

pontnews&views

FREE monthly community magazine for Ponteland and district



PC launches drop-in
surgeries

.....
Historic pub reopens
after five years

.....
A-star GCSE students
really smash it

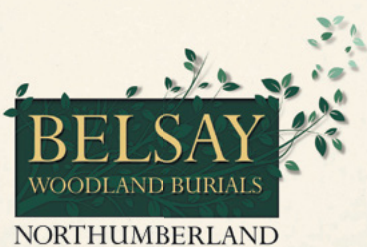
Flower Show hailed 'one of the best'




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Scorching sales at Duck Race

Racegoers went quackers for tickets as record crowds attended this year's Duck Race.

Families descended on Ponteland Park for the last day of the school summer holidays – Sunday September 3 – and for the first time in the event's history race tickets sold out.

Rotary Ponteland was pleased to receive support from Newcastle Airport and Newcastle Building Society along with nearly 30 local businesses which had either sponsored a boat in the business boat race, donated raffle prizes or offered their services free of charge.

The main charity beneficiary from this year's event was Children North East, which provides life-changing services and support to babies, children and young families across the North East.

Rotary President Peter Tincombe said: "The response from the public was fantastic and it was wonderful to see so many happy faces."

Photos by Barry Pells.



Vienna Rimonti, three



Scorching weather attracts record crowds



Meet your new PC at first drop-in surgery

By PC Cameron Makepeace, Ponteland Neighbourhood Policing Team

I would like to start by saying a big thank you and well done to Ponteland Rotary Club for a very hot and successful Duck Race on Sunday September 3.

I was in the park all day and it was a pleasure to see so many people enjoying the day and see the Ponteland community come together to support local charities. I look forward to next year's event.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank those of you I have spoken to already and have been very welcoming to me in my first two months as your local neighbourhood officer.

As I mentioned in last month's edition, I intend to hold drop-in surgeries over the next few months to give you the opportunity to speak directly with me.

The first one will take place on Tuesday October 24 at Ponteland Leisure Centre from 10am until 1pm. Further dates and times will be published in next month's edition.

I am aware several reports have been received regarding anti-social behaviour in the area over the last month. I want to assure residents I will be carrying out regular patrols in the area and I am working with local businesses, licensed premises and schools to identify those responsible.

Anyone with information or concerns please continue to report these incidents through 101, online or, in an emergency, 999.

Readers can contact me through Northumbria Police's local neighbourhood policing team mailbox at the following address: easttynedale.npt@northumbria.police.uk.

New volunteers needed for Memorial Hall

Volunteers are being sought to help trustees at Ponteland Memorial Hall run the popular venue and its busy events schedule.

Changes during the hall's centenary year have included the removal of the hugely unpopular Parking Eye car parking system and the introduction of a series of new events.

Trustees are appealing for new volunteers to join them. Anyone interested can email info@pontelandmemorialhall.com or call 01661 822603.

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"In order that they may have life and have it abundantly." (John 10:10)



Ziyana Madathil, Tom Jurowski and Lucy Dodd collect their GCSEs at Dame Allan's Schools.

GCSE students smash it

National junior badminton champion Lucy Dodd was among several teenagers from Ponteland to achieve impressive GCSE grades in this summer's exams.

Lucy, who won two U17 international tournaments and the National U17 Mixed Doubles while in Year 11 at Dame Allan's Girls' School, celebrated an outstanding set of eight GCSE grade 9s and one grade 8.

She said: "I'm really happy with my results. I'm looking forward to coming back to the Sixth Form and focusing on A Levels, with a view to going to university and continuing with high-level sport."

Ziyana Madathil and Tom Jurowski, also from Ponteland, also achieved great sets of GCSE grades 9 – 7 (A* - A) at Dame Allan's. Ziyana got six grade 9s, two grade 8s and one grade 7, while Tom got five grade 9s, three grade 8s and one grade 7.

More than 60 per cent of exams sat by Year 11 pupils at Dame Allan's Schools achieved grades 9 – 7 (A* to A) while more than 40 per cent were 9 – 8 grades. One fifth of all exams sat this year achieved a 9, the highest possible grade at GCSE.

