

pontnews&views

FREE monthly community magazine for Ponteland and district



Canal death parents campaign
for safety measures

Villagers at “breaking point” over
housebuilding disruption

£46m schools and leisure
complex faces delay

Science show goes off with a bang!



DH PRIVATE HIRE

PONTELAND'S PREMIER COMPANY

DARRAS HALL TAXIS

01661 610184

24Hr

email: darrashallprivate@hotmail.co.uk

CHEAPEST FARES GUARANTEED

PRICE PROMISE

WE WON'T BE BEATEN ON PRICE OR RELIABILITY BY ANY OTHER LOCAL TAXI COMPANY.

24 HOURS A DAY

EXECUTIVE 6 & 8 SEATERS AVAILABLE

BOOK A DARRAS HALL TAXI
and see the difference in the cost to your journey!

Thinking of retiring? Unsure of your options?

**Speak to
a pensions
expert**



independent
financial
advisers

For your **free** initial consultation
give us a call on **(01661) 821110** or
email us at **enquiries@cfs-ifa.co.uk**

CFS Independent Financial Advisers Limited, Lower Blyth Suite,
Kirkley Hall, Ponteland, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE20 0AQ

Serving the Ponteland community since 1996.



PONTELAND GOLF CLUB

VENUE FOR HIRE

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

Golf North East

**Our recently refurbished dining
room is the perfect venue for
any private and intimate occasion**

We cater for all occasions including christenings, birthdays,
anniversaries and weddings. We also cater for funerals, providing
a sympathetic and professional service. Our function room can
hold up to 100 guests.

We offer a range of hot and cold buffets along with a formal
menu for seated dinners.

Our professional and attentive team ensures that you have the most
pleasant and effortless time during your function.

With a wealth of experience - both front of house and in the kitchen -
we guarantee that we can cater for your every need.

Call now for availability

01661 822 689

Agents for Golden Charter Pre-Need Planning



STRETTLÉ

**FOR A COMPLETE
FUNERAL & MEMORIAL
SERVICE**

- Funeral arrangements for cremation or burial - Religious or Humanist from £2650 inclusive
- 'Pre-need' funeral and memorial plans from £2899
- Advice on grave purchase - traditional or woodland
- Memorials in stone, marble, slate and granite - traditional or bespoke from £390 inclusive
- Memorial renovation, additional inscriptions etc.
- Statuary, vases, plaques and 'tomblets' - the remarkable miniature home memorial
- Memorial stone valuation/insurance
- Sympathy and funeral floral tributes

Office, Showroom and Chapels of Rest at:
15 West Road, Ponteland Tel: 01661 822015
450 West Road, Newcastle Tel: 0191 274 2471

24HR ENQUIRY LINE
(0191) 252 8222

School science show goes off with a bang!

More than 600 pupils enjoyed an exploding volcano, liquid nitrogen ice cream making and a collection of skulls as Pont High's science show went off with a bang.

Twenty-five science students in Years 9, 10 and the sixth form performed a series of demonstrations on the theme of 'The Story of Life' for pupils from six local primary schools, Ponteland Middle School and the high school.

The show was performed five times to celebrate National Science Week and also included showing a thermite reaction making iron, northern lights in a glass flask, viewing a simple life form under a microscope and freezing flowers using liquid nitrogen.

Ponteland High School's Head of Science Mark Warland said: "It was fantastic to see our students perform a science show to so many people. They have worked very hard to ensure they securely understood the science behind

the demonstrations, explain how it relates to the history of life and perform it safely to an audience.

"The feedback from students, teachers and parents has been overwhelmingly positive with the students being the stars of the show."



Cover shot: Year 12 student Emily Maskey, 16, of Darras Hall, freezes rose petals with liquid nitrogen. Photos by The Image Farm.





Top tips to prevent burglars and bogus officials



By PC Darren Fisher and PC Ingrid Clayton

There have been 30 crimes recorded during the period from to February 13th to March 12th for Ponteland and the surrounding area:

- Section 47 assault – three
- Common assault – two
- Sexual assault female – one
- Stalking – two
- Public Order Sec 5 – one
- Public Order Sec 4 – one
- Burglary dwelling – two
- Burglary dwelling attempt – two
- Burglary other than dwelling – two
- Coercive/control behaviour – one
- Damage to motor vehicle – three
- Theft shoplifting – three
- Theft other – three
- Damage other – one
- Fraud by false representation – one
- Fraud abuse of position – one
- Dangerous driving – one.

Crime prevention

We want to use this opportunity to remind home owners about the need to be vigilant with regards to their security. Top tips to prevent being a victim of burglary:

- Check that all doors and windows are locked even when at home
- Keep keys hidden, do not keep keys in the door and never hide a spare key outside
- Use your house alarm when inside if you can and when not at home
- Secure items like ladders to walls or place them inside out of view
- Check security lights are in good working order
- Report immediately any suspicious people or vehicles
- Use timers to light your house even when you're out
- Take photographs of valuable items and also note any serial numbers for insurance
- Keep expensive jewellery/documents in a home safe anchored to the brickwork
- Never give your keys to anyone you do not know well.

Doorstep crime

Not sure? Don't open the door!

- Install a spy hole and a door chain or door bar in the front door
- Check visitors' identity cards carefully
- If a caller claims to be from a particular company check online
- Don't leave any doorstep callers alone with your door open
- Never agree to have work done by someone passing by - get a least two quotations from reputable companies
- Never hand over cash or sign anything at the door
- Talk to someone you trust for a second opinion.

Bogus callers may be smartly dressed and claim to be from the council, police or utility companies. They can also turn up as builders or gardeners and try to trick you into paying for unnecessary work. If you think that a bogus caller has called on you, report this immediately to the police and to trading standards.

If you have any information regarding the above or any other incidents, please email easttynedale.npt@northumbria.pnn.police.uk or call us on 101.

GUY OPPERMAN MP

Your local Member of Parliament for the Hexham Constituency

Guy Opperman, your local Member of Parliament, holds regular surgeries across the constituency. If you would like to arrange an appointment to discuss an issue of concern to you, please get in touch with Guy using the details below.

GET IN TOUCH WITH GUY

t: 01670 789161

w: GuyOpperman.co.uk

e: TeamOppy@gmail.com

f: [fb.com/GuyOppermanMP](https://www.facebook.com/GuyOppermanMP)



GuyOpperman.co.uk

Don't let Charlie's death be in vain

A Ponteland couple whose teenage son drowned in a Manchester canal during a night out have gained huge support for their campaign for new safety measures.

Charlie Pope, 19, was found in Rochdale Canal on Friday March 2nd, having gone missing in the early hours of the previous day after leaving the Zombie Shack bar.

Shockingly, the University of Manchester student is one of 76 people to have died in the city's canals and waterways since 2007. A further 35 people have been rescued from them in the past four years alone.

Charlie's devastated parents Nick and Andria and siblings Joe, 21, and Ponteland High School A level student Daisy, have backed a change.org petition calling for barriers to be installed around the canal banks which had nearly 50,000 signatures as we went to print.

