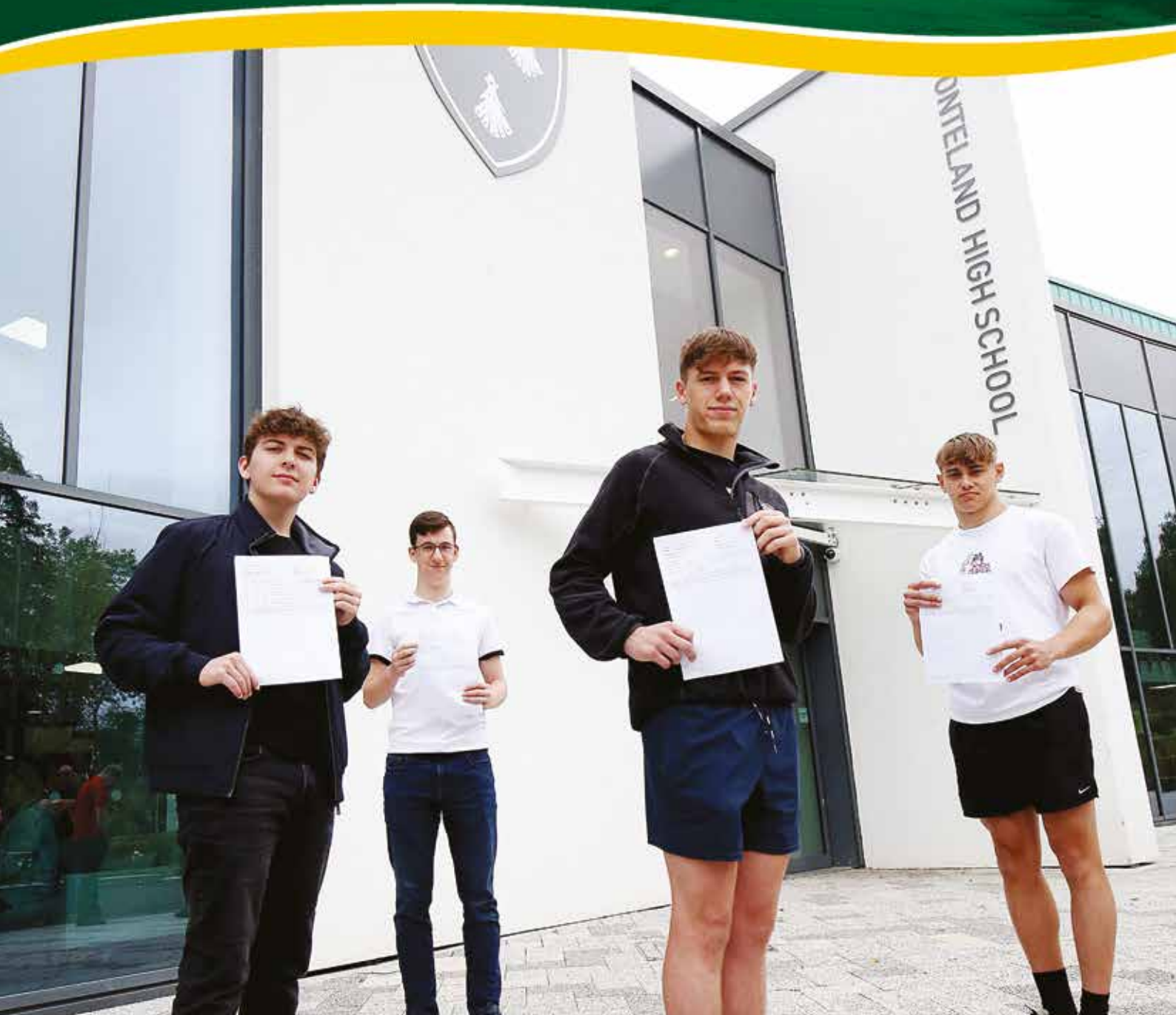


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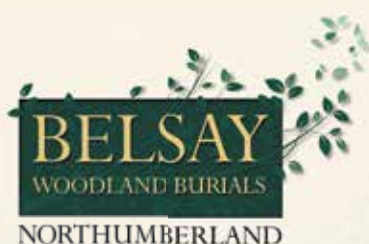
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Students achieve superb A-level results despite disruption

A-level students at Ponteland High School have been praised after securing 'superb' results despite two hugely disrupted years of study.