Ponteland High School was also

celebrating outstanding grades across all subject areas in GCSE and vocational qualifications, with 36 students (14%) achieving five or more of the highest grades 7-9 (previously A*-A).

They included:

10 or more Grade 8 and 9

Isabella Crampspey
Rebecca Shaw

10 or more at Grade 7, 8 and 9

Joe Alderson
Katy Bullock
Lucy Congleton
Emily Hall
Rebecca Nicholson
Charlie Stuart
Kathryn Dawson
Dominic Walters
Emilie Willats

Ponteland High School Headteacher Stefan McElwee said the students had coped with both a local reorganisation of schools which saw them move to Pont High in Year 8 and Covid a few months later.

He said: "In the face of these challenges, our Year 11 students have shown admirable determination and resilience. All of our students should be extremely proud of themselves; they have shown a strength of character and work ethic to be proud of."



Anya's A* performance

Anya Holdsworth, 18, from Ponteland, achieved an A* in Biology, an A* in Chemistry, an A in Maths and an A* in EPQ (Extended Project Qualification) and is heading to the University of Sheffield to study chemistry with an industrial placement year.

Anya said: "I'm absolutely delighted with my A Level results! Dame Allan's has been fantastic in supporting all sides of me, encouraging my passion for music alongside my academic interest in science. Even though I took three challenging STEM subjects at A Level, I was never made to feel like I should be prioritising that over my musical interests, everyone was so supportive."

Historic pub reopens after takeover and makeover

A historic pub near Ponteland has reopened its doors after five years following a takeover and makeover.

The Highlander, which once hosted Bonnie Prince Charlie, has been restored by Unveiled Venues, which purchased the 18th century former coaching inn last year.

The firm was launched last October by Aidan and Helen Ruff to bring together the Ellingham Hall and Lemmington Hall wedding venues under one group brand. The addition of The Highlander marks Unveiled Venues' entry into the pub restaurant market.

Group Director Anthony Hunter said: "The building is Grade II listed and steeped in history. It dates back to the early 1700s and its doors closed in 2018. We have been keen on opening an additional site that reflects our wedding venues for some time, and The Highlander – Ponteland fits perfectly with our brand."

After a full restoration of its restaurant area, open plan lounge bar and function room, the venue – on the outskirts of Belsay on the A696 – reopened on September 14.

Its initial opening hours will be from Thursday to Sunday from 12noon.



Pictured, from left, are: General Manager of The Highlander Michael Patterson; Group Sales & Marketing Manager Lynn Sanderson; Group Director Anthony Hunter and Group General Manager David Fordham-Scott.

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Ofgem trebles storm compensation cap

The compensation cap for households and businesses that lose power as a result of severe weather events has been almost trebled by Ofgem to £2,000.

The new rules follow a review into the response to Storm Arwen by distribution network operators carried out by the energy regulator.

Ofgem has updated the statutory regulations all six operators responsible for linking up homes and businesses to the electricity network in Great Britain are required to follow.

Network companies that fail to follow the rules and protect consumers' interests could face multi-million-pound fines.

The changes include:

- Increasing the compensation cap for loss of supply due to severe weather from £700 to £2000, and increasing the initial payment from £70 to £80
- Reducing the length of the time consumers have to wait for additional compensation from 12 hours to six hours after the initial payment period

- Allowing all compensation payments to be made by bank transfer to simplify and speed up the payments process
- Reducing the time consumers would need to be without power before they are eligible for compensation.

Storm Arwen saw nearly one million homes and businesses lose power in November 2021, with 40,000 consumers cut off for three days and almost 4,000 having to cope without power for over a week in parts of northern England and north-east Scotland.

They included hundreds of homes and businesses in Ponteland, Darras Hall and surrounding villages Medburn, Whalton and Belsay.

Local MP Guy Opperman, who produced a report containing a series of recommendations for improvements to storm preparations by the energy firms, welcomed the changes.

He said: "I am delighted that Ofgem have made this decision following our campaign to improve storm preparedness this winter. This summer I have visited communities who were affected by Storm Arwen and I know this news will be welcomed."