Nick said: "The last couple of weeks has been, as every parent can imagine, a living nightmare from which you don't wake up. It is every parent's worst fear and the pain is unbearable. Charlie fell into a canal after a night out with friends in the early hours of March 1st and drowned.

"After we visited Manchester to identify Charlie, I asked the police to take me to the part of the canal and the lock where he fell in. I was stunned at how dangerous it was, with no barriers or fences to protect people.

"I visited it at 3 o'clock on a Saturday afternoon in broad daylight, stone cold sober and the area scared me to death. At night, in the dark, maybe having had a few drinks and slippy with ice and snow, it must have been lethal. It was a disaster waiting to happen.



Charlie during a European inter-railing trip last summer.

"At that point, I thought we have to make this safe so this can't happen again. We drove back to Newcastle on the Sunday and on the Monday I became aware of a petition that had been started by someone in Manchester to put barriers up on the Manchester canals.

"Myself and the whole family signed it and shared it and the petition was at about 4,000 names. Today, within two weeks, it has 44,000 signatures. The vast majority are people who live in Manchester and have never heard of Charlie, but are aware of how dangerous these waterways are and have maybe lost someone themselves or know someone who has.

"I managed to get hold of the lady in Manchester who had started the petition, Alona Ainsworth, and asked her why she had started it. She said she personally didn't know of anyone who had drowned, but was sick of the fatalities, which were running at almost one a month and wanted to try and do something about it. We call her our angel."

On March 13th Nick met officials responsible for waterway safety in the city and two days later were told by the head of the fire and rescue service that they were going to immediately put up temporary structures to try and make the area safer.

Nick, a finance director for a local commercial furniture firm, added: "That weekend, Charlie may have saved a life. I cannot thank everyone



Daisy, Andria, Joe, Nick and Charlie Pope.

enough who has supported us this far. It has been a huge, collective effort, but this is just the start.

"There are more stretches in Manchester which need to be done, but also cities up and down the country now have brought city living with bars, restaurants, night clubs and apartments to the edges of these waterways with very little protection.

"If you have a son or daughter away at university, please check what the city is doing about this. We have to force the authorities to protect our children from themselves."

The family are urging people to sign the "Put barriers up on the Manchester canals" petition on change.org and are also due to meet the

Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham.

Charlie's funeral was held at English Martyrs RC Church on Stamfordham Road on March 22nd followed by a balloon release to celebrate his life and a reception at the Diamond Inn where a book of condolences was available.

The family is asking for donations in lieu of flowers to a charity that was very close to Charlie's heart which provides free accommodation to parents who have very sick children in hospitals very far from their home: justgiving.com/fundraising/charliepope19

Follow the campaign on Twitter using hashtag #MakeCharlieTheLast.

Villagers “at breaking point” over housebuilding disruption

Villagers in Medburn say they are “at breaking point” with ongoing disruption caused by various housebuilding schemes on The Avenue.

We featured the problems residents are experiencing with heavy traffic, mud, potholes and noise from several construction sites in the hamlet in our November issue. But it appears the situation has got worse not better in the six months since.

Nearly 150 homes are being built, with the two largest schemes – for 50 and 62 homes – not yet started. The other developments are of six homes or less. Another for 16 homes was refused planning permission in November.

Northumberland County Council is under fire from angry homeowners who say they feel “let down” by the lack of enforcement action.

David Kinghorn, who has lived on The Avenue for 22 years, said: “I have never known the situation regarding The Avenue to be so bad. We are now no longer assured of a daily postal service as the road is likely to be blocked with site delivery vehicles on any given day. What will happen should an emergency vehicle require access is too frightening to contemplate.

“It is at a stage where access for residents and the services which we receive via The Avenue have reached breaking point.

“At one point within the last six months there were nine developments taking place along the length of The Avenue with all of the construction, delivery and service vehicles converging at once.

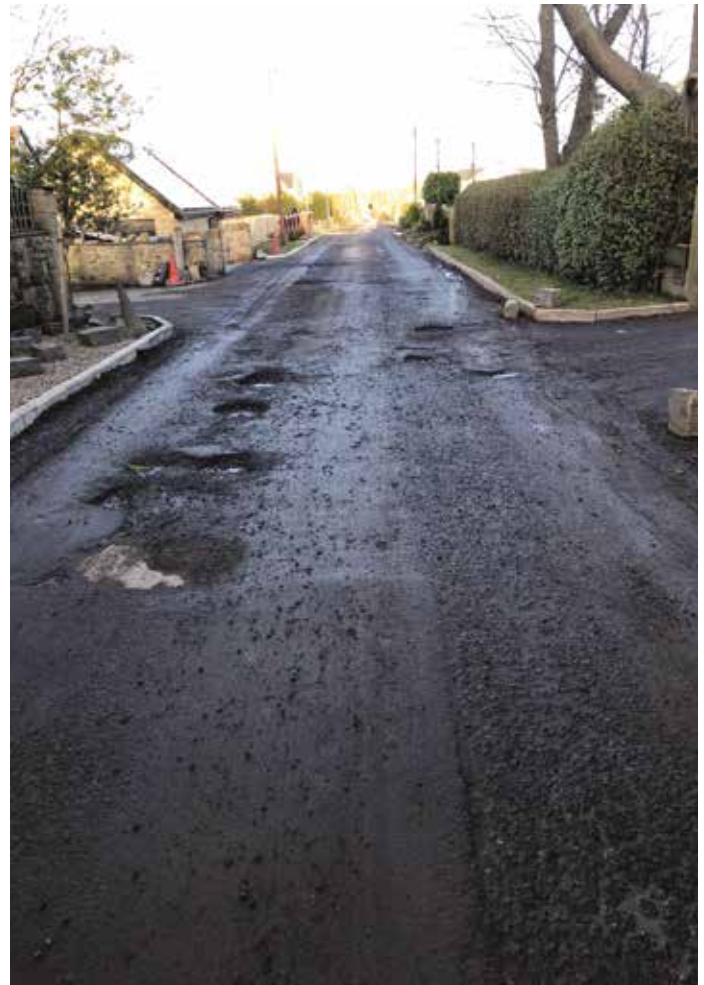
“This, coupled with tradesmen’s vehicles and those of residents, created gridlock. Yet there are further sites which have already been given building approval about to commence also.”

Mr Kinghorn believes the developments should have been staggered by the council to reduce the volume of site traffic and said the fact it is a private road should have no bearing on enforcement powers, adding: “We have been let down badly by a local authority which either does not care enough or is incapable of enforcing its own policies. They have been found sadly lacking in their actions and responses.”

Neighbour Stefanie Fletcher agreed. Describing the situation on The Avenue as “horrendous”, she said: “We have been so let down by the incompetence of the authorities. They should have considered the cumulative effect of all the applications they approved throughout the period of 2015 to 2018.

“I think there were 56 homes approved for building in 2016 alone. The council has allowed excessive building in an unsustainable location. The lack of a local plan has allowed developers and planners to exploit an area which is not fit for this level of development with no thoughts to improve the access road or infrastructure of such a small hamlet.