The 2022 cohort were taking their first public examinations following the cancellation of their GCSE exams due to Covid.

And 26 students achieved a clean sweep of grades awarded at A* and or A, which the school described as a "phenomenal achievement" given the significant disruption to their studies during periods of school closure over the past two years.

Three of them - Tom Beales, Nicholas Dobson and Hannah Eggleston - will be studying at Cambridge University from September.

Other notable performances include Rachael Foster and Nicola Ho, who both secured four A* grades, and Samuel Armstrong, Chloe Beechinor-Collins, Sebastian Sloan and Ben Wooley, who all achieved three A*s. Kathija Sharif obtained two Distinction* Cambridge Technicals in Business and ICT.

Ponteland High School Headteacher Stefan McElwee said: "We are delighted with the results achieved by our Year 13 students this year. We must remember that this cohort have not sat public examinations before as their

GCSE exams were cancelled at short notice in March 2020. It is especially pleasing to see the students have performed so well across all subjects despite their limited exposure to formal exams.

"I am particularly proud of the resilience and positive outlook they have maintained through the many pressures and disruptions caused by the pandemic. They have continued to focus hard on their studies and have more than risen to the challenges presented. Today is a day for them to celebrate fantastic results and to look forward to further successes in their next destinations, whether that be higher education, apprenticeships or employment.

"Our teachers have worked tirelessly to minimise the impact on students and ensure they have been well supported academically and emotionally. They too can celebrate the successes of their students and feel pride in how well they continue to serve all the students in our school.

"I hope our Year 13 students will look back on their time with us fondly. They are exceptional, inspiring and talented young people who deserve every success. I couldn't be prouder of them and I look forward to hearing about their further achievements in the future."

* New head starts at high school: page 6



Photos by Paul Norris.

Witnesses sought after park arson attack



By PC Graeme Harbottle, Ponteland Neighbourhood Policing Team

I would like to update readers on the ongoing investigation in relation to the fire and subsequent extensive damage caused to the wooden walkway structure in Ponteland Park.

I am leading this investigation and I am working alongside Northumberland Fire and Rescue community safety team as well as the County and Town Councils to identify any persons in or around this area between the hours of 12noon and 3pm on Monday August 1.

I am looking through and reviewing local CCTV in and around the area to identify any possible persons of interest as well as speaking with local businesses.

If anyone has any information in relation to this crime, I would encourage them to contact Northumbria Police on 101 quoting crime number 090048L/22 or alternatively anonymously via the Crimestoppers website.

I also wanted to update and raise awareness of the impact of drink and drug driving.

As a neighbourhood policing team, we have stepped up patrols and completed roadside vehicle stops with drivers who have been seen to drive out and away from licensed premises.

We also remain in contact with licensed premises staff to encourage them to contact police should they have any concerns about a customer who has consumed alcohol and is likely to drive away from the premises, to prevent any issues should they drive or attempt to drive.

I would like to reiterate that if you are caught and convicted, you could face a driving ban, large fine and a prison sentence. Drink or drug driving could lead to a criminal record and an increase in your insurance premiums. Remember – you should always consider the morning after the night before when drinking.

Contact the Neighbourhood Policing Team by email at easttynedale.npt@northumbria.police.uk or at Etal Lane Police Station in Westerhope which is open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

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Limited places still available for 2022/2023 from Nursery (age 2) through to Year 6. Children living in local catchment have a geographical pathway to Ponteland High.

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"We are absolutely delighted with our child's progress."

Baby joy for MP two years after loss of newborn twins

Ponteland's MP Guy Opperman MP has spoken of his joy after his wife Flora gave birth to their son Kitto two years after the tragic death of newborn twins.

Christopher Coleman Opperman, who is nicknamed Kitto, was born at St Thomas' Hospital in London on July 30.

Announcing the news, Mr Opperman paid tribute to the two sons the couple lost in June 2020, Teddy and Rafe, who both died within hours of birth.

The MP said: "Welcoming Christopher Coleman Opperman, who has been called Kitto for many months, to this wonderful world.

"Know that you will always be loved little man. Massive thanks to St Thomas' Hospital, after a long journey to this place, and a long week in hospital. Huge thanks to all the team from IVF to delivery. Mum and babe doing fine.

"Kitto will always be our third child. Sadly our twin boys did not make it, being born too soon for this world. They are loved, and never forgotten but, for now, we



celebrate a long journey to parenting."

