residents who are incapable of trimming their front hedges or parking

their cars on the roads, or both.

Perhaps they think that people with buggies or wheelchairs have telescopic legs which allow them to navigate the six inch gaps left after their abysmal parking and bone idle maintenance, or maybe they just like the idea of babies being pushed on main roads into oncoming traffic?

Come on Darras, get a grip of this.

Steve Eglon
Western Way, Darras Hall

Pedestrians and drivers causing concern

Driving along Middle Drive recently, we caught up with a young boy travelling quite fast along the gutter on a skateboard.

We held back waiting for a gap in the oncoming traffic so that we could give him a wide berth. Suddenly he came off the skateboard and landed sprawled across our half of the road just in front of us. He was, luckily, uninjured but the outcome could have been very different; he appeared to be totally unsupervised.

I am also concerned by the indiscriminate parking of vehicles on the school run. We can all see how the grass verge is damaged on Callerton Lane. But worse is on Eastern Way where vehicles park on a bend, or close to the junction with Middle Drive and possibly in a long line.

I have written to two headteachers about the dangers of this, particularly to the younger pedestrians weaving in and out of the cars. One replied that the school had not created the situation, the other did not even respond.

Pat Pearcy
Willow Place, Ponteland

October issue deadlines: Delivery of the October issue will start on Thursday September 28th and be completed by Wednesday October 4th. The deadline for all copy and adverts is Thursday September 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 October 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...

Ponteland Wildlife Group

Ponteland Wildlife Group will be meeting again at St Mary's Church Hall at 7.30pm on Tuesday September 5th with an illustrated talk about how the winter rains transform the desert in South Africa. All welcome.

Ponteland U3A

We meet on the first Wednesday of the month in St. Mary's Church Hall at 2pm. On September 6th Tom Martin will speak on 'Planting Autumn Baskets and Pots'. Visitors always welcome; no charge. For more information visit u3asites.org.uk/Ponteland or call (01661) 824953.

Kirkley WI

Meetings resume on Wednesday September 6th at 7pm in the Oak Room at Kirkley Hall. The speaker will be Nigel Barlow from Northumbria Blood Bikes. Visitors always very welcome.

Ponteland Parish Flower Show

The 40th Ponteland Parish Flower Show is being held at the Memorial Hall on Saturday September 9th. See article on page 17.

Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

At our meeting at 2.30pm on Monday September 11th in the lounge of Ponteland Memorial Hall, Darras Road, Aimee Nicholson will talk about The RSPB Hen Harrier Life Project.

Ponteland Photographic Society

Ponteland Photographic Society's monthly meetings restart on Monday September 11th at Merton Hall, starting at 7.30pm. New members welcome. See pontelandphotographicsociety.co.uk

North East England Group of the Alpine Garden Society

On Monday September 11th we are delighted to welcome Alan Furness to talk about David Boyd's Woodland Garden at Ponteland Social Club (CIU) on Merton Way at 7.30pm. Visitors £2. Visit alpinegardensociety.net/groups/North-East-England or email neegroup@agsgroups.org or follow us on Facebook.

Ponteland WI

Ponteland WI meet in the lounge of the Memorial Hall at 7pm on the second Tuesday of the month. Our talk on September 12th includes a slide show on the National Garden Scheme. Visitors are welcome.

Ponteland Village WI

Our next monthly meeting is on Tuesday September 12th at 7.30pm in St Mary's Church Hall when we are welcoming Cowells who will be talking to us about gardening and we will also be having a seed swap. New members and visitors are welcome (visitors £3 incl. cuppa and homemade treat). Contact us at pontelandvillagewi@hotmail.com or on our Facebook page 'PontelandVillageWI'.

Ponteland Lions Club

Our business meetings resume again on Wednesday September 13th at 7.30pm in Merton Hall and our social meeting will be on Wednesday September 27th. Visitors welcome. Our charity fund book stall will be at Waitrose on Saturday September 30th from 9am till 4pm. For details of our club phone 0845 833 9913 or visit our website.