“The residents and any prospective buyers for these new homes are the ones which will have to pick up the pieces of this epic failure from NCC.”



Damage to the road surface on The Avenue.

Residents say they have written to all the developers asking if they could collectively fund repairs for the road but none responded.

Ward councillor Veronica Jones said she sympathised: “There is no doubt that residents on The Avenue are in an impossible situation with many different contractors using the road daily.

“I have had discussions with the Head of Planning as well as the Portfolio Holder and with Enforcement, Environmental Health, Public Protection and the Fire and Rescue Service. The main issue is that the problems are caused by the fact there are many different developments ongoing.

“Enforcement officers are

dealing with individual cases but the problem is the overall effect. I have every sympathy with residents and NCC officers are continuing to work to resolve the situation.”

The county council added: “We are working with the developers in relation to wheel wash facilities. We do understand the concerns of residents and have been actively considering the issues raised. This is rather a unique situation in terms of the number of developments under construction at the same time.

“We will look into the concerns of residents and investigate anything which falls outside (environmental protection regulations).”

Beer festival set for another sell-out

It is high fives all round for the popular Ponteland Beer Festival, back for a fifth year and set for another full house.

The three day event takes place in two large marquees adjoining the First XV pitch at Ponteland Rugby Club from Friday April 20th to Sunday April 22nd, and promises to be bigger and better than ever.

The 2018 festival has 160 beers, lagers and ciders on offer as well as a wine and prosecco bar and a gin bar with a range of different gins and mixers. The food selection has extended to include a steak and burger stall, a pizza shack, fish and chips and a Bombay cafe serving Indian food.

Musical entertainment throughout the weekend includes North Star headlining on the Saturday for their third festival appearance and concludes with the Ponteland Rock Choir and Ponteland Community Choir joining new guests the Baghdaddies on the Sunday, which is now well established as a Family Day. The Family Day is free entry for ticket holders for either of the first two days.

The music gets underway on the first



night with country and western trio The Heavenly Thrillbillies and Live Wire with their unique mix of funk, soul, motown and rock and roll.

The festival is organised and hosted by Ponteland Rugby Club and coincides with the club's last Durham and Northumberland Division One home game of the season against Guisborough on Saturday April 21st. There is more sport on the Sunday with junior rugby and Ponteland Cricket Club running a six-a-side tournament.

Organiser Andy Maidwell said: "The festival is now rubber-stamped as an important fixture for the Ponteland community. As ever we are hugely indebted to the wonderful support of the many businesses and organisations who sponsor the event and continue to make it such a success.

"The loyalty of everyone in Ponteland and surrounding areas who continue to come in great numbers to mix with friends, players and former players and enjoy the music, food and drink is hugely appreciated."

Online ticket sales started at the beginning of February and are well ahead of last year, when the festival had more than 3,000 guests for the first time. Numbers are again restricted this year so people are advised to book early to avoid missing out.

Tickets cost £12 for Friday (6pm to 11pm) and Saturday (12noon to 11pm) and £2.50 for Sunday (12noon to 4.30pm). They can be purchased online at pontelandbeerfestival.co.uk or from Ponteland Leisure Centre (£13.50/£2.50) and include three drinks vouchers, a commemorative glass and programme.



PONTELAND BEER FESTIVAL 2018

Venue: Ponteland Leisure Centre Rugby Pitch

FRIDAY 20th APRIL
6.00pm - 11.00pm

SATURDAY 21st APRIL
12.00 NOON - 11.00pm

SUNDAY 22nd APRIL
12.00pm - 4.30pm

Ticket price includes admission, promotional glass, programme & 3 drink tokens.

Ticket price £2.50 or free with any Friday or Saturday ticket purchased.

Choose from over 150 Beers, Lagers and Ciders, **PLUS** Prosecco & Wine Bar and Soft Drinks & Gin Bar • Great choice from 4 food suppliers • Live Music & Rugby entertainment throughout the weekend



Full details of the festival can be found, together with online sales at
www.pontelandbeerfestival.co.uk



Shock for residents as Athol House to be demolished and rebuilt

Residents at a sheltered housing complex in Ponteland have been told they will have to move out as it is to be demolished and rebuilt in a £5m scheme.

LOCAL TALENT

Nationally recognised firm
with expert local knowledge

RICS Awards

2018

Shortlisted

PJC ARCHITECTURE LTD

Residential, Commercial & Architectural Services
0191 214 0022 www.pjc-architecture.co.uk

Owner Karbon Homes gave the shock news at a meeting with residents at Athol House on March 19th, one of whom has lived there nearly 30 years.

Jon McDonald, Support Housing Older Persons Manager for Karbon Homes, said in a letter issued to town and county councillors that the company was about to embark on a major redevelopment scheme.

He said: "Our Athol House sheltered housing scheme for older residents is now outmoded, and does not meet modern standards. We also find our older customers' aspirations are for modern one or two bedroomed apartments or bungalows.

"We have upgraded some areas of the Athol House building and improved the communal areas, but it has become clear that we need to look at a more comprehensive approach. So the board of Karbon Homes has now decided to demolish the building and make way for a new 32 unit, mixed tenure development of homes for over 55s.

"To enable this to happen, we unfortunately do need to ask everyone living at Athol House to move out of the building, and we recognise that this will be disruptive and unsettling for the residents."

Mr McDonald said all the residents will get the

assistance they need to find a new home where they feel comfortable and staff will do everything we can to help and support them. They will also receive a statutory Home Loss Payment of £6,100 and Karbon Homes say they will cover all reasonable costs of residents' moves.

He added: "We will meet with everyone individually to talk about their needs, any special circumstances and requirements, and take time to explain all the options available. Families and carers will be included in these discussions if the residents want this to happen.

"Whenever we have closed sheltered housing schemes in the past, we have always managed to re-house people in their areas of choice. From experience, we know that that it might take more than a year to find suitable alternative housing for everyone, and we are quite prepared to give all the time our residents need.

"Once the new building is complete, residents will be able to apply for one of the new homes, assuming they still meet the criteria for the building."

Athol House was opened in 1980 and has 35 properties with 29 residents aged mid-60s to mid-90s. The works, being funded by Karbon Homes with a contribution from the Homes England agency, are not expected to start until 2020.

Delay to new £46m schools and leisure complex could mean prefabs for pupils

Some pupils could be housed in temporary classrooms from September 2019 as a £46m schools and leisure complex may not be completed in time for the new academic year.

Northumberland County Council had planned to open the new combined 2,000-pupil primary and high school and leisure facility to coincide with the first cohort of Year 7 and Year 8 pupils arriving in September 2019 under the two tier education reorganisation.

The authority's strategic planning committee agreed that it was 'minded to approve' the Ponteland scheme at its meeting on January 11th.

But given the size and scale of the project it had to be referred to the National Planning Casework Unit for determination from the Secretary of State on whether he wishes to call-in the application for his own determination. Two months on a decision on this has still not been received.