Following the tragic twins' deaths, Mrs Opperman raised more than £28,000 in a campaign for research into Preterm premature rupture of the membranes (PPROM), a complication in which the amniotic sac surrounding the baby breaks before week 37 of pregnancy.

At the time she said: "This will hopefully prevent other families experiencing the same pain. We are so grateful for the care we received from the NHS and we want to ensure that the learnings from our experience are as widely accessible as possible. We intend this fund to be used for research into identifying and preventing PPROM."

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New head starts at high school

The new headteacher of Ponteland High School has taken up his post.

Stefan McElwee, who had previously been deputy headteacher at the school, was appointed at the end of last term, and started on September 1.

He replaces Kieran McGrane, who is stepping down from the role after 10 years at the school to move to the role of Pele Trust Chief Executive Officer on a full-time basis.

Mr McElwee said: "It is such an honour to have been appointed to the position of headteacher in such a fantastic school. I have enjoyed my role as deputy headteacher immensely, so to have the opportunity to lead the school in the near future is a wonderful opportunity.

"I am determined to build on the success of Mr McGrane by developing further our student-centred approaches to teaching and learning, so students continue to feel happy and secure in school, maximising their opportunities to achieve exceptionally well in all aspects of their school life."

Mr McGrane added: "We were fortunate to be able to interview five excellent candidates who were put through a rigorous two-day process. Mr McElwee was the unanimous choice and showed why he is the right person for this important role.

"I have absolutely loved being headteacher of Ponteland High School for the last 10 years but can move to my new role as Pele Trust CEO, confident that the school is in great hands."



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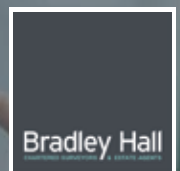
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Council chief receives £209,000 pay-out

A protracted dispute between Northumberland County Council and its Chief Executive has been resolved after a £209,000 severance pay-out was agreed.

Roughly the equivalent of one-year's full-time salary for the role, the council said the sum includes a £75,000 payment to settle an employment tribunal claim for 'injury to feelings' and £40,000 on account of 'injury or disability'.

The authority also resolved it would not pursue any action to recover £179,000 paid to Daljit Lally in a £40,000 per year international allowance not properly authorised and identified as unlawful by a Section 114 report.

Both the council and Mrs Lally will also cease all action against each other, including ongoing employment tribunals and standards cases.

The agreement brings to an end a two-year battle between the former CEO and the Conservative-led minority administration, which saw Mrs Lally suspended, former council leader Peter Jackson unseated and a string of senior officers leave the authority.

The deal was approved by 38 votes to seven with four abstentions at an extraordinary meeting of the county council on July 27.

Those voting against included Morpeth Conservative Coun John Beynon, who said: "Morally, it's wrong...this council has been run through intimidation, fear and bullying."

Calling for an investigation, he added that many good officers had been lost, with their reputations damaged, having "lived through hell" for the last few years.

The meeting heard that Mrs Lally had been on sick leave for several months. Providing legal advice, solicitor Mark Greenburgh told councillors there was "no possibility" of the chief executive resigning, adding: "She believes she has done nothing wrong."

Interim deputy chief executive Rick O'Farrell will replace Mrs Lally, who left the authority on July 31, on an interim basis.

Council Leader Glen Sanderson said: "I am pleased we are now able to move on."



ADVERTISING FEATURE

The importance of life assurance, a pension fund and a lasting power of attorney

By David Lamb CFP™ MCSI

Nobody likes to think about catastrophe scenarios such as death, serious illness or even losing a job. But failure to plan can be planning to fail and will subconsciously create nagging worries.

The first thing to do is to create an emergency fund. What would happen if you were to die? Would your financial dependents be able to maintain their lifestyle without the fear of running out of money?

Life assurance of £100,000 may sound a lot of money, but is it enough? If you have a young family, they may run out of money.

If you were to die, would your family need a lump sum, or an income? Insuring for an income is usually lower cost than insuring for a lump sum.

How did you arrive at your level of life assurance? A detailed shortfall analysis will help you calculate how much life assurance you may need. Cashflow modelling can help with this.

Will any life assurance go straight to your family, when they need it,

or will it get delayed whilst probate is processed and are there any inheritance tax issues? Placing a policy in trust can help resolve these issues but careful planning and professional advice is essential.

