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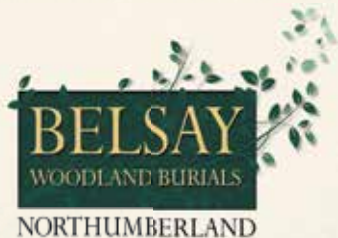


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take on chains of office

Boundary lines could
be redrawn under plans

Annual Flower Show
begins to bloom early

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Pupils reign in Spain through travel trip

Ponteland and Darras Hall pupils have tasted Spanish culture at first hand by visiting the country on an educational visit.

Twenty-nine youngsters, aged nine to 11, from three schools flew south as guests of their partner school, Los Olivos, based in the municipality of Godella.

And they never felt too far from home, with their focus being to contrast the historic city of Valencia, where they stayed, with their native Tyneside.

They participated in programmes of dance, yoga, music, drama, art and Spanish language, and made the most of the warm springtime weather.

Children from Darras Hall Primary, Ponteland Primary and Richard Coates CofE Primary, three of five local schools which are part of Pele Trust, took part.

Their travel was subsidised by the Turing Scheme fund, the government's programme to provide funding for international opportunities in education and training.

Lynn Blain, deputy chief executive of Ponteland Primary, said: "We are delighted that the Turing Scheme allows us to create wonderful opportunities for our pupils.

"We see real benefits to their skills, confidence and understanding of the world when they engage in these projects.

"The travel is exciting and has value, but the real boon is in meeting and working with their peers in school."

And Victoria Parr, headteacher at Darras Hall, added: "Visiting Valencia may have been a daunting prospect, but the children approached it with positivity and tackled every new experience with determination.

"The impact on their personal development is astounding. They return with new friends, new skills and the knowledge that they can take on new challenges."

In school, the pupils are following a programme of music, dance, art and drama inspired by the River Tyne and how it shapes the north east's identity and history.

And in Valencia, they balanced serious schoolwork with exploring the beach and Old Town.

Of special interest was learning how Valencia has managed the river that flowed through the city but routinely flooded.

It has been diverted and converted into a park and City of Science and Arts area, akin to Newcastle's Quayside.

The group also took part in a Flamenco workshop and Spanish lessons.

Hannah Davidson, 10, of Darras Hall Primary, said of the trip: "It made me feel a bit braver to try new places and makes me feel more ambitious for the future."

Liv Ward, nine, of Ponteland Primary, said: "My favourite part was meeting with the Spanish school and making friends. It was so lovely, I really enjoyed it."

And Sophie Brown, 10, of Ponteland Primary, added: "If you get asked to go, don't think about it, just do it. It's amazing."



Work and not all play for pupils.



Youngsters play the Valencia name game.



A beach visit was part of the programme.

New hands on chains of office

A Ponteland councillor has told of her pride at being appointed the town's Mayor – just six years after entering local government.

Coun Karen Overbury said she is “honoured” to become the latest link in the prestigious ceremonial position.

She has taken over from Coun Christine Greenwell, who spent two years in the role.

Coun Overbury, who acted as Deputy Mayor over the same period, became a councillor in 2017.

The retired journalist, who has two children and two grandchildren, moved to Ponteland with her late husband Kevin in 1987.

Her rise to the position of Mayor, where Deputy Mayor will be Coun Alan Hall, was voted in at the annual meeting of Ponteland Town Council on Wednesday, May 10.

She said: “I feel very honoured to take over as leader of Ponteland Town Council from Coun Greenwell and would like to thank her for her terrific work as Mayor over the past two years.

“It is a privilege to serve Ponteland and the people here.

“But without the hard work and dedication of the council staff and the many volunteers in the community who help to make Ponteland the wonderful place it is, the job of the councillors would be a great deal harder.”

Coun Karen Overbury, left, with Coun Christine Greenwell. (Photo by Barry Pells)



Coun Overbury has served on several Ponteland Town Council committees, including the Planning and Highways Committees and Environment and Events Working Parties.

She is also proud of her time helping to create the now-familiar giant poppies and the Platinum Jubilee and Coronation celebrations.