As a result the council has conceded the



complex may not be completed in time for the extension of the high school with the two extra year groups and fall-back plans are now having to be considered.

An NCC spokesperson said: "The application was referred to the National Planning Casework Unit and we await the decision of the Secretary of State on whether he wishes to call-in the application for his own determination.

"In the meantime we are preparing to start work on the site as soon as approval is issued. Some preparatory work has already taken place, including tree pruning and service investigation within the existing footpaths on Callerton Lane. This is not pre-empting any decision but

is part of the ongoing site investigations.

"Due to a delay in receiving the decision, it is becoming increasingly likely that this will impact on the completion of building work. We are working closely with local and national partners as a priority, to support them in their processing and consideration of the application.

"We will minimise the impact on students, however the delay may result in temporary accommodation being utilised.

"Ensuring that there are top quality learning environments for our young people is very important to us, and this development will provide modern facilities for students for years into the future."



WINNER
GARDEN CENTRE
OF THE YEAR
2017



40 YEARS
40th Anniversary



WINNER
BEST PLANT
RETAILER
2018



Local Delivery



Carry to Car



Gift Wrapping



Horticultural Advice



Plant Search



2 Year Hardy
Plant Guarantee

www.cowellsgc.co.uk

Cowell's
GARDEN CENTRE
Established 1978

For expert advice about all things gardening, just call
0191 286 3403
Please see website for opening times

Main Road, Woolsington,
Newcastle Upon Tyne,
NE13 8BW

Your letters

The Editor
Pont News & Views



Potholes and molehills in this month's letters...

Get your pothole claim in!

It's highly likely that before the poor condition of the roads in our area is addressed, you may have the misfortune to sustain expensive damage to some part of your vehicle when you encounter one of our many potholes.

If you do, I would recommend you contact insurance@northumberland.gov.uk or Transactional & Administration Section, Finance Department, County Hall, Morpeth, NE61 2EF with the following details:

- The exact location of the incident, the time and date when the damage occurred and any images taken of the scene and the vehicle damage, as long as it's safe for you to do so.
- An invoice for the cost of the repairs plus a copy of your MoT certificate and the vehicle mileage.

The Council has not been given even a small percentage of the funds needed to properly repair our road network and the recent bad weather has only made matters worse.

But if everyone took it upon themselves to report the potholes outside their respective properties the local authority would have a better overall view of the size of the problem. Call NCC on 0345 6006400.

P Vacheun
Edge Hill, Ponteland

We deserve better than pothole patch-up

Potholes outside my house on Runnymede Road have been filled and patched up for the second time in two years.

Not a good job, I'm afraid. The roads generally are in a very poor state of repair on Darras Hall. The residents, who are mostly drivers, deserve better.

Michael Anderson
Runnymede Rd, Darras Hall

Making an unamusing mountain out of a molehill

I write in contrast to the unamusing views expressed by Mr Eglon in the March edition ('Pest controllers needed to tackle park moles').

Far from viewing them as pests I am sure I am not alone in getting great pleasure from knowing that moles are using Ponteland Park, along with foxes, red squirrels, owls, bats and a wide variety of other species.

At a time when wildlife in the countryside is generally declining, we should be celebrating the fact that so many animals are able to find refuge in the park, not asking for volunteers to kill them.

Admirers of the featureless, wildlife-free sward have the option

of visiting the golf course or bowling club (an option which I suspect the moles don't have).

Chris Wright
The Beeches, Ponteland

Chainsaw massacre depressing for Darras

It's that time of year again when the air across Darras Hall is filled with the buzz of chainsaws.

Dozens of beautiful, mature trees either have their majestic crowns lopped off and look shocking or, far worse, are felled completely. They are seldom replaced.

If anything all we see are feeble laurel or leylandii where once there were mighty trees. Or the great beech hedges are replaced with quick-fix fences and walls. Awful.

Many of us moved to Darras Hall because of its abundant flora and it's depressing how this is disappearing.

I'm keen to know what our councils and committees are doing to work with owners to ensure mature trees are replaced and that the fantastic landscape of the estate doesn't vanish for good.

Mr D Keen
Middle Drive, Darras Hall

May issue deadlines: Delivery of the May issue will start on Friday April 27th and be completed by Thursday May 3rd. The deadline for all copy and adverts is Thursday April 12th. If you are aware of any missed properties please contact the editor at pontnews@cian-pr.co.uk or call (0191) 5191306. Businesses should be aware that all bookings for advertisements must be paid in full by the deadline to ensure placement in the May 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.

Kumon's maths and English study programmes work to improve your child's skills, develop their confidence and inspire a passion for learning.

Contact your local Instructor for a free assessment.

Ponteland Study Centre
Liz Burrin **01661 823273**

KUMON

Fees vary. Please refer to your local study centre.

kumon.co.uk

**Boost your
child's
confidence**



What's on...

Ponteland Means Business

Ponteland Means Business meets at the Diamond Inn from 8am to 9.30am on Tuesday April 3rd. Contact Brian Russell at brian.russell@profitabilitygroup.co.uk or on (01661) 872004.

Ponteland Wildlife Group

Richard Prior talks on 'The Natural History of Howick' on Tuesday April 3rd at 7.30pm in St Mary's Hall, Thornhill Road. Admission £2 including refreshments. Open to all.

Ponteland Leisure Learning - U3A

Brian Young talks on Minerals of the North-East 'The Bonnie Bits' on Wednesday April 4th at 2pm at Mary's Church Hall. Visitors welcome, no charge. On June 6th Philip Caine's title is 'Barrow to Bagdad and Back'. Visit u3asites.org.uk/Ponteland or call (01661) 824953.

Kirkley WI

Our guest speaker at Kirkley Hall on Wednesday April 4th at 7pm Val Boyle will tell us about a 'Courageous Countess'. Guests welcome. Visit kirkleywi.wordpress.com

Railway and archive films

The next showing is Saturday April 7th at 3pm and 7.30pm in St Mary's Church Hall. Admission free.

Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

Stuart Reid will talk on 'Flying with the RAF and the BBMF' on Monday April 9th at 2.30pm in the lounge of Ponteland Memorial Hall.

North East England Group of the Alpine Garden Society

On Monday April 9th at 7.30pm Ron McBeath will talk on 'Himalayas and China - then and now' at Ponteland Social Club (CIU), Merton Way. Visitors £2. Visit alpinegardensociety.net/groups/North-East-England. The Alpine Garden Society and Scottish Rock Garden Club also host the Northumberland Show from 11am to 3.30pm on Saturday April 14th at The Wentworth Leisure Centre, Hexham, NE46 3PD. Nine rare plant nurseries from across the UK selling from 11am. Alpines, woodland plants, bulbs and dwarf shrubs in flower. Admission £3; children and members free.

Ponteland WI

Christine Dixon will demonstrate on 'quilting - pursuing a passion' in the lounge of the Memorial Hall at 7pm on Tuesday April 10th. Visitors welcome. Our coffee morning is on Saturday April 21st from 10.30am to 12noon in Merton Hall. Cost £1 to include coffee and homemade cake. Lots of stalls including bric-a-brac, plants, books, cakes, accessories, raffle and sweets/chocolate tombola.