What would happen if you were to suffer a critical illness? Often a first heart attack is nature's way of telling you to slow down. Do you really want to have to rush back to work because you need to pay the mortgage? A critical illness policy could provide a cash injection that could be a life saver!

It is generally considered sensible to accumulate a pension fund so that you do not need to rely solely on a State pension in retirement. If you are incapacitated, without any income protection, you may need to survive on

state benefits with far more financial responsibility.

Another important issue to consider is losing mental capacity. Many people think 'it won't happen to us, we're fine', but what would happen to your finances if this was to happen?

The Court (of Protection) puts a padlock on that person's finances and they and their family lose control of their money. Cheques can't be written, money can't be transferred and bills cannot be paid. A deputy is appointed and so starts a long and expensive process.

The key to that padlock is a Lasting Power of Attorney, but you can only buy that key when you have mental capacity. Once that is lost it is too late.

Build your own cashflow model, for free, at lambfinancial.co.uk



Entries encouraged as Flower Show returns

Entries are being encouraged to more than 120 classes as Ponteland Flower Show returns this month after two virtual events for its 45th year.

From fruit and veg, flowers and heathers to cookery, handicrafts, woodcraft, painting, wines and photography - and children's classes - there is something for everyone.

It is now an open show, so exhibitors no longer need to be residents of Ponteland; friends and family from outside the village are very welcome to join in.

There will now be no charge for entries, but also no prize money - just prize certificates and bragging rights!

Entry to the Memorial Hall from 1pm to 4.15pm on Saturday September 10 will be donation only, with all money raised used to keep the show running and payment can be taken on the door by card reader.

Class schedules are being distributed throughout the village, at the library, Cowells and Plants Plus. They are also available via the show's Facebook page Ponteland Flower Show and on the new show website at pontelandflowershow.org.uk, where tips for those new to showing can be found.



Visitors view vegetables at the 2019 show. Photograph by Paul Norris.

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Your letters

Anger at telegraph pole plan for broadband rollout and an appeal for complaints about increasing aircraft noise in this month's postbag.

Shocked and angry at potential 'forest' of telegraph poles

I am a resident of Meadow Court in Darras Hall and read with interest your article (August issue 203) on the intended use of telegraph poles to facilitate Factco's rollout of high speed broadband.

In addition to Wentworth Court and Oakway we now know that Meadow Court (and Riverside) is also threatened with such a backward step.

Residents are both shocked and angry. They are not against the installation of high-speed broadband but are against the retrograde step of the use of telegraph poles to install it.

There had been no mention of intended use of poles during the various briefings. There has been no information or justification as to why this is technically necessary in the specific situation.

The communication of Factco's intention is also playing a part in creating concerns. Northumberland County Council records show that the authority was notified by Factco on June 1 of its intention to use poles.

A letter dated May 30 informing residents of this was hand delivered to NCC on June 29. Also on June 29 the statutory notices were posted on lampposts. On June 16 NCC told Factco '...(NCC) does not object to this development'.

So, by the time we knew anything at all about this the deal was done! And it would seem well within any 28 day consultation period.

Collectively and individually residents' views have been communicated to Factco, NCC, Darras Hall Estate Committee, County and Town Councillors. Factco has recently said it will review these plans, whereas response from elsewhere has been either 'it's been approved' or 'let's wait and see'.

Factco label this announced intention 'phase one' and it covers some 457 houses of the approx 2,800 dwellings in Darras Hall. Factco's rollout plan for DH has not been published. It may be reasonable to predict that situations as experienced in 'phase one' will be repeated throughout the estate which, if unchecked, will lead to a forest of telegraph poles.

This situation needs to be resolved now and our predicament should not fall on other householders as Factco's work through their phases. Residents who wish to sign up for fast broadband delivered in this way should be made aware of the deterioration of the environment in which they live.

Trevor Hughes
Meadow Court, Darras Hall

October issue deadlines: The deadline for all copy and adverts for the October issue is Monday September 19. Door to door distribution will be from Monday October 3 to Friday October 7. Businesses should be aware that all bookings for advertisements must be paid in full by the deadline to ensure placement in the October issue. Please visit ponteland-tc.gov.uk/pont-news-and-views for online issues and all updates.

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.

Are you bothered by increasing aircraft noise?

It's long been scientifically established that noise can be bad for your health.

Traffic and industrial noise have received a lot of attention but aircraft noise is increasingly regarded as a risk. Studies are showing that it can lead to an increased risk of heart disease and other health problems. So, aircraft noise is not just a nuisance, it can be bad for your health - even if you don't think you are bothered by it.