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Listen to The Boss

By David Lamb CFP™ MCSI

My last work meeting before leaving for Rome to see a Bruce Springsteen concert early this summer was an investment risk analysis with a new client.

During the discussion I asked him his views on the investment industry. He responded that he thought it was a necessary evil and considered it a very manipulative boys' club. Ouch!

A couple of days later I heard Bruce sing: "We learned more from a three-minute record than we ever learned in school."

The Boss also wrote:

Gambling man rolls the dice

Working man pays the bill

It's still fat and easy on banker's hill

On banker's hill the party's going strong

Down here below we're shackled and drawn.

With this reputation, perhaps the investment industry could learn a lot from a three-minute record. No wonder people are wary of financial advisers if they seem to be an old boys' club, only interested in wanting to invest your money at no risk to them!

A good financial planner will be different because they should focus on you, your family and your lifestyle - not your money.

Many of our clients initially come to us thinking they need advice on a product (a pension or investment), but after we have explained what true financial planning is they understand that what they really want is to know how much is enough? Enough to give them the lifestyle that they want without the fear of running out of money, whatever happens.

Many think this is the big question. We think it is the second biggest question.



The big question is enough for what? What is your lifestyle now and what do you want it to be in the future? The planner should then work with the client to achieve this lifestyle, using the resources that the client has available.

Have you thought about what your lifestyle looks like through the different phases of your life and how much will be 'enough' to fund it?

There are free resources on our website that can help you do this anonymously, including a tool to help you understand your current lifestyle and a questionnaire to help determine where you feel you are with your financial planning.

You may find the results interesting.



Visit lambfinancial.co.uk – scan the QR code for speed.

Kevin completes Town Council line-up

Ponteland Town Council is back to full strength following the co-option of Ponteland born-and-bred Kevin Wilson.

Following the resignation of James Ford due to work commitments, Kevin was co-opted and joins colleagues Coun Richard Dodd, who is also a Northumberland County Councillor, and Coun Christine Greenwell as Ponteland's North Ward councillors.

The ward includes the Thornhill Estate, North Road and the Runnymede Road and Darras Road areas and Jameson Manor, on the former Northumbria Police headquarters site.

Kevin, a self-employed consultant, attended local schools including Ponteland High School and lives in the heart of the village with his partner.

He has a particular interest in environmental issues and has joined the team on Ponteland Town Council's Environment Working Party, chaired by Coun Greenwell. The working party recently completed a major project to improve the Main Street bus stop and surrounding area in front the Pele Tower.

The bus shelter has been refurbished, the area tidied, new planters have been installed to brighten the area, a new waste bin purchased and new seats are in place.

Coun Greenwell, the former Mayor, said: "The Town Council has received a lot of praise for refurbishing and brightening up the area beside the Main Street bus stop. There are now benches inside and outside the shelter and it is very rewarding to see people relaxing and enjoying the sunshine while waiting for their bus."



Ponteland's 12 Town Councillors can be contacted via the website at ponteland-tc.gov.uk.