Ponteland Village WI

On Tuesday April 10th at 7.30pm in St Mary's Church Hall we are welcoming 'Smile for Life' who will talk to us about their work in the North East to put a smile on the face of every disabled and disadvantaged child who come to them in need of help. Visit: pontelandvillagewi@hotmail.com or our Facebook page 'PontelandVillageWI'.

Friends of Kirkley Hall

Lorna Tingey from Northumberland County Council will talk at 7pm on Wednesday April 11th at Kirkley Hall on 'Your household waste - where it goes and how it is recycled' and is offering a visit to the recycling centre at West Sleekburn. On May 9th speaker Peter Middleton will bring along a very talkative raven and a barn owl. Cost to members £4 (non-members £5). All welcome.

Ponteland Lions Club

Our business meeting is on Wednesday April 11th at 7.30pm in Merton Hall. Visitors welcome. Our social meeting will be on Wednesday April 25th and our charity fund bookstall and spectacles for recycling collection will be at Waitrose on Saturday April 28th between 9am and 4pm.

Ponteland Floral Art Club

We have demonstrator Jan Faulkner from Great Ayton with 'Spring Forward' at 7.30pm on Tuesday April 17th in the Memorial Hall, Ponteland. Cost for non-members is £7. All welcome.

Ponteland Community Partnership

Come to observe 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 April 18th. Contact: pontelandcommunitypartnership.co.uk or shirley@reevehill.plus.com

Ponteland Local History Society

On Thursday April 19th our subject and speaker are 'Far travellers and tooth decay: what science can reveal about the early medieval inhabitants of Bamburgh Castle' by Graeme Young. Meetings are held at 7.30pm in St Mary's Church Hall, Thornhill Road. Visitors are welcomed at a special price of £2 per person.

Ponteland URC Charity Concert

Popular Scottish Folk duo The Quiggs and North East accordion champion Leonard Brown perform at our Charity Concert at 7pm on Friday April 20th in aid of Labentara Village, Kenya. Tickets £8 from Geoff Stevens Opticians or Ponteland Social Club or by calling (01661) 824243.

Embroiderers Guild Ponteland Branch

On Monday April 23rd embroidered clock (advanced booking required) Anne Hefford - from 2pm to 4pm at the Memorial Hall. All welcome - cost £4. Contact Secretary Penny Ford at penelopeford636@btinternet.com or (01670) 788278.

Friends of Ponteland Park

Our AGM will be held in Merton Hall at 7pm on Tuesday April 24th, followed by Kevin O'Hara's talk on the exciting project 'Pine Martens - Back from the Brink'. Refreshments provided, visitors welcome.

750th anniversary concert

A concert is being held at 7.30pm on Saturday April 28th at St. Mary's Church as part of the celebrations marking the 750th anniversary of the link between Ponteland Parish Church and Merton College Oxford. Andrew and Margaret Watchorn will play Northumbrian small pipes and fiddle. Tickets £8 including drinks and nibbles on the door from 6.45pm. Book by email at 750thevents@gmail.com or visit pontelandstmary.co.uk

Ponteland Civic Society

Ian Warburton will speak on 'The CPRE Campaign to Protect Rural England' at our meeting at the CIU Club, Merton Way, at 7.30pm on Monday April 30th. Visitors welcome, charge £2.

Ponteland Bowling Club

Our qualified coaches are holding FREE introductory sessions for anyone, all ages, looking for a new sport or hobby. All equipment is provided. Sessions are available on the following Saturdays: May 5th, 12th, 19th and June 2nd from 10.30am - 12noon and Friday May 25th from 6pm - 7.30pm. Ponteland Bowling Club is situated on Darras Road between the Memorial Hall and the tennis club. Visit pontelandbowlingclub.co.uk



FREE

EASTER TREASURE TRAIL

SATURDAY 31ST MARCH 2018, 11AM AT PONTELAND PARK

MAIN STREET PARK ENTRANCE BY WAITROSE. ALL CHILDREN UP TO 13 YEARS
ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT. EASTER EGGS FOR ALL ENTRANTS.

 Ponteland Town Council

Emily swims for England in Brisbane Commonwealth Games

A teenage swimmer from Darras Hall is jetting off to Brisbane to represent England in the Commonwealth Games this month.

Emily Large, 16, was selected to compete in the 100 fly and 200 fly for Team England having won gold at the World Junior Championships in Indianapolis last August.

The former Darras Hall First School pupil, who now attends Kings Priory in Tynemouth, is the current European and World Junior Champion in the 200 butterfly.

The Brisbane Games will be her second major championship in the senior ranks, having debuted at the European Short Course Championships in Copenhagen last December.

Emily, who lives with parents Andy and Jenny and older

sister Sophia, said: "To be selected for Team England was amazing. I am really looking forward to seeing the culture of Australia as I have never been there before and it has always been a country I have wanted to visit."

A member of Newcastle Swim Club, Emily's big dream is to compete in the Olympic Games and head coach Ryan Livingston said she has "all the attributes to be successful at the very highest level of the sport".

She swims on Monday April 9th at the Gold Coast Optus Aquatic Centre and the Games are being broadcast by the BBC.



THE JEWELLERS GUILD *Jewellery by design*

Lovingly made in our own local workshop

Sanderson Arcade, Morpeth - 01670 518 000
Manor Walks Shopping Centre, Cramlington - 01670 712 277

Design & Restyle • Valuations • Repairs • Luxury pre-owned watches

Made in Morpeth

www.thejewellersguild.co.uk
Follow us on Facebook

Catch Seafood A696, Higham Dykes NE20 0DH



What's the Catch?

Catch Seafood is a modern day fish & seafood restaurant built on family values.

We're passionate about seafood & take pride in sourcing only the freshest and highest quality fish.

We also have five king-size bedrooms, all with stylish en-suite bathrooms & furnished with a nautical theme.

Get in touch on: 01661 881440 or ponteland@catchseafood.co.uk
www.catchseafood.co.uk

CATCH
seafood restaurant



COMMEMORATION OF THE END OF WORLD WAR ONE

The Council considered a report that included various suggestions for the commemoration of WWI. The Clerk and Coun Overbury had met to discuss various ideas which were considered by the Council. The lighting of a beacon at the top of St Mary's Church at 7pm on Sunday November 11th had already been agreed.

Other ideas included:

- asking the four primary schools to fill a planter with a poppy related theme for display
- holding a poster competition with the schools
- holding a poetry competition
- planting various areas with a poppy seed mix
- liaising with the Vicar of St. Mary's and other faith leaders about other services and events
- seeking the support of businesses and shops in Ponteland to have themed window displays
- displaying giant poppies on lampposts during November lining the route of the Remembrance Parade on November 11th.

