

Newton News

Incorporating The Newtonian - Newton Aycliffe's Free Community Newspaper
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A Triumph for Aycliffe Furniture Manufacturing Company



The UK's North East furniture manufacturing scene was alive with excitement on Thursday evening at the Hilton Gateshead Hotel, as the annual Insider Made in the North East Awards 2024 unfolded.

Armitage and Wilson Furniture, established in 2020, found themselves competing for the Manufacturing Start-Up Award alongside two other promising contenders. To the delight of over 350 members of the Engineering and Manufacturing community present, they were announced as the deserving winners. The event celebrated the best of the region's manufacturing industry, showcasing quality products and services and the skilled people behind them.

This award stands as a testament to the resilience, innovation and hard work that define the operations of this young company. Led by the visionary trio of Gavin, Martyn and Vince, alongside their dedicated team, Armitage and Wilson Furniture has swiftly risen in the ranks, carving a niche for themselves with their bespoke furniture creations. Gavin Wilson, Managing Director, remarked, "Winning an award for pursuing my passion is truly remarkable, but receiving recognition for simply doing my job is equally fulfilling. Achieving these milestones in less than three years? That was beyond my wildest

imagination."

Established amidst the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, Armitage and Wilson Furniture faced initial hurdles, particularly with their heavy reliance on the hospitality sector. Yet, they quickly adapted, securing premises and expanding their workforce.

After overcoming initial setbacks, A&W now operates from a spacious 3,200 sq ft facility, which includes a design studio/showroom for client interactions. The company prides itself on crafting a diverse range of bespoke furniture, including fixed banquette seating, sofas, armchairs, beds, headboards and footstools.

Armitage and Wilson Furniture passionately craft handmade furniture pieces and have amassed a clientele including prestigious venues such as Newton Hall, and have undertaken hospitality projects including The Aspire Lounge at Newcastle International Airport. The judges found their client list and partnerships with renowned hospitality groups, in just three years, hugely impressive.

Vince Armitage, a founding non-executive Director, expressed his elation, saying: "Absolutely thrilled that A&W won this award. It felt like a win when we were nominated.

Continued on page 2

A Celebration of Easter



Saturday 30th March will see a 'Celebration of Easter' take place in Aycliffe town centre from 12noon to 3.00pm.

Aycliffe Town Centre Management, Community Spirit and Aycliffe Radio will bring a plethora of activities and freebies for families to enjoy. Easter is a joyous time of year when families and friends come together to celebrate the spring season. One beloved symbol of Easter is the Easter Bunny, a friendly and playful character who brings treats and surprises to children around the world. The Easter Bunny is often associated with Easter egg hunts and various fun activities and games that make the holiday memorable for everyone involved.

Easter Bunny visits are a highlight of the Easter celebration for many children who may also have the opportunity have a photo with the Easter Bunny, adding to the atmosphere of the day.

Easter egg hunts are a classic and entertaining activity that kids of all ages can enjoy. The idea is simple: hidden egg images are scattered around various shop windows, and children search for them, making a note of where the images are located.

In addition to the Easter egg hunt, there will be other activities and games that can enhance the Easter celebration. These will include guessing the number of sweets in a jar, name the bunny, Easter raffle and a tombola stall.

Overall, the celebration of Easter with the Easter Bunny and various activities and games offers a wonderful opportunity for families and friends to come together, have fun, and create a lasting memory. Whether it's hunting for eggs, getting your face painted or participating in other activities, these traditions help make Easter a special and cherished holiday for people of all ages.

Bring the children along to meet the Easter Bunny and receive a free Easter Egg. The Easter Bunny will be located in the ex-Peacocks unit in the town centre along with other activities with cake and craft stalls. The local beat team will be in attendance with police vehicles. Joining them will be Balloon AI, making balloon models for the children, local facepainter, VickyMux, kiddies fairground rides, burgers, hot dogs and ice cream van, with Aycliffe Radio providing music for the afternoon.

Raptors Visit Five Acres

Last week Five Acres Champions had a visit of the feather variety. Gosling Raptors from Durham brought a selection of Owls to Five Acres so our Champions learnt all about their habitat and how to care for them.

Five Acres were joined by a group from Aspire, Bishop Auckland College - a very interesting morning.



Tesco Book Day



Dear Sir,
I would like to thank members of staff at Tesco, Newton Aycliffe who made the effort and dressed up for Book Day on 7th March, they do not realise how a bit of a laugh and fun lifts our spirits, especially us oldies! Some people don't speak to anyone until they shop, it was a pleasure to go to Tesco's to be cheered up.
Thank you girls
Name and address supplied.

Geoff Batchelor, Legend

A few months ago, Rotary Newton Aycliffe joined a project which, for many years, has been facilitated by Rotary York Ainsty. The aim was to collect unwanted spectacles which were then cleaned, sorted and graded and ultimately shipped to charities in Africa. Local eye clinics then provide sight tests to ensure the specs delivered to each person are optically correct and are the right size and fit. To date our club has collected over 8000 pairs of spectacles, more than all of the clubs in our group added together. This collection is coordinated for Rotary Newton Aycliffe by our longest serving Rotarian, Geoff Batchelor and we know he holds that record as he constantly reminds us. Nearly 47 years of 'SERVICE ABOVE SELF'. Well done Geoff. Many thanks to Specsavers, John's at Neville Parade, Sainsbury's at Cobblers Hall, The Big Club and all those in our community who contributed.