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Plans map out proposed new voting borders

Ponteland's boundary lines could be redrawn under proposals by two planning bodies working separately - and residents can have their say.

In January, Northumberland County Council put forward limited proposals to shake up two of the town's wards, in a bid to better reflect housing numbers.

It has proposed amending the boundary between Ponteland East & Stannington and Ponteland South with Heddon, by moving the existing boundary from Eastern Way to the B6323 Callerton Lane.

Forecasts show Ponteland East and Stannington will have 11 percent more electors than average by 2028, while Ponteland South with Heddon will reduce by 14 percent.

And now the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has put forward its own plans, which are undergoing public consultation until Monday, July 10.

Its inspectors want to alter the boundary between Ponteland North and Ponteland South with Heddon, by moving the

boundary north to include a slice of Darras Road in Ponteland South with Heddon.

In its draft report, the LGBCE says: "The existing divisions for Ponteland and the surrounding parishes currently provide for fairly good electoral equality.

"We have adopted the council's suggested revised boundary between Ponteland East & Stannington and Ponteland South with Heddon, as we consider that the revised boundary better reflects the Darras Hall community.

"However, we also propose to revise the boundary between Ponteland North and Ponteland South with Heddon to provide for electoral equality for Ponteland North and to reflect the Darras Hall community.

"The existing boundary follows a footpath from Eastern Way to Broadway.

"We propose to move the boundary northwards to include a portion of Darras Road in Ponteland South with Heddon.

"This will provide for improved electoral equality for both divisions and we are eager to hear evidence of the community identity in this area to ensure our proposed boundary is appropriate."

The review was triggered by Northumberland meeting the LGBCE's criteria for 'electoral inequality' in parts of the county.

It aims to achieve electorate numbers in each division that are within 10 percent, plus or minus, the average for the county.

Full review information is at www.lgbce.org.uk.

Arresting development is finally approved

Ponteland's former police station is to get a new lease of life after plans to turn it into a restaurant were approved.

Northumberland County Council's decision to give the green light ends 20 months of uncertainty around the future of the Bell Villas property.

Applicant Jim Richardson submitted plans to convert The Old Police House in August 2021 – and he has another three years to complete the scheme, guidelines state.

Opponents of the application included Ponteland Civic Society, which warned there were already enough eateries in the town to feed more than 1,000 diners a night.

The society works to inform the public about the geography, history, natural history, architecture and landscape of Ponteland and its surrounding areas.

The planned restaurant site most recently operated as offices but there is presently no demand for further local workspace, it has been claimed.



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The scent of something different

Ponteland Flower Show is being rebranded to reflect its broadening appeal – but it's anything but a root and branch change.



As it marks its 46th year, organisers have renamed it the Ponteland Flower and Craft Show, with classes above and beyond the traditional beautiful blooms.

It takes place from 1pm to 4.15pm on Saturday, September 9, at the Memorial Hall in Darras Road – and competition classes will include flowers, vegetables, cookery, handicrafts, photography and art.

Treasurer Victoria James said the name change was an important development and the show was being promoted especially early to best lay the groundwork so it could successfully bloom in late summer.

She said: "Ponteland Flower Show has always been about more than flowers, so this year it has been renamed.

"This year sees the addition of a technical challenge set recipe class in the cookery classes.

"After the success of last year's changes, the show will again be free to enter and open to all.

"The show is entirely run by volunteers and relies on fundraising, so if any business or individual would be willing to donate a raffle prize, the committee would be very grateful.

"Ponteland Guides will again be serving tea and cakes to raise funds for their activities."

The event is supported by Ponteland Town Council, Northumberland Freemasons, Andrew Lawson Estate Agents, Cowells, and fratelli Ristorante.

In the photography category, the winner of the best image will receive a year's membership to Ponteland Photographic Society.

Photography classes within the show are wildlife, the north-east, animals, transport, and patterns

And for children, aged 12 and under, there are print, holidays, and transport classes.

Class schedules will be released closer to the event. More information is at www.pontelandflowershow.org, with contact details at info@pontelandflowershow.org.uk.