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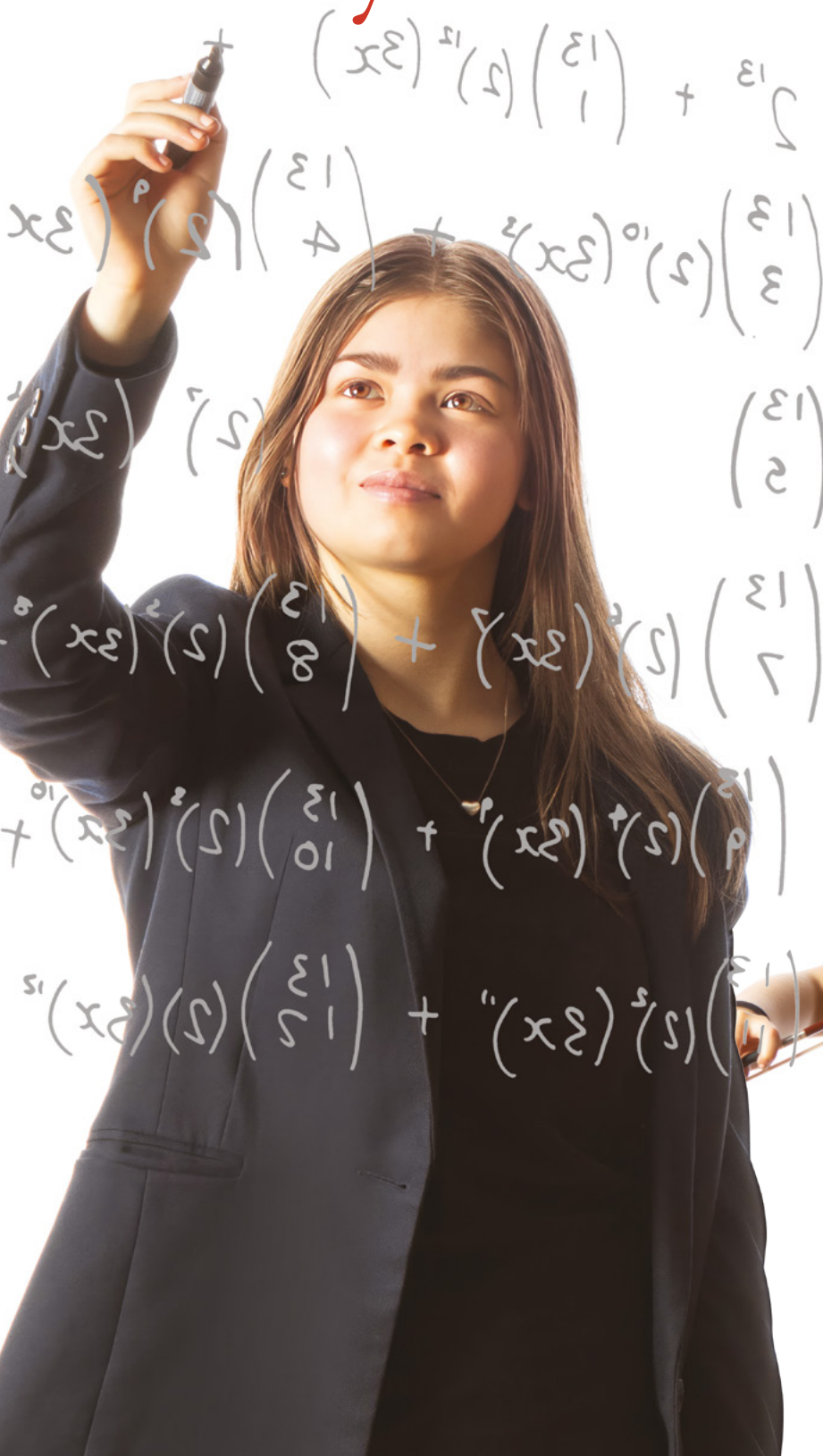
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Your letters

A suggestion for a new addition to your magazine from a reader in this month's letters...

Contact details for medical services in the magazine would really help

I could not find the phone number of my chiropodist in Ponteland and thought it might be in your magazine.

I am 97 years old and if I got a taxi to my doctor or chiropodist I can't get one to bring me home.

So I thought if you put doctors', dentists' and chiropodists' phone numbers in your magazine it would surely help with timetabling times to arrange taxis both ways with appointments between.

Please can you arrange to put telephone numbers of doctors, dentists etc in your lovely magazine. Thank you, I do enjoy the magazine.

Mrs Evelyn Robinson
Old Station Court, Darras Hall

Editor's note: We'd like to thank Mrs Robinson for her suggestion and kind words. Whilst we would not carry numbers for key medical services on a monthly basis we may well run a one-off 'cut out and keep' list in the near future as we have done in the past.

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.

November issue deadlines: The deadline for all copy and adverts for the November issue is Monday October 16. Door to door distribution will be from Monday October 30 to Friday November 3. Businesses should be aware that all bookings for advertisements must be paid in full by the deadline to ensure placement in the November issue. Please visit ponteland-tc.gov.uk/pont-news-and-views for online issues and all updates.

*The Editor
Pont News & Views*



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Groups and individuals invited to join Remembrance Day parade

All groups and individuals are invited to join the annual Remembrance Day parade in Ponteland on Sunday November 12.