Members discussed the Royal British Legion's Silent Soldier campaign, which involved displaying life size outlines of soldiers which could be displayed until the end of December. There is a minimum £250 donation for a soldier. The 'there but not there' campaign, which offered various items for sale such as life sized aluminium silhouettes of soldiers, glass silhouettes which can be sited in churches together with glass blocks engraved with the names of the fallen on War Memorials, was also discussed. The silhouettes cost £750. A budget has been set aside for 2018-19 to cover the costs of activities to mark the anniversary and the Council agreed to a request from the Ponteland Memorial Hall to purchase a silent soldier for display at the War Memorial. Sponsorship would be sought to fund another five. The task of organising activities and events was delegated to the Clerk and Coun Overbury who would report back to the Council monthly.

HIGHWAYS WORKING PARTY

A consultation on renaming the housing estate off Thornhill Road was agreed. Two North Ward Councillors had carried out a survey on the estate, with 33 of 40 households visited in favour of renaming the estate. Of these, 29 preferred 'the Woodlands Estate'. A leaflet will be delivered with a future issue of Pont News to the houses on the estate and information will also be on the website. The results of the survey will be evaluated and reported back to Council.

ENVIRONMENT WORKING PARTY

A recommendation from the Environment Working Party, which met on February 19th, to install small items of exercise equipment in the village area was agreed pending further discussion on suitable locations, and confirmation of any necessary permissions and grant funding for the project. The Council also agreed to accept a quote of £3,796 for park fencing to be funded from the Council's asset replacement fund.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Councillors congratulated the workforce of the county council, the town council and local farmers who had worked hard during the recent spell of bad weather to keep main roads open and pavements in shopping areas clear. They also commended the community spirit of residents who had made offers of assistance to those unable to leave their properties. The county council has allocated additional monies to highways to improve road surfacing.

GRANT APPLICATION

The Town Council approved a grant application from Ponteland Community Partnership for assistance, awarding £500 towards running costs including insurance, audit, training and the website.

This report is based on the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on March 14th.



We already look after **over 1 million, happy, healthy lawns**, and we'd love to look after yours too!

So give us a try - we're cheaper than D.I.Y. and our results are far superior.



For your **FREE** lawn analysis, call today:

0191 4886202

*Prices based on a lawn size of up to 40m²

HIGH QUALITY CLOTHING ALTERATIONS & REPAIRS

- ☒ JEANS SHORTENED
- ☒ TROUSERS & JACKETS ALTERED
- ☒ WAISTS & SIDES ADJUSTED
- ☒ SKIRTS & DRESSES ALTERED
- ☒ NEW ZIPS & BUTTONS
- ☒ CURTAIN ALTERATIONS



27 Broadway, Darras Hall, Newcastle, NE20 9PW

Tel: 01661 820700 | www.easystitch.co.uk

New sprint triathlon event for Ponteland



A new sprint triathlon event is being held in July in Ponteland in support of the Sally Allan Fund.

Ponteland Triathlon Club is hosting its first 'Sprint-Tri Ponteland' event on Sunday July 1st, with a 400m pool swim, 20km local bike ride and 5km village run.

With an estimated 150 to 180 athletes taking part, together with marshals and supporters, it's expected 400 people will attend the Event Hub at Ponteland Leisure Centre, boosting the local economy.

The Sprint-Tri, which it is hoped will become a regular feature in the North East regional triathlon calendar, is the brainchild of club secretary and keen triathlete Sue Heppell and is being supported by Waitrose and local restaurant Rialtos.

Sue said: "We wanted to put on an event that is very well organised so athletes

want to come back year after year. But we also wanted to make the village proud of our club staging such an event and to encourage local businesses to get involved with sponsorship opportunities."

Ponteland Triathlon, part of Ponteland Runners Club, has grown rapidly in numbers and last year the club was awarded "Triathlon Club of the Year 2017" by British Triathlon England after successfully hosting a number of "Go-Tri" events to encourage beginners to get into triathlon.

Club members decided to donate funds raised from the event to the Sally Allan Fund, which delivers the Sally Allan Mental Health Awareness Presentation free of charge to businesses, the public sector, charities and community groups.

Sally took her own life on Boxing Day 2015 and the Fund was set up by Sally's family to raise awareness of mental health issues. Since it began in January 2016 nearly 100 organisations and



Sally Allan with her husband Gordon

3,000 people have benefited from the presentation.

Anyone wishing to take part in the Sprint-Tri can enter by visiting pontelandtriathlon.org.uk or emailing secretary@pontelandrunners.org.uk



The Smarter Way!

Great Service | Great Fees | Great Marketing!



Chris Goodfellow



Liza Kennedy



James Gambles



Joanne Harbottle

Now at... 11 WEST ROAD, PONTELAND

Telephone: 01661 829164 email: office@goodfellowsestateagents.com

www.goodfellowsestateagents.com



NO SALE NO FEE - VAT INCLUDED!

SELL FOR ONLY 0.6%

Subject to a min of £1074 inc VAT!



Geography field trip students enjoy sledging in the snow

A level geography students braved the recent snowfall to visit the Cumbrian valley of Borrowdale.

They took the opportunity for a preprandial close up investigation on recessional moraines on the first afternoon - by sledging down them! Day two saw a walk to Seathwaite and examination of a number of glacial landforms including a frozen till.

The trip was organised to develop physical and human geography fieldwork skills.



Boccia teams win silver and bronze medals at regional tournament

Two Ponteland High Boccia teams had to play each other for a place in a regional final after both qualified from the group stages of the tournament.

The school had won gold at the Northumberland Schools Boccia event in December, securing a place in the regional finals at Gateshead leisure centre.

But after entering two teams which were both successful in the group stages, they were drawn to play each other in the first semi final.

The purple team with Jake Cooper, Ava Wilson Hope, Liam Evans and Andrew Short made it through to the final and a thrilling encounter which saw Durham Trinity eventually win by 4 to 3.

PE Teacher Chris Doig said: "The students have been an absolute credit to the school and I would like to thank them allowing me to share in the experience. Well done to everyone!"

Bratwursts and Bavarian dancers for students in Munich visit

A group of 25 students enjoyed a bratwurst as they were entertained by Bavarian dancers at the 16th century Hofbräuhaus during a three day trip to Munich.

Other highlights included visiting the Olympic Stadium and the top of the Olympic Tower, touring Bavarian Filmstadt, visiting Bayern Munich's Allianz Arena and sitting in some very expensive cars at BMW Welt.

The trip also gave the students a great opportunity to practice their German!

DID YOU KNOW THAT LENS FITTING ERRORS CAN REDUCE VARIFOCAL PERFORMANCE BY UP TO 40% ?

Achieving the best vision possible is more than just an accurate prescription



Relaxed vision can only be achieved if the lenses are fitted to match:

- the shape of your face
- the position of your eyes
- the inclination of your head
- the position of your glasses on your nose

Our i.Terminal uses Zeiss centration technology to measure calculations to 1/10th of a millimetre assuring you of 100% precision performance

Call us now to or book an appointment online:

Ponteland 01661 823374

Hexham 01434 603862

Haltwhistle 01434 322217

www.geoffstevenandsons.co.uk



Geoff STEVEN & Sons
OPTICIANS
Providing advanced eyecare since 1946

Life begins at 40 for Ponteland mums Jess and Lucy

Two Ponteland mums are taking the old phrase 'life begins at 40' quite literally.