St Mary's Church Hall

Railway and Archive Films will be shown on Saturday September 16th at 3pm and 7.30pm in St Mary's Church Hall. Admission free.

Beading group

Come and learn to make your own beaded jewellery or make some Christmas presents. Beginners as well as intermediate beaders are welcome. From September 19th we will meet at Merton Hall, Ponteland NE20 9PX, on Tuesdays 7pm to 9pm. Booking is essential; contact Marijke Shrivastava at mshrivastava@blueyonder.co.uk or on (0191) 284 7266.

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 September 20th. Contact: pontelandcommunitypartnership.co.uk or shirley@reevehill.plus.com

Ponteland Local History Society

Our next meeting at St. Mary's Church Hall, Thornhill Road, Ponteland is 7.30pm on Thursday September 21st when Freda Thompson will talk on 'The forgotten hero – The Newcastle Lad Admiral Lord Collingwood. Membership is open to all with annual subscription £6 (single) £10 (couple). Visitors £2.

Embroiderers' Guild

Join us for our AGM from 2pm to 4pm on Monday September 25th at the Memorial Hall, Darras Road, to hear about our activities over the past 12 months and look

forward to the coming year. All welcome - £4. Contact ponteland.eg@btinternet.com or (01661) 881395.

Ponteland Civic Society

The first Civic Society meeting of the new season will be held at Ponteland CIU Club (opposite Merton Hall) on Monday 25th September at 7.30pm. We welcome a return visit from Mike Greatbatch who will talk about buildings and people – entitled: 'Landmarks and Legends of the Shields Road'. Visitors welcome cost £2.

An Evening with Graeme Danby & Friends

Ponteland Rotary Club's annual concert is being held on Sunday October 15th at 7.30pm at the Britannia Hotel, Newcastle Airport. The host is bass Graeme Danby accompanied by his wife Valerie Reid (mezzo soprano) and friends from the world of opera. For tickets contact Alan Hall at alanhalleeef@msn.com or call him on 07740 866764.

Are you safety aware?

Winter Warmer event - Thursday October 19th at Merton Hall from 9.30am to 12noon. Coffee and biscuits provided. The event will include information on keeping safe at home, including internet safety.

Ponteland writers

A friendly group with mixed writing ability and experience. We meet every Wednesday at Post Box coffee shop from 7pm to 9pm. New members welcome.

Ponteland Methodist Church Carpet Bowls Club

This friendly club meets on Mondays from 1.30pm to 3.30pm and Fridays from 7.30pm to 9.30pm. Experience not necessary. For further info contact Barbara on (01661) 824652.

Audio Book Group

The group is for people who have visual impairment or face barriers in reading printed books. 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 in Ponteland Leisure Centre on the first Monday of each month from 10.30am-12noon. Membership is free. Contact Michelle Watson at mwatson@activenorthumberland.org.uk or (01670) 622562.

Scottish Country Dancing

Bullocksteads Scottish Country Dance Club meet on the 3rd Tuesday of each month from September to April at Dalton Village Hall from 7.30pm to 10pm. Live music. Cost £5 per session. Pooled supper. A friendly social class. All welcome, no need to have a partner. Have fun, exercise and make new friends. Contact Ruth on (01661) 881654 or just turn up.

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Alan Hall Mob: 07740 866764, email: alanhalleef@msn.com

Rotary holds musical evening

Graeme Danby and Friends are holding an evening of musical entertainment next month in conjunction with the Rotary Club of Ponteland.

Graeme is famous internationally as a singer but he is also well-known throughout the region for his musical talent, his friendly demeanor and his sharp wit.

The musical extravaganza will see Graeme joined by his wife Valerie Reid (mezzo soprano), Lisa Swayne (soprano), Austin Gunn (tenor), Lydia Newlands (piano), Bradley Creswick (violin) and 12-piece choir Dodici Voce.

Graeme has insisted that he wants a new fresh programme of music for this event and says that it will include songs from the shows, musical theatre and Flanders & Swann.