St. Francis' Junior School Celebrate Bronze Medals



Nine year 6's, from St. Francis' Junior School, were given the opportunity to represent our school at a County Wide Rugby Tournament at Newton Aycliffe Sports Centre. We played against 16 other schools and were awarded with a bronze medal in the shield competition. The children were amazing! The teamwork, resilience and determination to win their games were outstanding! They demonstrated great sportsmanship by shaking hands with their opponents, being polite and cheering all teams on. Well done to all the children who attended, you have done our school and yourselves very proud! We also want to take this opportunity to thank Go Well for arranging another fantastic sports event.

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PM Visits Newton Press

The Story of Our Town . . .

'What Lies Beneath'?

Sedgefield MP, Paul Howell, welcomed the Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak MP, on a fleeting visit to the constituency's biggest town on Friday 15th March, bringing him to well-known family printing business, Newton Press.

Paul Howell MP said: "It was great to welcome The Prime Minister to Newton Aycliffe, especially to Newton Press which is celebrating its 60th year in business after being opened in 1963 by Syd Howarth MBE. Having spent my entire career in industry, before I entered politics, I have always had a good understanding of small businesses like Newton Press and what they provide in terms of specialist service and jobs for the local community. I would like to congratulate Newton Press on their 60th Anniversary in business and its contribution to the area, including the continuous publication of Newton News, Newton Aycliffe's community newspaper for 75 years."

Paul Howarth, Director at Newton Press, said: "It is nice to be recognised and acknowledged for the work Newton Press continues to do for the local community as well as the many businesses, locally and nationally, that we support. The Prime Minister took a real interest in our work and the challenges and opportunities we face. I'd like to thank Paul Howell for his support and for bringing Rishi to learn about our business here in Newton Aycliffe."

Photo: PM Rishi Sunak and MP Paul Howell.



Dear Sir,

As a fellow Newtonian, I have always been keen to learn and discover the history of our town, more so after we reached a 75-year milestone. It's been great reading stories and seeing old pictures of our town in development. Like many others, I have grown up knowing the 'story' of this town, a town that grew off the back of a large WWII munitions factory, where the 'Aycliffe Angels' filled brass casings full of hell! A large factory that later became the foundations of our industrial estate, which sprouted our town under a New Towns Act, a town of better living, where worker and manager can live next to each other. In a nutshell, that's pretty much how the story has been told. But there must have been something here of great importance, beyond that of a munitions filling factory, as we were No.8 of 17. Why did it attract the attention of Winston Churchill and the King, even Germany made a propaganda reference to it! It was classified as 'Top Secret' and code named 'R.O.F 59', just to confuse the Germans. But was there more to this facility than we all know? What made it different to all the other munitions factories around the country in wartime Britain, and why so top secret? Whilst doing a bit of light research, I stumbled upon a collection of ariel photography carried out by the R.A.F, images of the munitions factory in all its glory, from construction to operation and beyond. The images show every detail in how it was actually laid out, the infrastructure of railways and roads, plus bunkers, which some appear to be underground. The images also show how the site quickly changed at the end of war, from a military purpose to a civilian. But, more importantly, they clearly show the truth, but also, what lay beyond this area of mass production, as occupying the site opposite is an additional large facility, where INEOS is now. This industrial looking facility has a different appearance to the filling factory, but is clearly connected to the whole operation and is highly secure, with tunnels into a large bunker and the whole site being fenced off. Further up the road from here, at School Aycliffe, or where the Chestnuts are, is another large building complex that looks even less industrial, more laboratory looking if anything, but clearly connected via one road linking it all together, School Aycliffe Lane, which passes the site at 'INEOS' and links directly to the munitions factory. This road then leads out at Simpasture Gate (at Finchale Road allotments) to yet another site; a site that is equally highly secure and vast! Approximately one mile in length! But this site is greatly different to all the others as within, there is very suspicious looking activity and earthworks. The facility is unlike anything else. The site covers an area from what is

now Finchale Road, where there is a small building complex between Hopper Road and Dixon Road, but where the allotments are, and reaches as far as Woodham Burn School. What is strikingly noticeable about this site is, it looks to be perhaps a weapons testing facility of some kind but, on a grand scale, spanning from a house that still exists today at Lee Green, in a straight line to Woodham Burn School itself, where there is an enormous blast bunker, and I mean enormous! Which is still partially here today. This complex looks to be highly suspicious, more than just a firing range, as at the business end where Pease Way Surgery now is and at the Woodham Burn site, there are objects and structures that can't be identified. What looks to be the control building is now Lee Green Dance School which, as a building in itself clearly stands out from all others. It has an elongated garden that points in the direction of Woodham Burn School and fits on the ariel photography. Having looked at the pictures very closely, I still can't figure out just what was going on here and its real purpose but, whatever it was, it must have been highly secret, as it was rapidly covered up with the development of our new town over its exact footprint, leaving nothing behind but the building at Lee Green and the once large bunker at Woodham Burn. The fact is, I haven't found anything like it at any other munitions facility, which makes me now wonder what was so 'Top Secret' to attract Churchill, Royalty and the interest of Germany? Was it the munitions factory, the entire facility or was it something else at a time of great urgency in wartime development? It's quite clear that the whole area was in use from School Aycliffe to Woodham Burn, clearly there was more than just a munitions factory here; perhaps it was a site of weapons development and testing on a major scale, and one that was a huge threat to Germany? But, what I find most alarming, is just how quickly the entire facility was demolished and built on post-war, like a massive cover-up operation, Bakelite, industrial units and our town! In a matter of years, it was all gone! No mention of it whatsoever other than there was once a large munitions factory here were our 'Aycliffe Angels' tirelessly worked. But one thing is for certain; its legacy still remains if you know where to look, the evidence is all around us. So, I ask, what was the real reason for the development of our town? What was the large testing facility under the entire blueprint that was so rapidly covered over, or shall it remain a wartime secret hidden by civil development? It would be interesting to know what was really going on here and would help in the better understanding of our town because, clearly, there's more to the story than we all thought...What lies beneath? Name and address supplied.