ADVERTISING FEATURE

The Financial Plan

By David Lamb CFP™ MCSI



In recent articles I've detailed the data needed to complete a financial plan, and the importance of assumptions. Now we get to the structure of the Financial Plan itself.

The Plan is not a static document and should evolve as the client's life changes. It could be relatively simple or quite comprehensive, depending upon the client's requirements. Either way, it should be easily understandable. The Plan itself may not involve the use of financial products (we are financial planning, not providing financial advice at this stage).

The structure, as recommended by the Chartered Institute of Securities & Investment should include:

Objectives and Priorities.

A statement of what the client wants to achieve and when.

Assumptions. This would usually be a summary of the main assumptions.

Current Position. This will include detailed statements for assets and liabilities as well as net worth, income and expenditure, net spendable income, tax calculations, such as income and inheritance tax. This information will then be used to produce cash flow statements (more on these next month) which will then show you where you are heading financially if you do not do anything. A comprehensive plan will also include projections in catastrophe scenarios.

Action Plan. This will be where the planning actions are detailed. Again, these can be very simple or extremely detailed. (I prefer to keep this section as simple as possible, going into greater depth in a separate document, if required). The format should include the specific action, the reasons for the recommendation and who will be responsible for carrying out the action (this may include the client,

the financial planner, their solicitor or accountant) and timescales for completion. As part of the Action Plan, the cash flow projections should be updated to show the effects of the plan on the clients projected financial future.

Arrangement for Review.

As previously stated, a Financial Plan must be an evolving document, so it is essential to have regular reviews.

We often meet new clients who think they've been receiving financial planning but have never seen a financial plan. In reality, they have only been receiving financial advice, but without a plan, it will be very difficult to understand the consequences, and benefits, of financial advice, and, unfortunately, that is where things can go wrong.

A Financial Plan should be the centre of an ongoing, structured professional process and at the centre of a financial plan should be cash flow projections. More on that next month.



Festivities at St Mary's Parish Centre. (Photo by Barry Pells)

Coronation celebrations are crowning glory!

Ponteland residents celebrated the coronation of King Charles III in true Royal style – with regal and respectful festivities.

In events fit for a king, street parties, afternoon teas and other events were held, with bunting and lamppost displays prominent – and there was even a flower planting on Coates Green.

Shops and businesses decorated their windows, with a £200 prize being offered by Ponteland Town Council for the best in each of three local landmark areas.

They were Main Street, and Bell Villas, in Merton Way, Ponteland, and Broadway, in Darras Hall.

And 12 grants of £100 were offered to organisations, groups and care homes for street parties, afternoon teas and other events.

Children also did not miss out, with 10 gold Coronation Crowns hidden in windows of shops and businesses for them to find.

Coun Karen Overbury, chair of the council's Events Committee, said: "We would like to thank each and every one of the shops and businesses, who all made a magnificent effort to make Ponteland look welcoming and fit for the Royal celebration.

"The windows, flags and bunting made walking or driving through Ponteland particularly inviting and cheerful.

"The shops and businesses were all delighted to join in this extra bit of fun and councillors themselves enjoyed the imaginative way many of the shops had displayed the crowns."

In Merton Way, the winner of the £200 prize was Tynedale Hospice at Home, with John Bardgett and Parklands Chemist joint runners-up.

For Main Street, Iain Nicholson and Co Solicitors came first, with Major Family Law and Ponteland Private Nursery in joint second.

And for Broadway, Carousel claimed the prize, ahead of runners-up Dobsons Estate Agents and HB Opticians.

A Royal Picture competition, held in primary schools, had £20



Christine Greenwell, then Mayor of Ponteland, centre, middle, at a Coronation tea at Merton Hall.

vouchers for the winner and £10 vouchers for the runners-up.

At Richard Coates, the winner was Jack Harrison, ahead of Amelie S and Willian Baldacchino-Nicholson.

And at Ponteland Community Primary, Tarat Kara came first, with runners-up Elise Sampele and Ella Symons.

At Darras Hall Primary, the winner Rhys, with runners-up Isabella Rose and Sophie Lawson.