The event will be held at the Britannia Hotel on Sunday 15th October at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £15. To book email Alan Hall at email alanhalleef@msn.com or call him on 07740 866764.

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Tragedy for family as father-of-two dies of cancer aged 39

A Ponteland man who moved to the Middle East to work in the oil industry has died aged just 39 after battling cancer.

Daniel Rowlands attended Ponteland First School, Coates Endowed Middle School and Ponteland High School before taking a degree in Mechanical Engineering at Northumbria University.

The father-of-two had a number of jobs in the oil industry, but got a placement in Muscat in 2010 for Petroleum Development Oman (PDO), which is part-owned by Shell, eventually transferring onto Shell staff. He moved there with wife Paula and their daughters Sophie, 12, and Olivia, seven, who settled well in schools in Oman.

Daniel first noticed symptoms in Spring 2016, but thought it was due to stress following the suicide of a close friend in Oman. However, they persisted and last August he was diagnosed with colorectal cancer.

His mum Sylvia, who has lived with her husband Michael in Cheviot View for more than 40 years, said: "Daniel's private medical insurance covered him for treatment in England, so last September he came home and saw a colorectal surgeon the same day, thinking it would be the simple removal of his tumour and he would be able to go home.

"However, it was not to be and he started on intensive chemotherapy to try to reduce the tumour by at least 25%, before an operation could be considered. This first batch did not work, so they tried daily oral chemo and daily radiotherapy for five weeks.

"He had to wait another six weeks before other MRI and CT scans could be done, as the treatment continues to work internally. During this time, he was able to return to Muscat to be with his family and to see his work colleagues.

"After his six weeks in Muscat, he returned for the results and was told that nothing had worked and a different form of chemo would be tried. However, following just one treatment, he then had severe back and stomach pains, so had to attend hospital again.

"This time they kept him in and he never came home again, as the cancer spread at such a rapid pace to his liver and his spine, it even shocked the medics. He was moved to Marie Curie Hospice from The Freeman, just four days before he died in July. Unfortunately, none of the drugs touched him.

"The quality of care and attention he received at both The Freeman Cancer Centre and Marie Curie Hospice cannot be praised enough and some of the staff even attended his funeral, as his plight had moved them so much."

During Daniel's treatment in Newcastle, his family stayed in Muscat so the girls' schooling was not affected but visited every few months and for a whole month last Christmas, when a kind friend let them stay in a bungalow she owned in Darras Hall to have family time together.

Daniel's huge passion for radio controlled cars was marked at his funeral, with a floral car on his coffin and fellow RC enthusiasts bringing cars to the humanist service. Donations made at the service are going to the hospice, Marie Curie and



Imperial Cancer research.

Sylvia added: "His funeral was amazing, as over 300 people turned up from as far away as Australia, Israel, Holland, Spain, Greece and Oman. He was a radio controlled car enthusiast and had made friends all over the world in this sport.

"Six of his friends ran their RC cars in front of the hearse to the chapel, which was quite a sight. There was also an annual RC revival meeting held near Grantham at the end of July, to which the whole weekend was dedicated and held in his memory, and a trophy presented in his name to a notable member, which my husband was asked to present."

Daniel also leaves his elder sister Tanya.



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School becomes academy trust



Ponteland Community Middle School is grateful to Northumberland County Council for the support given to the school's academy conversion during the last four months *writes the Governing Body.*

We became a foundation school last March and secured the freehold of land (including our beloved 3G pitch) and the future for the school. At the time of going to press the school, still named as Ponteland Community Middle School, is working to convert finally as a multi academy trust on 1st September using the title Ponteland Academy Trust.

The trustee governors are looking forward to working with other governing bodies to forge a future for schools to secure a complementary, cohesive, 21st century pathway for our children and students and to develop solutions for children and families within our new and existing professional partnerships.