Present

CELEBRATION OF EASTER



Saturday 30th March
Aycliffe Town Centre
12.00pm to 3.00pm

Meet the Easter Bunny

FREE Easter Egg for Under 12's (limited availability)

Games and Activities
Police Car and Van
Fairground Rides
Face Painter
Burgers & Hot Dogs
Ice Cream Van

Music from
Aycliffe Radio

All proceeds to Community Spirit



Balloon AI

Darlington U3A No 7 Change

We recently had a wonderful talk by Paul Hertington representing Co-op Estate Planning under the title of 'Tax, Care and Toyboys'. At first we were puzzled by the heading but soon realised where Paul was coming from and the talk he gave was full of informative details on making a will and caring for your assets, along with a great deal of laughter about not losing all your belongings to a toy boy or girl and, of course, how much the tax man would want when we eventually shuffled off.

Lively and entertaining, as well as giving some members a lot to think about.

This is only one of the activities that this group enjoy, if you are interested, please check out our website at: sdurhamu3a.org.uk or call Brenda on 01325 496039, or just drop into our meetings at Bowen Road Community Hall - we can guarantee you a warm welcome.

Dear Sir,

From Monday 1st April, Monday to Friday, the Arriva number 7 bus heading to Durham, due at Newton Aycliffe, Churchill House at 7.33am and 7.53am, will be extended via Durham Road instead of Durham Bus Station, to Holmlands Crescent, Framwellgate Moor, due there at 8.40am and 9.00am respectively.

This will be ideal for students attending New College Durham. A change of bus will still be required for return journeys.

Helping Hand.

Thank You

Dear Sir,

Could I publicly thank the team at AutoSafe on the Business Park for the fantastic job they did replacing the clutch on my Mini Cooper recently?

Completed promptly, and at a great price, they even refitted my aerial which I'd removed to avoid it being stolen, plus adjusted my side mirrors too.

Minis are known to be a long job for clutch replacement and several garages in Aycliffe didn't even come back to me with quotes, so obviously didn't want the work!

Thanks guys, highly recommended.

Darran Weston.

Incompetence or Deliberate?



Dear Sir,

Can anyone at Durham County Council Highways Department explain, and/or justify, the stupidity in the positioning of a lamp post in the centre of a public footpath on Preston Road, Newton Aycliffe?

The word 'incompetence' comes mind.

Name and address supplied.

RUNNING CLUB NEWS



Well, it has been a bit of a monumental week this week with some epic and momentous races taking place and members pushing their bodies to the limits with some remarkable performances.

On Saturday 16th March, eight members travelled to Newcastle to take part in the Tyne Bridges to Boundaries Ultra. Just a few days before the race, the runners found out that the route had been changed and had been extended to a whopping 34 miles. The route started on the vibrant quayside, before heading through the industrial areas and along the river to the beautiful country parks and riverside meadows. The route itself was along scenic trails and winding roads and even the odd stepping stone across the river at one point. Richard Campbell (4:57:23) finished an amazing seventh in this epic race, with Richard Trowles (5:01:21) finishing in tenth place. Also representing the club were Mikey Taylor (6:33:02), Daniel Tatham (6:40:18), Salv McDonnell (7:00:54), Ian Payne (7:24:51), Cath McDonnell (8:42:12) and Bernadette Cooper (8:42:24).

The following day saw a busy day of racing, and some more epic runs, across the region and beyond. Six members took part in the Save the Rhino Run which started near to Durham Amateur Rowing Club. This was a timed event where runners could chose the distance they wanted to run. This could be anything from a 5k rising up to an Ultra. Two runners managed to complete five of the 4.3 mile laps of the course achieving a total distance of 21.8 miles. Steven Dawson (3:18:38) and Jayne Rudd (4:38:22) both achieving this distance. Runners who completed three laps of the course were able to achieve a half marathon with Paul Dalton (2:01:12), Jean-Pierre Hupin (2:27:16), Carley Cooper (2:28:31) and Em Flynn (2:38:59) all achieving this feat. Fantastic running from them all.

At the same time, two members travelled to Locke Park in Redcar to take part in the Harry Gamble-Thompson Locke Park 20 (Ten). The runners had the choice of choosing to run either 10 miles or 20 miles. David Stothard (1:36:08) and Ian Stothard (2:06:45) both completed the 10 mile race. Two members travelled to Thirsk on the same day to take part in the Thirsk 10 mile road race. John Surtees (1:00:22) and Tracey Surtees (1:14:13) both representing the club, with Tracey finishing as third female in the over 35 category.

One member travelled to York for the Vale of York 10 mile race, with Kirsty Cameron (1:48:16) the sole representative for the club. One member travelled a bit further afield to take part in the Aldi Ashby 20, which was a 20 mile race in Ashby in Leicestershire. Richard Tonge (4:08:12) was the sole representative for the club, collecting a smart pink hoodie in the process after completing the race.

One member travelled to Kielder as part of the Trail Outlaws Dark Skies Runs. Sandrine Hewitt (2:02:52) completed the 11 mile night run, which started and finished at Kielder Waterside, running north towards the viaduct, before turning and heading back to the Waterside. The event featured 818 feet of climbing, a tough run at anytime, let alone in the dark.

It was also a cause for celebration for the Junior Section with their annual awards taking place at Heighington Village Hall. It was an opportunity to celebrate the end of the season, before the new track season begins, and to recognise all of their hard work, effort and improvements over the last year. There was also a special performance from Will Allison who competed in the primary school cross country finals for Year 5 and 6 pupils, taking place in Peterlee. Will finished 13th overall out of 100 runners and was the first Year 5 pupil to finish, an excellent achievement and bodes well for next year.