Aircraft Noise Action Group (ANAG) has been campaigning since 2017 to get Newcastle Airport to address the issue of aircraft noise. ANAG has seen a large increase in the number of noise complaints going to the airport via its website since pandemic restrictions were limited.

A lot of complaints are coming from people who were not bothered by the noise before the pandemic so it looks like it's getting worse. ANAG is also beginning to see a few more night flights after 11pm, some in the early hours - not many but they are noticeable.

Part of the problem is that there are no planning or other restrictions on flights into and out of Newcastle Airport. This means that the airport can, in theory, fly planes in and out at any time of day or night if it so chooses.

If you're bothered by the noise, it's really important to complain and keep complaining so that the airport can't claim that it is running an operation that everybody is happy with. You can complain via ANAG's website, using their easy-to-use complaints form at: aircraftnoiseaction.com/complaints-form-2

Roger Haydon, Chairman, Aircraft Noise Action Group
Mayside Place, Clara Vale

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North-East Dog Festival

This popular annual event returns to Kirkley Hall from 10am on Saturday and Sunday September 3 and 4. Full details and tickets at northeastdogfestival.com.

Duck Races

The popular Duck Races event returns to Ponteland Park on the afternoon of Sunday September 4. Details of the event and how to enter the competitions at rotaryponteland.org.uk.

Ponteland Wildlife Talks

We meet at St Mary's Parish Centre, Thornhill Road, Ponteland, at 7.30pm on Tuesday September 6 when our speaker will be Nick Johnson, Project Officer of The Veteran Tree Project and on Tuesday October 4 when Stephen Hall will talk on 'Chillingham's Wild Cattle'. Entry fee of £2 includes refreshments. Open to all.

Ponteland u3a

Meetings and talks at St Mary's Parish Centre are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 2pm. Our next two talks will be: September 7 – Northern Ghosts by Ken Smith; October 5 – Talk by a local author by Jane Ions. We will have an open day on September 19. For membership information call 01661 824953.

Ponteland Flower Show

The 45th Ponteland Flower Show will return to the Memorial Hall on Saturday September 10 after two years running virtually. See article on p8.

Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

Geoff Hughes will address us on the subject of 'Newcastle through the ages' at our next meeting in the Memorial Hall at 2.30pm on Monday September 12.

Ponteland Village WI

Our next meeting at 7.30pm on Tuesday September 13 at St Mary's Parish Centre, Ponteland, will include a talk on The People's Kitchen in Newcastle. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month. Look for Ponteland Village WI on Facebook or email pontelandvillagewi@hotmail.com.

Callerton Garden and Flower Club

Our next meeting will be held at 2pm at Ponteland CIU Club on Wednesday September 14 when Sophie Simpson will give an illustrated talk on garden design. Visitors very welcome (£7).

Kirkley WI

Kirkley WI resumes regular meetings this month following a summer break. Visitors or guests are warmly welcomed to our meetings held at Kirkley Hall on the second Wednesday of each month. Our

next meeting is at 2pm on Wednesday September 14 when guest speaker Carol Burnett will talk to us about medicinal plants and the Poison Garden at Alnwick. Call 01661 872956 for more information.

Gatherings for Christian Meditation

Our group meets in St Mary's Church for meditation from 2pm to 3pm on the second Wednesday of each month. Our next dates are September 14, October 12, November 9 and December 14. All are welcome.

Ponteland Local History Society

At 7.30pm on September 15, Freda Thompson will give her talk 'Grainger's Town' at St Mary's Parish Centre, Thornhill Road. Visitors welcome £2. The History Society Archive Desk will be open at Ponteland Library between 1.30pm and 3.30pm on Friday September 2. No appointment necessary. Further information available at ponthistsoc.blogspot.com.

Ponteland Friendly Stitchers

On Monday September 26 from 2.15pm to 4.15pm at The Hive Bar in Ponteland Leisure Centre we have our AGM and Exhibition of Members' Work. Membership of the group is open to all and you can come to a meeting as a visitor for £5. Contact Secretary Penny Ford at pontelandfriendlystitchers@mail.com.