The parade leaves the Leisure Centre at 10.40am in time to arrive at the War Memorial on Darras Road for the 11am two minutes' silence and a Service of Remembrance.

Any organisation or individual is welcome to lay a wreath, with the first one being laid by one of the Deputy Lord Lieutenants

of Northumberland and the second by the Mayor of Ponteland.

The parade will return to the Leisure Centre and everyone is invited to enjoy free refreshments in the Memorial Hall after the service.

A new Royal British Legion Branch, Dinnington, Ponteland and District is looking for new members and volunteers to help to sell poppies in November and to support the charity's work. Contact community fundraiser Steve Wilson at SWilson3@britishlegion.org.uk.

What's on...

Ponteland Wildlife Group

Our next talks at St Mary's Parish Centre are Gordon Beakes 'Mushrooms and Toadstools, Deadly and Delightful' on Tuesday October 3 and John Lumby 'Alaska and Pribilof Islands' on Tuesday November 7. Both start at 7.30pm and entry fee of £2 includes refreshments.

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 are: October 4 'Northumbria Blood Bikes' by Nigel Barlow; November 1 '16 Squadron Army/Aviation Co-operation WWI' by Colin Buxton. Contact 01661 824953.

Alpine Plant Show & Plant Fair

North East England Alpine Group is holding our Autumn Alpine Show and Plant Fair on October 7 at Hexham Auction Mart. Plant sales start 10am and the show opens approx 11am. Several plant nurseries will be in attendance plus our members' sales table. Large free car park. Admission £3.

Ponteland Methodist Church

We are hosting an evening of musical entertainment by Kathy Anderson and the Adventurers on Saturday October 7 at 6.30pm. Tickets costing £5 are available at the door. All ticket sales go to the Care and Share team for distribution to charity. Refreshments will be served after the performance.

Ponteland Senior Gentlemen's Club

On Monday October 9 at 2.30pm at St Mary's Parish Centre we have Michael Porteous talking on 'Hadrian'.

Ponteland WI

Visitors are welcome to our next meeting on Tuesday October 10 at 2pm in Merton Hall, when speaker David Hastings will present the history of the RNLI. The competition is for a lapel badge. Our next monthly lunch dates are Monday October 2 and Monday November 6. Join us at Plants Plus at 12.30pm, all welcome.

Ponteland Village WI

Riding for the Disabled will be the theme of the talk at our meeting on Tuesday October 10 at 7.30pm in St Mary's Parish Centre. Subgroups include Dining Out, Walking, Walking with Dogs and Book Club. Due to the large rise in new members, we can no longer allow visitors and have started a waiting list. For more information, email pontelandvillagewi@hotmail.com. Look for Ponteland Village WI on Facebook.

Callerton Garden & Flower Club

Our next meeting is at Ponteland CIU on Wednesday October 11 at 2pm when we have 'All Shapes and Sizes' delivered by area demonstrator Daphne Dawson. Visitors welcome £7. Refreshments available in the bar.

Charity ceilidh

The Whistling Sheep Ceilidh Band are inviting people of all ages to enjoy an evening of dancing from 6.15pm to 9.15pm on Friday October 13 at Ponteland High School to fundraise for the Disaster Emergency Committee. Buffet food included, bring your own non-alcoholic drinks! Adults £15, High School students £10, Primary School students £5. Tickets can be bought cash only from the High School reception or by online payment by emailing whistlingssheepceilidhband@gmail.com.

Plant Heritage North East Group

At our meeting on October 14 at 2.30pm in St Mary's Parish Centre we have a presentation by Howard Leslie 'Wonderful Gems from the FREE Plant Exchange Scheme'. Raffle and refreshments available. Visitors welcome - £5 entry. Contact pat.skews@btinternet.com.

Ponteland Local History Society

At 7.30pm on Thursday October 19 Mel Wall will give his talk 'The Korean War' at St Mary's Parish Centre. Visitors welcome £2.