Following conversion we will be working with parents, our community and stakeholders to develop a sustainable, hybrid educational model that meets the needs and aspirations of parents, creating a wide and flexible pathway.

The school's email address has changed to reflect our new status; we can be contacted at admin@ponteland.academy.

A potential partnership is with North East Futures University Technical College (www.nefuturesutc.co.uk). Already, PCMS and UTC have a long-standing partnership which has enriched our own curriculum and opened up amazing opportunities for our children to experience new and exciting science and technology topics.

The UTC, opening in 2018, is offering places to students who wish to progress into the exciting specialist areas of digital technologies and health sciences. They will follow a hands-on learning curriculum which combines very strong academic qualifications with technical experience and a unique careers



programme. The UTC also opens up partnerships with employers, large and small; local universities and colleges; and apprenticeship schemes.

The Gold Sportsmark achievements of PCMS have led to an invitation to apply to be a Platinum Sportsmark school. This will be done and reflects the PE commitment before, during and after school and the additional 1,200 hours a year of extra-curricular activities provided by many PCMS staff for PE as well as music, arts, technology, drama, coding, booster learning and homework sessions.

Our academic achievements have confirmed the reputation for the school, where again our superb Y6 KS2 SATs results are 20% above the national average. We have accepted over 150 new Y5 children for the new school year; and are oversubscribed for the new Y6, Y7 and Y8 places.

PCMS has been a National Support School and a Teaching School since 2014. The headteacher Dr Pryer has proudly supported schools across Northumberland and the region as a National Leader of Education supported formally by nine Specialist Leaders in Education staff in school.



Together we have supported first, primary, middle and secondary schools with bespoke programmes, reciprocal visits, performance management projects and professional development resources for teachers and SEND teams. These projects have developed strong collegiate, professional relationships helping to strengthen leadership, teaching and learning across our communities.

In preparation for the future, governors have appointed highly experienced KS3/4 teachers in English, Maths, Art, PE, History and Geography. We also welcome specialist primary staff in the KS2 team, Schools Direct trainees, SCITT trainees and PGCE students from universities. High numbers of applications for these posts were received and reflect the school's popularity in the community and teaching circles.

We have an ongoing commitment to keep regular communications with parents and our community and look forward to seeing parents, children and prospective teachers at any of our future open events where we can share our vision and project ideas ensuring the development of our reputation, our achievements, our partnership and our community.

SPONSORED PAGE

All welcome to bridleway celebration

The whole community is being invited to attend a celebration event to mark a project revitalising Callerton Lane bridleway.

Ponteland Mayor Alan Varley and local celebrity Marian Foster, who hosts weekly gardening programme Garden Mania on BBC Radio Newcastle, will be cutting the ribbon at the bridleway on Saturday September 30th at 10.30am.

The event has been arranged to celebrate the completion of the community project raising the heritage profile of the old railway line, now a well used active travel route proposed through the Neighbourhood Plan to become a wildlife corridor.

The Area Countryside Officer will be on hand to show residents what has been achieved and explain what the next project from Rotary Way to the airport will consist of.

At the beginning of the year, Ponteland Community Partnership organised a community event with the support of Area Countryside Officer to involve the community, 11 local organisations to give some additional care to the route, plant 75 trees and reinstate wild flowers, to add a perch bench and create two educational interpretation pedestals showing railway heritage and the natural environment.

This project has proved to be so successful it was awarded a "Highly Commended" Love Northumberland award for best new project category in the county.

Because of this success the community partnership is planning with the Area Countryside Officer the next project to take on the bridleway from Rotary Way to the airport, starting in October.

We are looking for volunteers to get involved - to find out more register your support use the contact page at pontelandcommunitypartnership.co.uk



American dream come true for young beauty queen

Ponteland schoolgirl Juliette Taylor has returned from an international beauty pageant in the US with a clutch of awards.

The 15-year-old, who was recently named St Oswald's Young Fundraiser of the Year, has been crowned Miss International Role Model at the week-long Royal International Miss American Pageant held in Orlando, Florida.