Other events included residents of Old Station Court being serenaded by musicians and choir for a tea and cake afternoon at Darras Hall Primary School.

And St Mary's Church's bells rang out in the morning and afternoon, in total for approaching three hours, in celebration of the big day.

Other events included street parties, residents of Old Station Court being serenaded by musicians and choir for a tea, a cake afternoon at Darras Hall Primary School and afternoon teas at St Mary's Parish Centre, the Memorial Hall and Merton Hall.

Those present at Merton Hall received a pen to commemorate the coronation, and there were five fun-filled games of bingo, with commemorative gifts as prizes.

Front page photo: Coun Christine Greenwell, then Mayor of Ponteland, welcomes guests to the Coronation tea party at Merton Hall.



Children entertain at Darras Hall Primary School. (Photo by Barry Pells)



Chef Richard Bell with pupils (l-r) Teddy, Hannah and Jessica, and residents from Old Station Court. (Photo by Barry Pells)



Youngsters at Cheviot View street party.



Bellringers prepare for action at St Mary's Church.

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Your letters

More anger at 10 per cent Council Tax increase for Police and Crime Commissioner in this month's letters...

Councillors are excellent but Crime Commissioner's a major disappointment

I was extremely unhappy to see that the Police and Crime Commissioner had chosen to increase their council tax charge by 10%.

But I hasten to point out that councillors do not get to endorse this increase. It is entirely up to the PCC how much they increase their precept by.

I otherwise entirely agree with the points made by Hilary

Wood in last month's edition. Indeed, our current PCC, Kim McGuinness is now seemingly too busy spending time on her campaign for the new North East Mayoralty to focus on her day job.

I should end on a positive note. Though the two PCCs we've had since 2012 have both been major disappointments, our local councillors - at both a town and county level are all excellent. They are responsive to residents' concerns and fight to provide good public services while keeping taxes low.

Kevin Wilson
North Road, Ponteland

Pickleball comes to Ponteland

Sports enthusiasts stuck in a pickle through injury can win back their fitness through a new ball sport launching in Ponteland.



Pickleball, which has over four million registered enthusiasts in the US, combines the best elements of tennis, table tennis and badminton.

Mark Harrison, who leads Ponteland Pickleball, describes the game as being "action-packed and exciting but easy for beginners to get to grips with".

While physically demanding, it is suitable for those who have stopped other sports or running due to injuries or knee problems.

The use of a hollow ball means players can feel comfortable against others who might normally hit harder shots. As running is not a big factor, players of all ages can have a well-matched game.

The club has been playing in Newcastle but has moved to Ponteland, thanks to a grant from Ponteland Town Council.

Mark said: "The best thing about pickleball is the

inclusiveness. Adults of all abilities are welcome along. Everyone just mixes in and plays together, you can only have fun.

"Most of our members are from Ponteland and I grew up here, so it's great to establish a new community club.

"We'd like to thank the town council for the grant which has provided us with nets and paddles."

Similar clubs in Jesmond and Hexham have over 30 regular players, so it is hoped Ponteland residents will also embrace Pickleball. The club often gets couples and families attending and playing together.

The sessions take place on Wednesdays 7.30pm to 9pm during term-time at Ponteland Community Primary School. All the pickleball equipment is provided.

Places can be booked via the Spont App - code RHXSP - and more information is at www.pontelandpickleball.co.uk.

July issue deadlines: The deadline for all copy and adverts for the July issue is Monday June 12. Door to door distribution will be from Monday June 26 to Friday June 30. Businesses should be aware that all bookings for advertisements must be paid in full by the deadline to ensure placement in the July 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.

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What's on...

Ponteland Plant Heritage Group

On Saturday June 3rd, we are holding a plant fair at Ushaw House and Gardens, Durham DH7 9RH, from 10am to 3pm. Adults £8 and children £5, which includes access to the house, chapels and gardens. Email pat.skews@btinternet.com for further details.

Ponteland WI

Our next monthly lunch is at Plants Plus on Monday June 5th at 12.30pm. Anyone can join us for a natter and good food. We will also meet on Tuesday June 13th at 2pm in Merton Hall. Visitors will hear Kim Wilde talk about her life on Wilde's Farm near Ponteland. Our monthly competition is for a decorated egg cup.