If you are feeling inspired, and are interested in joining the club, you can turn up for one of our sessions. More information is available on our website www.ayclifferunningclub.org.uk - or our Facebook page. If you would like to chat with someone, then you can email ayclifferunningclub@gmail.com - If interested in the Junior Section you can email arc.juniorsection@gmail.com - Make this year the year you or your children get into running and join us to keep it going for many years to come.

GET HELP NOT A CONVICTION...

PREVENTION NOT PROSECUTION

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Heighington Matters



Egg Rolling - Daffodils are in full bloom and daylight is taking on that bright radiance that only occurs with the advent of Spring - and with Spring comes St Michael's Church egg rolling competition - a tradition that has been 'rolling' along for many years. It will start around 10.45am on the Village Sign Green on Sunday 31st March. Children and adults will be given the opportunity to show their prowess by launching a paste egg down the Green and, if they manage to throw the egg furthest, will win a delicious chocolate egg. And, needless to say, everyone is invited to St Michael's Easter Church Service which starts at 9.30am.

Whilst Heighington Parish is a wonderful place to live, we do have our problems. Speeding, parking and dog fouling are constant complaints that with a little thought and consideration, can easily be improved. Speeding through the village streets and back lanes is a senseless act. Our roads, which are too narrow with tight bends, create hazards that should slow down any driver, if they think beyond the end of their nose. We have pedestrians, mothers with push chairs, dog walkers and horse riders all sharing constricted roads, often with blind corners but, despite these dangers, many drivers continue to drive far too fast - note how many cars drive around our housing estate on the wrong side of the road when driving around a tight corner. SO, DRIVE SLOWER AND REDUCE THE DANGER.

Many houses, in the villages, were built a long time before cars became so popular, so they do not have garages. Others have a garage for one car but many households have more than one car - together with narrow roads and footpaths, parking can generate dangers. There are no simple solutions, other than common sense. Think when parking - make sure vehicles can pass and drivers views are not restricted.

It is the responsibility of all dog owners to clean up the mess that their dogs create... Repulsive reports come my way, like the little girl recently walking with her mother, slipping, resulting in dog mess on her lovely new dress and a man visiting his parent's grave in St Michael's coming away with his shoes covered in the stuff. So, dog walkers, please pick up after your dog. Put the waste in a dog bin or take it home.

Aycliffe Youth Football News



The weather continues to postpone many of our games as we head towards the final months of the season.

Hebburn Town 0 v Aycliffe U15 Eagles 6

A great game of football from the boys in blue, a slow start, but that soon changed second half when the boys played some fantastic passing football and ran away with the game. Kian in goal made a key world class save first half to keep a clean sheet. A top performance from every player. Goals from Harvey x 2, Will, Olly, Noah and Finn. MOM: Harvey.

Easington Girls 1 v Aycliffe U14 Angels 7

A good result against a talented Easington team. Easington took the lead, before goals from Romilly, Charli and two from Amy put us 4-1 up at half time. In the second half, Romilly completed her hat-trick and Faith scored the last. Star players Eveie & Amy.

Auckland Moors 7 v Aycliffe U14 Girls 4

The first half started end to end with both teams almost scoring with every shot with the score 3-3 after ten minutes. The match calmed down but both teams were making mistakes, with frustration setting in at HT we were behind 5-4. The match petered out in the second half and we were unable to find a way behind their defence. We conceded two more, the match ended 7-4, in our first defeat of the season.

Riverside Yellows v Aycliffe U10 Eagles

Eagles raced into an early lead and continued their high press and flowing football throughout the whole match. Fantastic link up play from back to front and superb finishing from Floyd (3), George D (2), Phoenix (2), George H, Adam, Harry L and great assists from Will and Sam and great saves from Harry M, rounded off a superb day.

Norton & Stockton 1 v Aycliffe U13 Girls 3

Aycliffe scored straight from the kickoff. The goal came Peyton who ran into the area from the left and got her first goal of the game. Then the girls came under a bit of pressure in the last ten minutes of the half. The defence and GK absorbed the pressure and kept us HT 1-0. Early in the second half, Norton scored a cross/shot and drew level. However, it was Aycliffe who scored next, Peyton scored. The team's third goal came from Peyton, converting Hannah's corner and the three points were secured.

Redcar Athletic v Aycliffe U9 Eagles

A draw, with the opposition grabbing a dramatic late equaliser with almost the last kick of the game. The boys took the lead thanks to another goal from Rogan during a first half where they were largely the better team. This mainly continued into the second half, but we were undone at the death. All in all though a very good performance. Harvey G was MOTM.

Greatham v Aycliffe U11 Girls

Phoebe opened the scoring and this was followed by Frankie, winning the ball and scoring from outside the box. Another great shot by Frankie, saved by the keeper, Amelia reacted quickly dragging the ball back away from the keeper and calmly passing the ball into the goal. Final goal came from a run past the defence by Amelia, who smashed it into the back of the net. HT 4-0. Second half and Aycliffe showed some great work in defence, but there were no further goals. POTM Nieve.

Easter Activities

Are your children entitled to benefit related free school meals? Then we have just the activities for you!

During the Easter Holidays Learning a New Way CIC will be facilitating four sessions packed with fun team games, Lego challenges and crafts too. We hope to get outside for a nature walk and everyone will receive snacks and a meal at each session - What's not to love?

Children, who have attended sessions before, told us they had a great time, and we would love it if your children could come along too - we are waiting to welcome them.

If your children are on benefit related free school meals, you should have received a Fun and Food ticket from your child's school. This will give you the information you need to book places using the Durham County Council central booking system. If you haven't got a ticket, please contact your school.