Proud mum Jill Taylor said: "This pageant focuses on community work, interview skills, stage presence and confidence. She won a host of side awards including Miss International Fitness Model, Miss Personality, Best in interview, Prettiest Smile, Best Scrapbook, Power of the Crown, Global Volunteer award presented by the Mayor of Orange County.

"But the ultimate prize - Royal

International Miss, International Role Model – was presented to Juliette on her final evening. All her work in the UK helped her to achieve this award. She beat girls from all over America and South Africa to win this prestigious title.

"As part of winning, Juliette has to set up a special International Service Project and she's chosen to work on a project which gives thanks to first responders. We're so proud of Juliette and all she's achieved."

Juliette was guaranteed a place in the international contest after winning the Junior Teen category in the British contest last July.

She said: What I love about this contest is how we are encouraged to support charities and become role models for other young women. It isn't just a normal pageant and there is a strong focus on leadership, compassion and charity work.

"I have long supported St Oswald's and have helped my dad, Dave Taylor who



is a chef at the Hospice, with all of his fundraising endeavours. St Oswald's is a truly fantastic charity and I am so proud to be able to support and promote it."

Juliette has made over 100 appearances since winning UK title last July, giving up 150 hours volunteering at community and charity events. As part of her prize she will go on a cruise to Mexico next year and return to the US hand over her crown.

Flower show celebrates 40 years this weekend

The 40th Ponteland Parish Flower Show is being held at the Memorial Hall this Saturday September 9th.



Started on the instigation of Dr Jack White in 1977, the first show was held on Saturday September 9th 1978 and has always been held on the second Saturday in September.

By way of celebration the voluntary committee is inviting children to design a 40th anniversary card and in cookery there will be a class for a 40th anniversary cake where only the decoration will be judged.

There are also new classes this year, with a vase of Autumn foliage and a vase of ornamental grasses in the flower classes, while the dahlia classes have been simplified to pompom, cactus and decorative, and heathers will be either white or coloured.

In vegetables, a small cucumber class and vase of herbs are introduced. The children's classes are completely revised but still include some baking and "Me and My Pet" is added in photography.

There have only been three chairmen of the voluntary show committee during the event's history, and new volunteers are now being invited to join and ensure the continuation of the show. For details on this and submitting entries, please email Show Chairman Syd Cowan at syd.cowan@btinternet.com or call him on (01661) 824459.

Show Chairman Syd Cowan at last year's show.

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Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust

A request had been received from ABCT in June for the Town Council to have a plaque or marker to honour the Ponteland airfield near Limestone Lane that had been used as a military night landing ground by 36 Squadron between 1916 and 1919. The Council had agreed in principle to have a plaque in Ponteland subject to further discussions regarding potential costs.

There was some support locally for a full sized marker to be placed on or near the site of the airfield, however after discussions with ABCT it seems that they would prefer to supply the plaque which would include details of their website. The suggested location of the plaque was on or near to the Memorial Hall and the Council agreed to start discussions with the Memorial Hall to find a suitable location. The Council confirmed its original intention to have a plaque only, although it may be possible to provide some sort of location plan with the plaque showing anyone interested how to find the site.

Northumberland Fire & Rescue Plan 2017-2021

Councillors were advised of the consultation re the above which closed for comments on September 1st. The Plan was available to view on the County Council's website. Councillors agreed to advise the Clerk of any comments which would be sent to NCC by the deadline date.

Highways Working Party

The Working Party had met on July 14th and councillors discussed a proposal from Coun Veronica Jones for a chicane on Western Way in an attempt to slow down traffic in this area. A scheme was being drawn up by the County Council

and there would be a public consultation held, however the Town Council agreed to support the proposal in principle at this stage. They would be consulted as part of the public consultation exercise.

Environment Working Party

The Working Party had met on July 17th and a brief report on the Britain in Bloom judging event that had been held earlier in the day was provided. The Town Council expressed appreciation to all those involved in the entries for both Northumbria and Britain in Bloom. The results of the competition would be announced on October 27th at an awards event in Llandudno.