Ponteland u3a

We hold meetings and talks at St Mary's Parish Centre on the first Wednesday of each month at 2pm, the next two being on June 7th with Swinging 60s by Freda Thompson, and July 5th with Happy Days Digging Up Northumberland's Past by Barry Mead. Anyone wishing to should call our membership secretary on 01661 824953.

Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

From 2.15pm on Monday June 12th at St Mary's Parish Centre, Thornhill Road, Ponteland, Deanna van der Velde will tell 'My Mother's Story'. For our latest news, visit pontelandsgc.co.uk.

Ponteland Village WI

Development Direct, a charity helping schools and providing education opportunities and working with communities in developing countries will be the subject of our meeting on Tuesday June 13th at 7.30pm in St Mary's Parish Centre, Ponteland. We meet monthly and subgroups include Walking Group, Dining Out, Walking for Softies, Dog Walking and Book Club. To try the group, email pontelandvillagewi@hotmail.com or look for Ponteland Village WI on Facebook.

Callerton Garden & Flower Club

Members will meet on Wednesday June 14th at 2pm at Ponteland CIU Club. Area demonstrator Val Guest will show flower arrangements under the title of 'Summer Sizzle'. A bring and buy stall is available, with refreshments in the bar. All visitors welcome, fee £7.

Ponteland Friendly Stitches

The next meeting is on Monday June 26th from 2pm to 4pm in St Mary's Church Hall, Thornhill Way, Ponteland. Two members will deliver a Crewel workshop. Visitors are welcome. £5 fee payable. More information is from emmadenham52@gmail.com.

Knit & Natter Group

We meet on Tuesday afternoons from 1pm to 3pm at Ponteland Library. For more information, contact library assistant Julie Ennis at ponteland.library@northumberland.gov.uk

Rotary Ponteland

Rotary Ponteland meets at the Britannia Hotel, Newcastle Airport, each Tuesday, alternating lunchtime and evenings. The club is involved in activities in the community, schools and newly formed environmental group PAGE. We also organize events in the village to raise funds for local charities. We also hold occasional Zoom meetings. More information is at rotaryponteland.org.uk and John Cooper at info@rotaryponteland.org.uk.

Ponteland Health Walks

We meet each Tuesday at 10.30am outside Ponteland Leisure Centre. The free walks take 60 to 90 minutes on local footpaths and are a good way 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.

Creative Writing Classes

Places are available for several new members, from beginners and more experienced writers. Our classes inspire and encourage you to write poetry, short

fiction and memoir and to share and develop your writing through workshop sessions in a friendly and supportive group. We meet on Wednesday mornings in Ponteland and Dinnington. Email Claire@claire276.plus.com for more information.

Inner Wheel Club of Ponteland

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

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.

Ponteland Social Group

Come to our fantastic social group – a great chance for older people who live in the area to get together and enjoy friendship, a whole host of great activities, crafts, music or even just have a nice cuppa. You can find us every Wednesday from 10.30am to 12noon at St Mary's Parish Centre. Contact email friends@ageuk-northumberland.org.uk or call 01670 784800.

Line dancing

We meet on Wednesdays at 6.30pm at St Mary's Parish Centre, where we have laughs, friendship and exercise to music. The cost is £3 per session. Dancing is at beginner and intermediate level. New dancers are always welcome. Free taster session offered. Contact Rosemary Gray 01661 822493.