Any other questions, please don't hesitate to contact email: admin@learninganewway.co.uk

SPECS APPEAL

Rotary
NEWTON AYCLIFFE



Don't leave your old unwanted spectacles lying in a drawer . . . donate them to Rotary

We will make sure they reach those in need

COLLECTION POINTS

The Big Club

John's Mini Market (Neville Parade)

Sainsburys (Woodham)

Specsavers (Town Centre)

We do not require cases, thank you

Newton News

Easter Deadline

Thursday 28th March - Easter Edition

Deadline: 12noon Tuesday 26th March

Friday 5th April - Back to Normal

Deadline: 12noon Wednesday 3rd April

Please be aware of the opening times below and deadline times above to ensure your advert is placed on time and in the correct edition

Advertisements can be placed at our offices
Blue Bridge Centre, St Cuthberts Way
** or email to paul@newtonnews.co.uk **

Office Opening Times

Open until Thursday 28th March at 5.00pm
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Have a Say on Local Issues

Residents in Great Aycliffe & Middridge can find out how local issues are being tackled when the local area action partnership hold their next board meeting later this month. The Great Aycliffe & Middridge Partnership Area Action Partnership (AAP) board will be meeting on Tuesday 26th March 2024, between 6.00pm and 8.00pm, and members of the public are invited to observe proceedings. The meeting will be held online via Microsoft Teams. Board members will be receiving a presentation during the meeting from County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service in relation to their Community Risk Management Plan consultation. Anyone who would like to attend the meeting should register in advance by emailing gampaap@durham.gov.uk. Great Aycliffe & Middridge Partnership is one of 14 Area Action Partnerships set up by Durham County Council in 2009.

N.A.F.C. JUNIORS

Under 7's travelled to Stockton and played some good football, with goals from Alfie and James.

Under 8's Juniors had a great game against 21st Allstars, Aycliffe worked extremely hard all over the pitch with goals coming from Colton, Reuben, Linc and Zach. MOTM went to Colton for hard work and great decision making.

Under 8's Whites played Washington Athletic Santos, it was an entertaining game with goals from Seb and Oscar.

Under 9's entertained Prissick Rovers Athletic, it was a tight, tense game, with goals from Noah (2). An exceptionally good performance all round from everyone, with MOTM to Theo, for his defensive display and his composure on the ball.

Under 10's Blacks reversed a fixture with Dormanstown Rovers, it was an entertaining game which saw Aycliffe control possession, with some silky passing and great finishing. Goals from Alfie S (2), Lucas P (2), Jack B and JJ. POTM awarded to Jack B, by opposition, for controlling the game.

Under 10's Reds played Darlington, Aycliffe dominated the game with some great goals and defensive displays. Charlie got two goals and Andrew scored a goal. An impressive third clean sheet in a row in the league for MOTM Jenson, who made some smart saves.

Under 11's Blacks reversed a fixture against Normanby. In a game full of goals, Aycliffe couldn't secure the three points. The goals were scored by Tyler (2) and Fin. MOTM was Jacob, who worked tirelessly in centre midfield throughout and Tyler, who scored two very well taken efforts to take his tally to 19 goals for the season.

Under 12's Whites were edged out 4-3 away at Hylton. Aycliffe dominated and deserved to get something from it but missed out. Goals from Theo, Tyler and Michael. MOTM were Tyler and Michael who put in great performances.

Under 12's Juniors faced league leaders Redcar Athletic, despite a great attitude and good football Aycliffe could not manage to get anything from the game. POTM were Jensen and Matty.

Under 13's travelled to Greatham Blues, in a game that Aycliffe dominated from start to finish, scoring some great goals and playing some lovely football, eventually winning 10-1. Goals from Oscar (5), Archie, Tyler, Grayson (2) and Sam.

Under 15's Blacks hosted Boldon Colts Madrid at Moore Lane. A goal from Jayden opened the scoring, with Aycliffe looking strong against an energetic Boldon. A second goal from Jayden doubled the lead then Boldon scored before half time. Jayden completed his hat-trick and Leon scored the fourth in a 4-1 win. MOTM was Danny.

Under 15's Whites terrific cup run continues after a comfortable 4-2 win away to Darlington Young Bulls. A brace from new signing Adam, an own goal and one from Tom made it a job well done.

Great play from Aycliffe who are back to playing some good entertaining football. MOTM was Adam for the goals and work rate for the team.

Under 16's Whites lost 3-0 away at table topping Boro Rangers Whites. Trailing 1-0, with ten minutes to go, the hosts eventually scored two more to get the points. Aycliffe had opportunities but could not convert. MOTM was Tyler.



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Spring into Spring

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Monday 8th April 2024 1pm - 3pm
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There'll be lots to keep them occupied including Easter crafts and games. Free snacks provided.

Places must be booked - see details below.

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Parliament Talk

Tel: 01325 790580 - Email: paul.howell.mp@parliament.uk

Last week started with my time in Westminster, dominated by the Budget debates, as a Treasury Parliamentary Private Secretary I am required to spend time in the Chamber supporting the Treasury ministers in these debates. On Monday there was a reception hosted by the 1922 Committee, which consists of back bench Conservative MPs. They showed us the picture that has been taken of us all in the Chamber to celebrate the Committee's centenary. On Tuesday I had the privilege of inviting two of our amazing Head Teachers to a reception in No 10. They were the Heads of Ferryhill School and Deaf Hill Primary, Trimdon Station. They are representative of the many fabulous heads and teachers we have throughout the constituency. I was delighted, after they had been to No 10, to also take them for a look around the Palace of Westminster.