For teacher Jess Eyre-Tanner and her friend Lucy Goldwater, a full time mum, have decided to take on 40 new challenges in their fortieth year.

Top of their list is completing the Great North Run to raise £1,000 for Tynedale Hospice at Home.

Whilst it's the first time Jess will have run the half marathon, she has already taken part in the Ponteland Wheelbarrow Race and a 10k tough mudder and has begun attending a regular circuit training class.


The mum-of-three, of Ridgely Drive, who teaches at Hexham Middle School and turns 40 in September, said: "I have to admit I am a little bit terrified but I know that it will be an incredible experience. My main aim is to finish in once piece – it doesn't matter where we come in the race."

Mum-of-four Lucy, of The Crescent, Darras Hall, 40 in October, added: "I have never done anything like this before and my family and friends are pretty surprised that I've signed up. I absolutely hated running when I was at school! The Great North Run was definitely number one on my list of 40 things to achieve. I've just got to think of the other 39 things now!"




Tynedale Hospice at Home provides palliative nursing care to people in their own homes, family support services and a hospital transport service to people living in Tynedale, West Northumberland, Ponteland and the surrounding areas.

Lucy and Jessica have set up a fundraising page. To help them reach their target you can sponsor them at uk.virginmoneygiving.com/4040




START THE WEEKEND EARLY



aperitivo time

with free nibbles and discounted prices for drinks every Friday from 2.30pm to 6.30pm (at the bar area only)



2 for £8 cocktails

every Thursday (at the bar area only)

Follow us on
twitter @barfratelli and @fratellisport for special offers and competitions

Open all day, every day

www.fratelliponteland.co.uk | 01661 872195
 Ristorante Fratelli, Bell Villas, Ponteland, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE20 9BE

Special offer available on selected cocktails only, 2 for £8 cocktails - available Thursday only, La Dolce Vita - selected cut price drinks and complimentary nibbles available Fridays 2.30pm - 6.30pm in the bar area only.

Build a brighter future for your child



Kip McGrath's qualified teachers create individual tutoring programmes, using proven Kip McGrath methods.

☒ Maths ☒ Reading
☒ English ☒ Spelling
☒ Comprehension

Call today for a FREE assessment

Newburn & Westerhope
0191 4355274
 1st Floor - Tynevale Works,
 High Street, Newburn,
 NE15 8LN



kipmcgrath.co.uk/newburn-and-westerhope

Hi, I am Brian the Lion

This is an ideal time to treat yourself
to a new leisure building for your garden,
I have over 40 show buildings on display

We are a North East family run business since 1979



Find us at Azure Garden Centre

Station Road, Cramlington, NE23 8BJ

Opposite the Cramlington Ford Garage on the A1172

Our sales office is open everyday 10am - 4pm

01670 733 499

cram@gcslb.co.uk

www.gcslb.co.uk

Greenhouses - from only £288



Log cabins - from only £1566



Apex sheds - from only £289

Pent sheds - from only £267



Garages - from only £1657



Greenhouse Glass

24" x 18" £3.50

24" x 24" £4.00

**Always in stock
we cut to size
Toughened Ordered**

*Prices shown are subject to change and do not necessarily relate to the exact model shown

**We Sell: Sheds, Garages, Greenhouses, Summerhouses,
Playhouses, Log Cabins, BBQ Cabins, Storage, Kennels,
Greenhouse Glass, Glazing Rubber and Accessories**



This voucher entitles you to:

**2 free cups of
Filter Coffee or Tea**

**in the extremely pleasant
'Cafe Azure' within
Azure Garden Centre**

Sales, Delivery & Installation

**GCS LEISURE
BUILDINGS
GARDEN CONSTRUCTION SERVICES**

Free post-16 student travel set to restart in September

Free post-16 student travel is set to be reintroduced in Northumberland in September.

The move will meet one of the seven key pledges made by Northumberland Conservatives at last year's local election campaign prior to the former Labour leadership's fall from power at County Hall.

The County Council's Cabinet gave the green light for a public consultation on removing the charges before new arrangements can be introduced ready for the start of the new school year in September.

Since 2014 students have been required to pay for their own travel if they can access their chosen learning provider via local bus and rail services.

For those students who cannot access a viable public transport network, subject

to eligibility criteria, arrangements are made for them to travel on school buses/taxis contracted by the Council at a cost of £600 a year per student.

The Conservative-led administration said it is committed to abolishing the charge for students meeting the eligibility criteria, with a one-off £50 fee being introduced to help cover costs.

It was not possible for the new administration to bring in any changes to its Post-16 Transport Policy ahead of the deadline for the 2017/18 school year, which came just days after the new council was formed last May.

Deputy Council Leader Wayne Daley, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, said: "One of our priorities when we

formed this administration was to abolish this charge which we felt was unfair and divisive. We're delighted to have now reached the next stage in amending this policy which will reintroduce free post 16 transport for many students.

"Delivering a good quality sustainable education in Northumberland is vital and part of that is about ensuring students can travel easily and cheaply to where they need to study. I'd encourage as many people as possible to take part in this consultation before the deadline on April 2nd."

To take part in the consultation visit:
<http://bit.ly/2EEtfWi>



**PONTELAND'S ONLY
CENTRALLY LOCATED
MOT STATION**



MOT ★ SERVICING ★ REPAIRS



Call us on
01661 872220

www.meadowfieldautocentre.co.uk

Meadowfield Industrial Estate, Ponteland, NE20 9SD



Ponteland's mum's first book sells out after Times Literary Supplement praise

A Ponteland mother-of-two's first book about her grandfather's Great War experiences as an Army Chaplain has sold out.

Sarah Reay spent four years writing 'The Half-Shilling Curate' about her grandfather Reverend Herbert Butler Cowl, an Army Chaplain who went to France with the Durham Light Infantry and the Northumberland Fusiliers in 1915.

He was severely wounded during heavy enemy bombardment at the front and on his journey back to England he was placed in a cot bed aboard the hospital ship Anglia when she hit a German mine in the Channel.

As a result of Herbert's actions that day, he became one of the first Wesleyan Army Chaplains to receive the Military Cross for exemplary gallantry.

The book was launched by foreword writer BBC Health Editor Hugh Pym at the Lit and Phil in Newcastle in October 2016 – his grandfather was also a Great War Army Chaplain.

Last September the book was featured in The Times Literary Supplement, where acclaimed author and historian Allan Mallinson wrote: "In many ways, The Half-Shilling Curate is the story of the 5,000 chaplains who served with the British army in the First World War, 179 of whom died during that service."

Praising the book, he added: "Love and decency shine from the pages in both words and photographs."

Sarah said: "This was most probably one of my highlights of last year. The book sold out before Christmas and earlier this month a second edition was published.