Merton Hall library

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

Upcoming Events 2023

PONTELAND MEMORIAL HALL

19-21 MAY	ALAN REED ART EXHIBITION View the work of one of Newcastle's leading fine artists.
15 JUN	PONTELAND ANTIQUES SHOW Prosecco afternoon tea with BBC TV's David Harper.
18 JUN	WILDE FARM MARKET It's back! Every third Sunday from June to December.
9 SEP	PONTELAND FLOWER SHOW Not just flowers! Crafts too. And it's free to enter.
15 SEP	IMPROVISED COMEDY NIGHT Ponteland Rep presents "The Disreputables"
DATE TBC	CHARITY RETRO DISCO Food and DJ in support of Tynedale Hospice at Home.
12 NOV	REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY Refreshments served following the parade and service.
17-19 NOV	BEAUTY & THE BEAST Ponteland Rep returns for its pantomime - oh yes it does!
24-25 NOV	WINTER ALE FESTIVAL Ales, lager, cider and live music - not to be missed!
3 DEC	ROTARY CHRISTMAS MARKET Shop small and local for your festive gifts.
27-30 DEC	PREPPIES YOUTH THEATRE PANTO Let the mince pies digest while you enjoy the show.

PMH WWW.PONTELANDMEMORIALHALL.COM

Time being called on beer festival ticket sales

Ponteland Beer Festival organisers are urging last-minute attendees to quickly book their entry online – with last orders being served on tickets.

They say sales have been so successful as they bid to top last year's record-breaking 3,000 visitors, that the event's website is the best place to purchase.

Now in its eighth year, the event takes place on Friday June 2 and Saturday June 3 on Ponteland Leisure Centre rugby pitch.

Organiser Richard Moller, from Ponteland Rugby Club, said: "Demand continues to be consistently high. As we finalise preparations to welcome everyone, it would be disappointing for anyone to miss out.

"Get online now to secure a place for you and your

friends and get the summer celebrations off to a great start and in great style.

"It really is a fun festival and a great opportunity to meet up with friends for a social event with a difference. There will also be a variety of participating sports events taking place.

"We had great weather last year and we are keeping fingers crossed for the same this time around.

"The festival is rubber-stamped as a permanent fixture and a real community event with huge support from the community and local businesses."

It runs from 3pm to 11pm on Friday, with tickets at £20, and from noon to 11pm on Saturday, at £25.

Entry includes a promotional glass, programme and three drinks tokens. Full details are at pontelandbeerfestival.co.uk

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Breathing new life into a great old venue!

The Ponteland Memorial Hall is going from strength to strength!

On 7th May, the Hall hosted a hugely successful Coronation Tea Party to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III.

One hundred and fifty people were treated to delicious food from Jan's Kitchen and entertained by a variety of fantastic local artists. Feedback has been great! And a whole program of exciting events is planned before the end of the year!

Next up on 15th June is the 'Ponteland Antiques Show' - an afternoon with David Harper of TV's 'Antiques Roadtrip', 'Flog It' and 'Bargain Hunt' fame.

"One of the best after dinner talks and display of expertise we have ever experienced."

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Guests are invited to bring along interesting items for David to value (just like on 'Antiques Roadshow'!) Precious heirlooms, car boot sale bargain finds or anything else!



David will regale with stories while guests enjoy prosecco and afternoon tea. Come along, meet David and see which of his 'outrageous' trousers he'll be wearing!

Remember, with the availability of several function rooms and a licensed bar (managed by The Pont Tap), the Hall can be hired and perfectly configured to suit small and larger scale events such as weddings, birthdays, banquets and sporting awards.

For full details of the facility, booking arrangements and availability please see: www.pontelandmemorialhall.com

If you'd like to join our growing team of supporting volunteers we want to hear from you! info@pontelandmemorialhall.com



A close-up photograph of a butterfly with orange, black, and white patterned wings, perched on a bright yellow flower. The background is a soft, out-of-focus yellow.

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A Belta night for the food bank

The Belta Reivers play at the cash-raising show.



Music was more than the food of love when a Geordie and Irish folk trio played a sell-out show at a popular Ponteland venue.

It also a way of putting edibles on the table for people enduring financial hardship – with £628 raised for the Wansbeck Valley Food Bank.

The fantastic cash sum came from the pockets of around 90 attendees of The Belta Reivers' gig at Ponteland Club and Institute, in Merton Road.

The band played a lively set which had their audience singing along to folk favourites, including the Blaydon Races and Fields of Athenry.

And they also performed energetic jigs, sentimental ballads and jazzy flute improvisations.

The Rev John Rowley, of Wansbeck Valley Food Bank, sent a letter of thanks to the Heddon and Ponteland Branch of the Labour Party, which organised the show.