Wednesday, as usual, was the Transport Select Committee. This time we were looking at the future of transport and, in particular, how data use will drive change. It was then the usual Prime Minister's Questions before calling across to the Jubilee Room. This is a room just off Westminster Hall (where the Queen lay in state) that is regularly used by visiting groups and exhibitors. This week though it was the turn of Durham food businesses, this included gin, beer, cheese, wine and food suppliers. From my constituency we had Lovesome Oil whose farm is in Brafferton. The businesses all seemed to have a good time and some also made some connections for new customers.

I met with Minister Stuart Andrew MP to talk about both the Community Wealth Fund I have championed, but I also asked him about funding options to support the plans for Heighington Station and the bicentenary of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. Stuart is setting me up to meet one of his colleagues to discuss this further. I then went to an incredibly emotional event where we met some Israelis who had been hostages following the Hamas attack, but subsequently released. I cannot put into words how moving this was. They talked not only about the initial kidnapping and seeing friends around them dying, but their time in captivity and of those still in captivity. Not something I will ever forget! I had a catch up with Local Trust who are the secretariat helping my Left Behind Neighbourhoods All-Party Parliamentary Group and later called to discuss future homes standards and innovation by universities.

Thursday saw an early start to record "Around the House" the ITV Tyne Tees political programme that broadcasts on a Thursday evening, but is actually recorded at 8.30 on a Thursday morning. After that it was to the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme Strategic Command session to learn about Joint Operations Planning. I also took the time for a call with Durham County Council to discuss the Ferryhill Station and Leamside Line projects, I am pleased to say we are seeing good progress, helped by the £350,000 committed by Government last week to support the business cases. After the votes it was then a dash for the train north.

I needed to be back on Thursday night because Friday started with me hosting the Prime Minister in Newton Aycliffe. He came to call at Newton Press, see the team and congratulate them and the town for its 75 years. Rishi was intrigued by the old and new kit being used to produce the different products Newton Press deliver and I also had the pleasure of telling him about the fantastic community work they do too.

As usual, my Friday was full and the next visit was to Ferryhill to join the Strategic Regeneration Group looking to how they can improve Ferryhill, then back to the office where I had a call with Transport North East about our Rail and Bus improvement plans. Ferryhill Station and buses, like the X21, were our primary considerations. After this I joined the steering group looking to deliver the Aycliffe Community Hub.

Saturday, I called back to Ferryhill to discuss the Post Office Horizon and Infected Blood scandals with a constituent and then later I went to see the Sedgefield Players present 'Calendar Girls', which was a fantastic evening. Monday started with a constituent meeting before the train to London ready for the next stage of the Rwanda Bill as it returns from the Lords. I will be in Westminster until Thursday 21st March for Transport Questions.

As always, if you want to catch up with me or if we can offer any help, please call Aycliffe 790580 or email paul.howell.mp@parliament.uk

Five Acres at Brafferton



We are absolutely delighted to announce that Phase 1 of our Planning Permission has been completed. Last week Darlington Borough Council Highways Section finished upgrading the existing farm entrance ready for our new Outdoor Activity Centre.

We are very excited about our new project and can't wait to install the perimeter fence. Once completed, this additional site will offer more opportunities for new and existing Champions.

Neighbourhood Policing

By PCSO Steven Kipling



The Neighbourhood & Response teams, working out of Newton Aycliffe, have been busy responding to a variety of incidents across the area over the past week, including Concerns for Safety, Missing Persons, Shoplifting, Domestic Incidents and Harassment.

On Monday afternoon, a male was arrested for exposure and transported to Darlington custody. A prolific shoplifter was arrested on Friday and charged, 11 shoplifting offences and has been remanded to court.

Members of the Neighbourhood Team attended Aycliffe Village Primary School to continue this year's carousel sessions, delivering talks on Crime & Consequences, Bullying, Internet Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour. Enquiries are ongoing following a report of two break ins at two units on Aycliffe Business Park.

A male has been charged with going equipped to steal and handling stolen goods. Response officers have been investigating a report of a stolen motorbike, and a male was spotted with the stolen bike by members of the public. The male was duly arrested and will attend court in due course.

A female has been reported for a public order offence after using threatening words and behaviour towards ambulance staff who were dealing with an emergency incident.

A male has been arrested for a number of offences including public order, criminal damage and possession of a bladed article, following several incidents in the town centre. The male has been released with bail conditions whilst further enquiries are underway.

PC Crawford has issued a Traffic-172 to a male who drove off following an RTC.

Speedwatch checks were conducted on Woodham Way on Saturday afternoon. Forty three vehicles passed through the speed check during this time, with seven vehicles going over the speed limit.

£200 Donation to MND



Dorothy Whitehouse, and the dedicated ladies of the Sharing Together Craft Group in Newton Aycliffe, make an array of crafts, raising funds for many charities throughout the local area.

Once again, they have demonstrated the true spirit of compassion and community by donating to the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MND). This charitable act holds special significance for Shelagh McFarlane, a cherished member of the group, whose husband bravely battles with Motor Neurone Disease.

A heartfelt cheque for £200 has been penned and will be given to David Whalley, the MND Area Support Coordinator for North East and Cleveland.

Every donation, regardless of its size, plays a crucial role in making a significant difference in the lives of individuals and families impacted by Motor Neurone Disease Association (MND).