"The new edition is approximately five pages longer than the first edition with some adjustments, additional facts, and includes a number of new anecdotes and photographs which came to light following its initial publication.

"The Army Chaplains who served so gallantly during the Great War have been largely overlooked during these years of commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the First World War. So, let us hope now that their selfless courage is never forgotten."

Copies can be ordered online at halfshillingcurate.com



Sarah with Hugh Pym at the launch of The Half Shilling Curate.



**Your Local
Country
Superstore**



Husqvarna

Garden Tractors
Robotic Mowers
Lawnmowers
Chainsaws
Hedgecutters
Stimmers



Scots Gap, Morpeth NE61 4DT • Tel: 01670 774205
Opening hours are Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.30pm, Saturday 8.30am - 5pm

www.robsonandcowan.co.uk

Find out about activities for over-55s at Step into Spring

An event is being held in April to showcase the wide range of activities available in Ponteland for the over-55s.

Step into Spring has been arranged by Ponteland Ageing Well, a group of volunteers aiming to make a difference to the health and wellbeing of local residents aged over 55.

Drop into Merton Hall on Thursday April 19th from 9.30am until 12noon to:

- Enjoy a complimentary cuppa and find out more about the many activities for over-55s held regularly in Ponteland and Darras Hall.
- Meet our friendly stall holders to discover an exciting range of activities available including Age

UK Northumberland, Action on Hearing Loss, Churches Together and U3A.

- Chat with health trainers and have your blood pressure checked.
- Obtain advice on all your IT queries, big and small.

From exercise classes, line dancing and lunches in our church halls to coffees and bingo and brunch at Merton Hall, there is an abundance of choice for staying active, finding a new interest, increasing your social circle and staying healthy and well.

So whether you, or someone you know, has just moved in to Ponteland or Darras Hall or are simply looking to do something interesting and new – do pop in to the event and share our top tips on staying active, connected and well.



Free transport available on the Ponteland Hopper.

We have had great feedback from our previous events:

"They sorted out my problem on my mobile phone..."

"I've found out about a coffee morning to go to..."

"It was great - really informative..."

To book your free place on the Hopper Bus to take you to and from the event or to find out more about this excellent service please ring ADAPT on 01434 600599.

Volunteers sought for pre Bloom judging litter pick

Volunteers are being sought for a two hour litter pick taking place ahead of the spring judging for Northumbria in Bloom.

Can all taking part meet at the Memorial Hall on Saturday April 21st for a 10am start. Litter pickers and bags will be provided.

The NiB judging follows on Wednesday April 25th at 2pm.

Call response times improved for Ponteland patients

Call response times for patients of Ponteland Medical Group have been cut by a third in the last five months.

The practice, part of Northumbria Primary Care, says it has worked tirelessly to dramatically reduce the average call response time following feedback from patients.

Appointments can now be booked or cancelled, repeat prescriptions requested and investigation results seen - all online.

Dr Hannah Brown, a GP at Ponteland Medical Group, said: "Listening to our patients and understanding their experiences, is very important to us – it provides invaluable insight on where we need to improve.

"Following feedback from the Care Quality Commission last year, we assured patients we would work to resolve the problem with the call response times and improve the process of making an appointment by telephone.

"We would like to thank all our patients

for their support while these issues were addressed and we will ensure more work is done to continually improve access and quality.

"So far, we have improved call response times by almost 32.5% and have seen big improvements in overall patient satisfaction. We know that there is more work to do – but this is a very good start."

The CQC rated the practice as 'requires improvement' after an inspection in February 2017 and said patients found the appointment system difficult to use. Its report said National GP Patient Survey results published in July 2016 showed the practice was performing below the local and national averages in many areas.

Areas highlighted for improvement included continuing to monitor and review access to appointments and the telephone system, taking steps to ensure confidentiality is maintained in the reception area and improving communication with the patient participation group.

Temporary playpark being created during school and leisure complex build

A temporary playpark is to be created during building works for the new £46m schools and leisure complex for Ponteland.

While the scheme is being developed, the play area at Callerton Lane will be moved to a new location on the other side of the bridlepath. The skate park is not being replaced.

The move follows a request from the Town

Council, which had asked Northumberland County Council if six of the smaller items of equipment could be moved to a smaller temporary play area further up Callerton Lane to ensure children still had somewhere to play during the construction period.

Nominations sought for Community Partnership

Nominations are being invited for Ponteland Community Partnership's Executive Council and Executive Committee.

The Partnership is a group of volunteers all with a strong community spirit who wish to reach out to all residents, working with other local groups, and engage with projects and events for young and old to enhance their quality of life.

The Partnership's 2018 AGM will be held at 7pm on Wednesday May 23rd in the committee room at the Ponteland Town Council offices in the Meadowfield industrial estate.

Nominations are sought for membership of the Executive Council for the posts of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer as well as members of the Executive Committee.

These should be submitted in writing no later than April 26th to Mrs Shirley Hill, Honorary Secretary, Ponteland Community Partnership at shirley@reevehill.plus.com

Christian Aid concert

Thursday April 26th - 7pm
Ponteland Methodist Church

Don't miss Gareth Davies-Jones, an award winning professional singer-songwriter, who plays a variety of instruments.

Bob Harris of BBC Radio 2 says 'Very beautiful music. I can thoroughly recommend this'.

Originally from Ulster, Gareth now lives in the Tyne valley. He has worked with the Sage, the Arts Council, the Mining Institute etc. His 11 albums include memorable melodies about lighthouses, maritime daring and tragedy, WW1 tunnellers, history of mining, landscape of Northumberland, the Sermon on the Mount, songs of hope, love and longing. Gareth will also be showing a Christian Aid exhibition - 'Inherit the Earth'.

Tickets £10 from Ann Cooper (01661) 82434 and Pauline Groves (01661) 824764.

**Take the plunge**



THIS ISN'T JUST A POOL, IT'S AN OASIS OF OPPORTUNITY WITH INNOVATIVE NEW CLASSES COMING SOON.



NEW CLASS PROGRAMME COMING SOON TO PONTEND LEISURE CENTRE. CLASSES INCLUDE AQUA JOG, HYDRO HIIT, HYDRO POLE, FLOATFIT AND MORE!

For further information visit www.activenorthumberland.org.uk/taketheplunge or call 01670 620 200



café - workshop - supplies

barista coffee - speciality teas

homemade cakes & scones

for directions and more details visit:
www.kirkleycycles.com

t:01661 871 094

service • repairs • spares



ROAD • MOUNTAIN • COMMUTE
fully equipped modern workshop

CHECK IN TO WIN



CHECK IN ON FACEBOOK
AT HAVELI FOR A CHANCE
TO WIN CHAMPAGNE
EVERY WEEK



share your **#greatindianfood**

BOTTLES MUST BE WON EVERY WEEK UNTIL 28th APRIL 2018

3-5 Broadway, Darras Hall | **01661 87 27 27** | haveliponteland.com

@HaveliPonteland /Haveli.net HaveliPonteland