Plant Heritage North-East Group

The North-East group of charity Plant Heritage, which supports the conservation of garden plants, meets at Ponteland Memorial Hall on the second Saturday of the month at 2.30pm, when there is an illustrated talk followed by tea, biscuits, a raffle and plant sales. On Saturday October 8 the talk will be 'Linnel Farm Bulbs'. Visitors welcome - £5 to include raffle.

Merton Hall library and coffee morning

Merton Hall's coffee morning and free library is now open on Fridays from 9.30am to 11.30am. New or nearly new book donations would be appreciated - they can be dropped off on Friday mornings.

Ponteland Ladies Choir

We meet on Mondays, term time, at 7.30pm at Ponteland Community Primary School, Callerton Lane. We sing a wide variety of music. Please contact Susan on 07710 418780 for more details. New members welcome - no auditions required.

Creative writing classes

Suitable for both beginners and more experienced writers, these classes will inspire and encourage you to write poetry, short fiction and memoir and to share and develop your writing through stimulating

workshop sessions in a friendly and supportive group. We meet on Wednesday mornings in members' homes in and around Ponteland. Email claire@claire276.plus.com for more information or to arrange a free taster session.

Rotary Ponteland

We meet at the Britannia Hotel each Tuesday, alternating lunchtime and evenings. Visit rotaryponteland.org.uk.

Ponteland Methodist Church

Sunday worship 10am and 6.30pm - all welcome. Monday 1pm to 4pm 'Open Door' café. Tuesday Boys Brigade with a Girls' Association. Thursday Toddlers, Men's Forum, Women Together. Saturday walking groups. Various Bible study and House groups. Prayer and Fairtrade groups. Pilates, Zumba, dance. Room hire. Contact anncooperx@gmail.com or call 01661 824347.

Inner Wheel Club of Ponteland

Part of a women's voluntary organisation we are a small club founded on friendship. Meetings held on the first Monday of the month at St Mary's Parish Centre at 2pm include members spending social time together and talks, and occasional meals in a local restaurant and small fundraising events for charities are also held. New members and visitors are always welcome - contact 07568 743653.

Ponteland Health Walks

Ponteland Health Walks meet every Tuesday at 10.30am outside Ponteland Leisure Centre. The free walks take 60 to 90 minutes on local footpaths. A good opportunity to walk safely, improve fitness and make new friends. Assistance dogs only please. Contact Gordon Allan on 07936 135469 for more information or just turn up, no notice required.

Ponteland Ukulele Band

We are a friendly group of mixed ability ukulele players and meet every Tuesday at the CIU Club from 1pm to 3pm. New members welcome.

Knit & Natter Group

Knit & Natter on Tuesday afternoons from 1pm to 3pm at Ponteland Library. For more information contact Library Assistant Julie Ennis at ponteland.library@northumberland.gov.uk

Ponteland Ramblers

Ponteland Ramblers are a friendly group of local ramblers who organise walks in Northumberland or North Durham of usually about 8-9 miles on alternate Sundays and shorter walks on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. Visitors are welcome to join us for a few walks, without any obligation to join formally. For details of forthcoming walks, please visit our website ramblers.org.uk/ponteland

Project aims to attract red squirrels to 'hidden' conservation area

By Jane Hodson-Hamilton

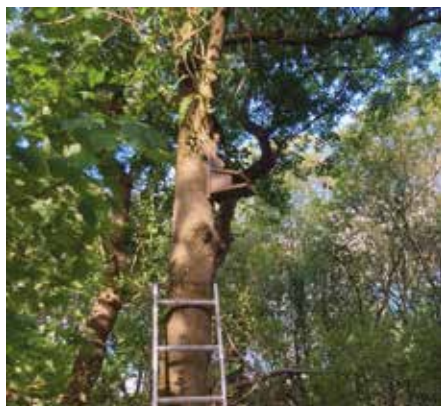
A 'hidden' conservation area could become a new safe haven for Darras Hall's dwindling red squirrel population, thanks to a new environmental project.

Ponteland and District Red Squirrel Group has attached initial feeding boxes to trees in Grasslands, with the support of landowner Darras Hall Estate Committee.

The four-hectare Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), well hidden by the surrounding houses on Middle Drive, Eastern Way and Woodlands, is one of over 4,100 SSSI sites in England deemed to be internationally important for wildlife.

The main botanical interest centres on the gently undulating species-rich grassland which has developed on clay soils and which grades into wetter areas.

With an oval shape believed to have



replicated a cricket pitch, Grasslands was first identified in the Darras Hall Trust Deed 1910 as a specific area uniquely positioned in an isolated spot to be used for recreational purposes and has been left relatively undisturbed since.