Ponteland Friendly Stitchers

Our next meeting will be on October 23 between 2pm and 4pm in St Mary's Parish Centre when Jessica Kinnersley will deliver a 'Little Blooms' workshop. Visitors are welcome - fee £5. Contact emmadenham52@gmail.com.

Ageing Well

A free event to help people to stay healthy, well, warm and safe this winter is being held in Merton Hall on Friday November 3 from 9.30am to 12noon. The informal get-together, with free coffee, will give older people access to free advice on a range of topics from Northumberland County Council's Ageing Well team.

Creative writing classes

We have places available for new members, 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. Tasks are set weekly and feedback given by an experienced teacher and published poet. We meet on Wednesday mornings in Ponteland and Dinnington. Contact 01434 605276 or claire@claire276.plus.com.

Ponteland Badminton

New players are welcome to join our sessions at Ponteland Leisure Centre. Adults play on Mondays from 8pm to 10pm, Tuesdays 1.30pm to 2.30pm (no strings) and 7.30pm to 8.30pm. Juniors play on Mondays from 4pm-5pm (term time), Thursdays from 5pm to 6pm (no strings) and Saturdays from 10am to 11.30am (Sept -July). Adults also play at Ponteland Community Primary School on Fridays from 10am to 11am. Contact: Phil Hall 078100 84153.

Kirkley Carvers

Join us to chip and chat at Whalton Village Hall, NE61 3XA, on Thursdays from 1pm to 3pm. Contact Bob on 0191 267 1930 for more information.

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. Due to the generosity of residents Merton Hall cannot accept any more books at this time. We are pleased to report the free library is now full.

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.

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 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.



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WEDNESDAY 18 OCTOBER 2PM - 3PM	TUESDAY 24 OCTOBER 2PM - 3PM	THURSDAY 26 OCTOBER 12PM - 1PM

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Tickets: 

Flower Show 'one of the best for a long time'

Despite an extremely hot day the 46th Ponteland Flower and Craft Show was one of the most successful in years in terms of both numbers of entries and visitors.

There was a big increase in the number of entries in the handicraft and art sections and, despite the extremes in weather this year, a good number of entries in the vegetable and flower sections.

Organisers were pleased to see many exhibitors entering for the first time along with many regulars returning and said it was great to see the younger residents of the village so well represented in the children's classes. There was also fierce competition in the set recipe class which will 'definitely' be returning next year.

Members of Ponteland Flower Club produced a beautiful display of floral art, while Ponteland Guides provided the refreshments and raised a record £440 for their activities.

The organisers are extremely grateful for all the donations on the day and to all the volunteers and sponsors. If anyone would like to join the committee or help on show day next year, email info@pontelandflowershow.org.uk.

Cover shot: Sisters Amelie Bonnar, eight, and Madeleine Bonnar, six.
Photos by Barry Pells.



The show attracted lots of visitors despite the hot weather.

Botanical Avenue

Christmas Wreath Workshops

Join us at our studio on The Blagdon Estate and embrace the festive season creating your own fresh wreath.

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Wednesday 6th December 10am
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Sunday 10th December 11am*

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For more information and to book visit our www.botanicalavenue.co.uk
or email helen@botanicalavenue.co.uk
Private workshops available.



Volunteer and fundraiser receives community champion award from MP



A volunteer who supports charities, churches, schools and other organisations has been presented with a Community Champion Award by MP Guy Opperman.

June Atkinson is a primary school governor at Richard Coates Church of England Primary School, a local fundraiser and a volunteer.

In March 2022, after Russia invaded Ukraine, she organised a community collection at St Mary's Parish Church in Ponteland for the Ukrainian people.

Guy Opperman's Community Champion Award allows local residents to nominate community members who have made outstanding contributions to their community.

The MP said: "I was delighted to present June with a Community Champion Award. She is an outstanding servant to the community across Ponteland through her charity work and volunteering. Huge congratulations, June, and thank you for all you do for Ponteland."

June said she was 'honoured' to receive the award: "In receiving this award, I am honoured, of course, but I also accept it on behalf of those with whom I volunteer in supporting Guide Dogs Association, Eliot Smith Dance, St. Oswald's Hospice, Richard Coates C of E Primary School, Sage Gateshead and St. Mary's Parish Church."

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