Paul Howell

Member of Parliament for Sedgefield

paul.howell.mp@parliament.uk

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Green Arts Share Spring Creativity

Spring has finally crept into our beautiful workshop space at the Eco Centre and we are looking forward to sharing it with our community. Thank you so much to all of our 'Dip into Art' participants who made the last ten weeks so creative, it was brilliant to see so many new skills and techniques being shared. This has been a great success and it was good to see lots of new faces and people returning to the space with an initiative that is inclusive and fun. We have some exciting new workshops on offer. To keep in the Eco spirit and to celebrate the recent 'World Book Day' we are hosting a new workshop by mixed media artist Sharron Bates where you can combine creative skills to make something beautiful to take home. Bookbinding will be held on 28th March and will include the chance to create your own artwork on a cover, to personalise for yourself or for a gift. Our Cree men have excelled themselves, once again, by creating a full species of bird boxes, creating homes for the spring for our wildlife. The men are busy learning new skills that benefit the community and improve their own wellbeing and have been supportive of a range of projects to help others. To find out more, just contact us or visit our website, the sessions are held on Mondays 10:30 – 12:00. Our brilliant Creative Explorers are busy being 'green' and making use of recycled materials to create and learn new skills. Led by artist Dawn Belshaw, the groups have been making lovely items from plastic, eco printing and making insect hotels. Our next sessions will be held in the Easter holidays, with a new weekly course starting in April, to find out more just visit our website to reserve your space. The holiday activities will be held in Shildon and Aycliffe and are very popular and free! Come along and join us on Thursday 11th April, 10:00 to 11:30 at the Shildon Civic Centre in Shildon and 13:30 – 15:00 at Green Arts, Eco Centre, Newton Aycliffe, DL5 5AG. Find out about our full programme by visiting www.green-arts.co.uk or email info@green-arts.co.uk to find out more and reserve your space. Thank you for your continued support to Great Aycliffe Town Council, Public Health AAP, North East BIC and UK Government.



Obituary

Paul Dixon

Of Newton Aycliffe, formerly Chilton, passed away peacefully at home on 7th March. Loving Son to Lily Dixon; much loved Dad to Paul and Tanya; Grandad to Bradley, Rex, Ozzy and Nova; also a Brother to Howard. He will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved him. Paul requested people dress as they please, bright and cheery. Family flowers only please, donations in lieu, if so desired, may be made for The Injured Jockey Fund, donation plate and pin badges available at the crematorium. Will family and friends please meet for a service at Wear Valley Crematorium, Coundon on Thursday 28th March at 12.30pm.

Beatrice (Bea) Fletcher



Peacefully on 2nd March, Bea, aged 82 years. Dearly beloved Wife of the late Ray; much loved Mam to Leigh, Glenn, Earle and the late Anthea and Phillip; a dear Mother-in-Law, Gran, Great-Gran, Sister, Sister-in-Law and Aunt. She will be sadly missed by all her family and many friends. Funeral on Tuesday 26th March, would friends kindly meet for service in St. Clare's Church at 10.30am followed by interment in the West Cemetery, School Aycliffe. Floral tributes, if so desired, will be accepted by Whitehouse Funeral Service, Surtees House, Hilton Road, Newton Aycliffe, DL5 6EN. Reunited.

In Memoriam

Judy Colley

Died 27-3-2004
Twenty years have past, but not a day goes by when we do not think about you. Still loved and missed with all our hearts. Paul, Helen, Christopher & Michelle xxx

Tina-Louise Allan

21st March
You are always with me, in my heart and in my mind. Some days I am ok and some days I ache for you. But even though losing you is the hardest pain I have ever known, I am grateful to have had you as my Sister. Forever missed. Jacquie

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Aycliffe Senior Football News

Seaham Coast 3 v Newton Aycliffe Women 6

The game started with Aycliffe on the front foot, but they couldn't pick out the right pass, Seaham were growing into the game and came close, but Courtney Wilson pulled off a stunning save. Shortly after Aycliffe capitalised on one of their chances, Katie B played an inch perfect through ball for Kate Williams, with the keeper coming to meet the ball Kate calmly tapped the ball past and into the bottom corner, 0-1. Kate then returned the favour, a through ball for Katie Laura Bragg, who despatched a shot from the edge of the box into the bottom corner 0-2. Seaham then equalised with a stunning strike, 1-2. Katie then got her second, this time assisted by Amber, firing the ball across the keeper into the far corner from a tight angle, 1-3 HT. Second half and a change of shape, the next goal was always going to be important and it came straight after the break. Katie rounding off her hat trick in style, Morgan Bennett playing the ball wide right, Katie with a carbon copy goal this time across the keeper and in off the post, 1-4. Katie then turned provider again, playing a ball over the top, Kate took the ball well in her stride and finished whilst holding off the defender to make it two for her and five for Aycliffe, 1-5. Seaham then got one back, 2-5. Aycliffe weren't finished yet, a few chances came and went before they got their 6th and it was Amber Dobson that got it. A free kick on the edge of the box taken by Annabelle was saved by the keeper, but Amber was quickest to react and fired home the rebound, 2-6. Just before the final whistle a rare mix up at the back let Seaham in to get their third of the game, final score 3-6. Player of the match today went to Symone Noonan, faultless today at the back and although did not directly assist, two goals today came from her breaking up play at the back and driving out with the ball. Thank you to the Away kit sponsor AngloTech Group.

i2i International Soccer Academy 4 v Newton Aycliffe Youth Seniors 1

This was the first of four games the seniors would play in the following nine days and resulted in their first league defeat of the season. The lads got off to a good start when, in the 16th minute, Corbyn Mitchell is brought down in the box and a penalty is awarded. He gets up and converts, finding the top corner. However, three minutes later, i2i breakaway to equalise. Then two goals from i2i, one a contentious penalty, before half time was always going to be difficult to recover from, HT 3-1. Aycliffe had chances in the second half, but it was the home team who scored, FT 4-1. Not a great performance from the lads but they have games coming up, thick and fast, that will define their season.