The installation of the feeders was carried out with the permission of Natural England, which has to approve everything that happens on these

special areas which are protected as being internationally recognised for having rare plants and animals.

Initially two feeders have been attached to trees and filled with the red squirrels' favourite treats - hazelnuts - in the hope that the support feeders will attract the diminishing population of reds back to the site. If this project is a success, additional feeders and even a drey, a red squirrel nesting box, will also be installed.

Darras Hall and Ponteland is the most southerly area of our region still to have a small but dwindling population of red squirrels. A further support project to erect a squirrel bridge across Fox Covert Lane is currently being investigated to help reduce the number of red squirrel casualties on the local roads.

If you want to know more about what you can do to help our red squirrels on the estate, visit the Ponteland and District Red Squirrel Group's Facebook page.



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The triathletes with Shola Ameobi.

Ponteland triathlete gives sporting chance to competitors with disabilities

Ponteland triathlete Jo Shallcross is helping give local children and adults with disabilities the opportunity to take part in the event they love.

Jo was first inspired to organise a triathlon tailored to the individual needs of North-East children after seeing a disabled child enjoying an event in Hawaii.

With the help of her friend Tracey Sample, from Amble, the Reason To Disability Triathlon is now in its seventh year and steadily growing in popularity.

Originally designed for children with disabilities who would normally be challenged by doing the event, the annual triathlon in Newcastle is now also proving popular with adults with disabilities too.

At this year's event in July, sponsored by SOS Group, there were 39 participants aged from eight to 29. Each had the opportunity to take part in a traditional triathlon – swimming, cycling and running – with distances adapted according to ability and with all the support they needed.

They included Elijah Parsons, 13 from Newcastle, who has spina bifida. He said: "I think I've been doing this triathlon since I was about 10. For me, the swimming part is the best because I like being in the water and the cycling is probably the most challenging.

"I've got a special handbike that attaches to this wheelchair and is powered by my hands. Going up the hills today in the heat was really hard."

Mum Jo Parsons added: "This event means Elijah can participate in something that's accessible to him and where everything's prepared for his needs. It's a chance for him to feel he's good at something because he's at a disadvantage a lot of the time. And he can see other people with disabilities, and how they vary and change, so that exposure is really good for him."

Newcastle United's Shola Ameobi is a long-time supporter of the Reason To Disability Triathlon and was on hand to present the medals and congratulate the participants.

He said: "It's a great opportunity for kids and adults with disabilities to really enjoy working out, to enjoy the camaraderie and enjoy being part of something together. It's really important that they continue to have this opportunity to celebrate and compete, regardless of what challenges they face, and we can all come together and enjoy being part of it."



Pictured (l-r) are: event organiser Jo Shallcross, Andrew Skelton - Director, SOS Group, Shola Ameobi and event organiser Tracey Sample.



Elijah Parsons with his mum Jo and his handbike.

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Councillors thank Town Clerk for 20 years' service

Town councillors paid tribute to the Town Clerk when they presented her with a floral display and vouchers to mark her 20 years working for the area.

Ponteland Mayor Coun Christine Greenwell thanked Kath Mavin on behalf of all 12 councillors praising her "exceptional work and wonderful commitment".

Kath has been clerk for 14 years and was deputy clerk for six years before then, working at first for Ponteland Parish Council and then for the Town Council since its creation in 2009.

Coun Greenwell said: "All 12 councillors wanted to show their appreciation by purchasing thank you gifts for Kath. Her knowledge of the area, of who does what, when and why is appreciated by all of us.

"We wanted to mark Kath's 20 years working in Ponteland and show our appreciation for her dedication and efficiency, including throughout the many Covid issues and restrictions we have encountered over the past few years."



Pont Rep back on the Yellow Brick Road!

Following long postponements due to Covid over the last two years Ponteland Repertory Society CIO will be back soon to entertain our loyal audiences from near and far.