Northumberland County Council report

Coun Dodd reported that changes were being made to the Core Strategy and meetings of the Local Development Framework Working Group were being held every three weeks. He stated that the grass verges had been cut and an additional £2m had been set aside for roads and potholes in the county. He further reported that plans for the school and leisure complex would be out in September. He did not have a date as yet for work to start on the car park at the back of Merton Way.

Mayor's report

The Mayor provided details of his diary for July and August and forthcoming events in September.

This report is based on the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on August 9th.

Best ever GCSE results at Pont High

Ponteland High School is celebrating its best ever GCSE results and improved A level grades.

This year 79% of students achieved at least a standard pass in both English and Maths, up from 76% in 2016 results. Other notable achievements included 20% of students achieving five or more A*-A/7-9 grades and 41% of students achieving five or more A*-B/6-9 grades

Headteacher Kieran McGrane said the improved results came in spite of the recent changes to introduce more difficult GCSE qualifications, and praised both students and staff for their efforts.

He said: "I am absolutely delighted with the superb GCSE results our students have achieved this year. All schools have been understandably cautious about outcomes this year given the significant changes to GCSE English and Maths and the move to terminal exams. As such, it is even more pleasing to see that our results have increased from last year."

There have also been changes to A levels with the introduction of harder linear A levels that have been examined for the first time this summer.

Over 40% of students gained A*-B grades in a wide range of courses including Biology, Chemistry, CTEC Business, CTEC IT, Economics, English Literature, Fine Art, French, Geography, German, Health & Social Care, History, Maths, Further Maths, Music, Performing Arts, PE and Psychology.

Overall, the school has performed better than in 2016 with an increase in the average points score. In addition, 28% of all entries were awarded the top grades of A*-A or equivalent, with 49% A*-B and 69% A*-C.

Mr McGrane added: "These results are testament to the hard work and endeavour of everyone in the school not to mention the sterling support of our parent body. All of our students should be very proud of their achievements.

"As they prepare to move on to further study or work I would like to thank our students for the significant and positive contribution they have made to our school and wish them every success in the future."

Ponteland teenager meets Prime Minister to discuss young persons' mental health

A teenager from Ponteland met with the Prime Minister to share her thoughts on how to improve mental health amongst young people.

National Citizen Service (NCS) graduate Alex Elliott-Smith travelled to Powys in South Wales to meet Theresa May, who was there to announce that 100,000 teenagers a year will be given mental health training in order to help them cope with exam pressures and build up their self-esteem.

The training will be delivered as part of the NCS programme, which enables 16 and 17 year olds to gain skills for work and life.

Alex took part in NCS in 2016 and has since joined the

regional NCS youth board, who designed a booklet to help North East teenagers affected by mental health issues.

Ponteland High School student Alex, 17, said: "The Prime Minister read the booklet that I helped produce. It was great to see a person of such great influence show interest in issues that affect all generations. It was amazing to feel that our work is being recognised on such a big scale and mental health is achieving the attention it needs."

After giving up their weekends to run mental health stalls in Durham city centre, Alex and her peers at the regional NCS youth board decided to create a brochure in partnership with the If U Care Share Foundation that addressed the underlying stigma surrounding mental health



in young people. The team recently received funding from O2 Think Big to print the brochures, with the plan to distribute them at schools across the North East.

Alex added: "I'd recommend NCS to anyone. A world of opportunities have opened up to me after I graduated from NCS."

The NCS programme includes an adventure in the Lake District, Yorkshire Dales or Scottish borders, where

teens meet new people and enjoy fun and freedom whilst gaining leadership, teamwork and communication skills. Teenagers then work with their team to deliver a community project that makes a lasting impact on the local area.

The next NCS programme takes place during the Autumn half-term. Find out more at ncsyas.co.uk

Alex Elliott-Smith (seated 2nd left) with NCS graduates meeting Prime Minister Theresa May.



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