In it, he said: "In the previous five years, we have been able to issue food to the value of £814,866 and we remain totally committed to relieving food poverty.

"Today our doors remain open to those who have nowhere else to turn and it will be the same until the day food poverty becomes a distant memory."

Audrey Hood, chairperson of Ponteland Club and Institute, added: "It was a great night, and we were very happy to support such a good cause."

Company's charity support

Ponteland-based photo personalisation software provider Taopix has proved a heavyweight when it comes to food donations.

Employees gifted 174kg of edibles – and £275 in cash from a collection – to Cramlington Trussell Trust food bank.

It is the second successive year Taopix, which works from Meadowfield Industrial Estate, has given to the same charitable organisation.

Marketing manager Liz Spooner said: "We're more than happy to help where we can.

"The effort produced by the team was incredible, especially considering how hard every household has been hit financially in recent months.

"Trussell Trust statistics show one in five foodbank users are from an employed household, which shows just how poverty and food scarcity can impact anybody within the community and how nobody is all too far off financially slipping under."

Thanking Taopix, Joyce Docherty, the Trussell Trust's project manager, said: "Your kind donation weighed in at an extremely impressive 174kg and is already going into parcels being given to local families.

"Without thoughtful donations like yours, it would be impossible for the volunteers here at the foodbank to provide for the many local people who are in need of such help."

Farming market has something to crow about

A popular farming market is back in business – with an appeal to supporters in Ponteland to make it “bigger and better” than ever.

Wilde Farm, a 12-acre family-run smallholding, is restarting its Wilde Farm Market on the third Sunday of every month, from June 18 until December.

It operated for two years, from 2019, before taking a break – and will now take place at Ponteland Memorial Hall, Darras Road, from 10am to 2pm.

Farm co-owner Kim Wilde hopes stall holders, including businesses or entrepreneurs, and those who can provide a family service, such as a bouncy castle or pony rides for a ‘kids’ corner’, will take part.

She is also encouraging charities to promote their activities via a free pitching spot, with bands, choirs,



Rose Wilde, 11, at her mum's farm

buskers and dance groups invited to entertain the crowds – and a ‘pre-loved’ section aims to help sellers recycle.

Kim said: “We are resurrecting the popular Wilde Farm Market and are hoping to make it even bigger and better with the local community’s help.

“I would love to spread the word about our local and sustainable focused market.

“There will be hot food and drinks vans, a wide range of local produce and crafts, a kids’ corner, and a pre-loved section.

“We welcome community volunteers. We always need extra pairs of hands to set up and keep our markets organised and safe.

“Volunteers receive a lunch voucher to spend at the market as a thank you.”

Wilde Farm rears rare British breeds, and fresh fruit, vegetables, herbs and hops are also grown, following regenerative and organic principles.

More information is available at wildefarmponteland@gmail.com or from Kim on 07391 035717.



Last chance to party

The final touches are being applied by organisers to this year’s Party in the Park in Ponteland.

It is hoped around 3,000 visitors – the record-breaking number who attended in 2022 – will enjoy the fun-filled event.

Backed by Ponteland Town Council, and with sponsorship from Newcastle International Airport and others, it takes place in Ponteland Park on Sunday June 11 from 1pm. Admission is £1, and free for under 5s.

As well as the usual jam-packed programme of attractions, there is also a free dog show.

More information is being made available in a free programme being distributed to local homes.

Bands hit the right notes at concert

Two Ponteland wind bands blew their own trumpets to the highest of standards when they performed as part of a musical grouping quartet.

Players from Ponteland High School and Ponteland Community Wind Band were joined by musicians from the Prudhoe Community Wind Band and Whittonstall Community Wind Band.

A spokeswoman at Ponteland High School, where the show took place, said: “These ensembles are well recognised for their musical contributions in the Tyne Valley, and we were delighted to have the opportunity to perform with them as they very rarely meet together for a joint concert.

“Each ensemble presented a small programme of three or four pieces. At the end of the concert all four ensembles then joined together to perform a piece which was a rare spectacle.”



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