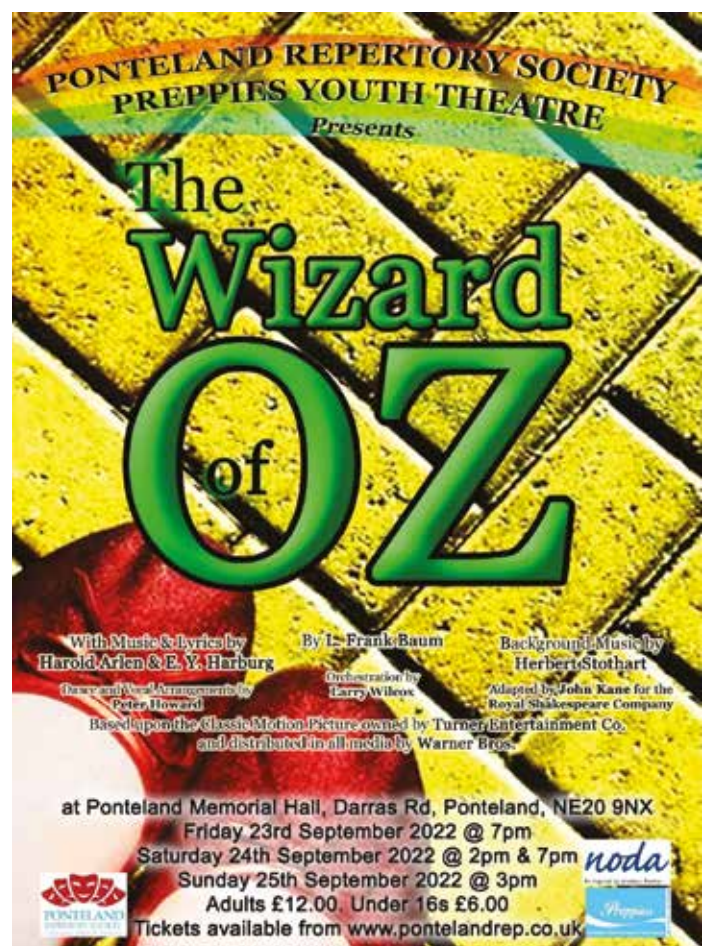
We have been on a very tough journey as have you all but are now nearly ready to go with everything crossed.

The Wizard of Oz is a great show for adults and children alike and the cast and crew have been working tirelessly for weeks and months to bring this production to you.

You will all be familiar with the songs from the show and Dorothy and her beloved dog Toto's journey through the Land of Oz to the Emerald City accompanied by her friends the Tin Man, the Scarecrow and the Cowardly Lion, so you can sing along if you want to. Toto has been created as an amazingly believable puppet.

We have many local and favourite actors, both very young and more mature, who look forward to seeing you all once again.

We are back in the Memorial Hall on Friday September 23 at 7pm, Saturday September 24 for a 2pm matinee and at 7pm, and on Sunday September 25 for a 3pm matinee. The UNITY Bar will be open on those days as well as refreshments and of course ice creams. Tickets available online at pontelandrep.co.uk.



History Society archive desk to reopen

By Michael Taylor

Ponteland Local History Society is to reopen its 'archive desk' at Ponteland Library this month.

The desk will be open between 1.30pm and 3.30pm on the first Friday of each month, starting on Friday September 2.

Recent circumstances have restricted the opportunities to access the society's archive of local photographs and documents, but with the support of Northumberland County Libraries additional space and facilities have been made available to enable society volunteers to reopen the archive desk.

Ponteland Librarian Julie Ennis said "I am delighted that the history society is once again able make access to their archive more widely available. Ponteland Library has housed the society's archive for over 20 years and it hoped that the increased space will be of benefit to those undertaking research or those wanting to know more about the community's past."

The archive consists of local photographs, documents, maps and plans. Local History Society volunteers staffing the archive desk will be able to help with local history research and projects, family history research and other sources of local history information.

No appointment is needed on the days when the archive is open between 1.30pm and 3.30pm on first Friday each month.

The chairman of Ponteland Local History Society, Michael Taylor, said: "The History Society would like to thank Northumberland Libraries and librarian Julie Ennis in particular for enabling the archive desk to reopen.

"Our volunteer members will be very pleased to see members of the community. We hope that people will just pop in to see our collection of photos or perhaps just tell us a story or anecdote from the past."

Further information about Ponteland Local History Society and the Archive Desk is available on the society's website or Facebook page.

Bridge club folds

The Ponteland (Wednesday) Contract Bridge Club which operated from the Memorial Hall has reluctantly closed its doors after 50 years and has donated surplus funds of £588 to the Hall.

The Bridge Club said that the impact of Covid and the move to online bridge playing no longer made the operation viable, but wanted to thank all members past and present for their support.



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