Sudoku

3			9		8	7	4	
4								
8	5			7	4			3
5	3	2				1		7
		8		2		3		
1		4				8	5	2
9			7	8			3	1
								6
	8	6	1		3			9

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Forest Park Independent Special School in Aycliffe

At Forest Park School, we aim to provide inspirational and challenging education alongside purposeful therapeutic support. I am delighted to have been given the opportunity to set up and lead our school as the Headteacher. Forest Park School is a 40 place Secondary School for children with a range of complex needs. We offer a small school environment with a nurturing approach to re-engage those students who find that Mainstream is unable to meet their needs. We are definitely not a one size fits all school and work hard, along with our team of dedicated and inspirational staff, to ensure that our students are happy, learning and achieving the very best outcomes and are ready for their next steps into further education, training or employment.

I have been a teacher for 24 years, qualifying as a Secondary English Teacher in 2000, I initially worked locally in Darlington and in Durham, moving further afield to Middlesbrough to take up a consultancy post delivering the National Strategy Framework. Leadership roles in both Secondary and Secondary Special Schools then followed and I completing my NASENCO award in 2017 and level 7 in Psychometric testing shortly after. As well as teaching I am a Thrive Licenced Practitioner, qualified to deliver interrupted development interventions to adolescents.

After setting up and leading a successful provision in my last school for children with additional needs, I could see that mainstream education was not meeting the needs of a select cohort of students – this is by no means the fault of any mainstream school, it is simply the climate that our education system education now finds itself in.

A unique opportunity came my way when I came together with a colleague and an investor to open an Independent Special School, a school where we could offer small class sizes and a supportive environment, a relevant, bespoke curriculum, along with high expectations and challenges. The project itself has taken almost two years from planning and renovating the site, an Ofsted inspection and our registration with the DfE, to now taking on our first students. The journey has not been without its challenges, and there have been many difficulties along the way - and many more to come, I'm certain - but, as they say, if it was easy, everyone would be doing it!

Our school core values of Trust, Resilience, Engagement,

Enjoyment and Success underpin everything that we do. Many of our students, and their parents, may have endured many challenging experiences throughout their time in education; I

want our students to learn, thrive and lead happy, fulfilled and successful lives. Our focus on these values ensures that we can grow together.

I am, and always have been, passionate about making a life changing difference to the children in my care, no matter what their barriers or challenges. My commitment to our students, their families and our wider school community, to make that difference, is what drives me. As a parent, I understand the importance of building these close working relationships with the families of our students, we understand the difficulties and challenges they face and want to be there to offer that support and guidance.

We are pleased to be able to offer holiday activities through Durham 'Fun and Food' project, specifically aimed at children with SEND and, as we grow, we look to strengthen our links within the local community. This offer will be available throughout the Easter holidays and at selected times throughout the Summer.

On a personal note, I would also like to thank my colleagues, family and friends, and the many local businesses, who have been a constant support to me over the past two years, I really could not have got to this point without you all; I am really looking forward to the next part of our journey here at Forest Park School, ensuring that we remain on our continued path to success and making Forest Park School a unique and thriving school community.



PCP Achieves 'Maintaining Excellence' Award

The Pioneering Care Partnership (PCP) is proud to celebrate its success in prioritising the health and wellbeing of its staff. PCP has been recognised for a 'Maintaining Excellence' award by the Better Health at Work Award (BHAWA) County Durham, showing that the health and wellbeing charity's commitment to 'Health, Wellbeing and Learning for All' doesn't stop at the people it supports.

The Better Health at Work Award supports organisations to improve workplace health. By signing up to the award, organisations are supported by a dedicated workplace health team, helping them to improve staff health and wellbeing through a range of activities and policy changes.

Carol Gaskarth, PCP's Chief Executive, said, "PCP is proud of the health and wellbeing strategies we've developed to support our growing workforce. From paid carers leave to wellbeing time, groups and activities, we take an inclusive and pro-active approach whilst engaging staff in decision-making. For us, it's more than having a healthy workforce, it stretches into families and communities.

"Through focusing on small changes, we can increase healthy behaviours and improve overall wellbeing and resilience. Achieving the Better Health at Work Award 'Maintaining Excellence' status underlines our unwavering



commitment to excellent employee wellbeing and being an employer of choice."

PCP aims to improve lives by creating opportunities to improve the health, wellbeing, and life chances of disadvantaged communities across the North East. On top of its achievement from the Better Health at Work Award, PCP holds gold from Investors in People – making it a great place to work.

To find out more about the BHAWA, visit www.yourworkplacehealth.co.uk - Find out more about PCP at www.pcp.uk.net

Aycliffe Village WI Update

At last month's meeting we held our Annual General Meeting with almost a full turnout. Members enjoyed cheese and wine and a fascinating talk by Freda Laverick, the Chairman of the Durham Federation of Women's Institutes. Anne Brown was unanimously re-elected as this year's Aycliffe Village WI President. Some members visited St. Clare's Court Care Home and helped with pancake making and enjoyed events for Red Nose Day with the residents.

We've had two popular book club meetings and reviewed two very different books that are supplied thanks to Durham Library Service. Our next meeting is on Wednesday 27th March in the Village Hall at 7pm. Our speaker will be Mike Thornton talking about The Test of Time, which is a new book about Norman Cornish, his life and work, historical moments and anecdotes. It will undoubtedly be a fascinating evening. Refreshments will be provided. Non members and visitors are very welcome to join us. Anyone who would like to join our WI, please contact Anne Brown via email: aycliffevillageWI@durhamwi.co.uk

Photo: Anne Brown, President, and Sue Hindle, Treasurer.



N.A.F.C. REPORT

Stocksbridge Park Steels 1 v Newton Aycliffe 0 Saturday 16th March

Newton Aycliffe's nine game unbeaten run ended, at Stocksbridge Park Steels, on Saturday. Despite leaving Stocksbridge empty handed, Aycliffe played well considering they were down to ten men for over 80 minutes. The game would be turned on its head when Dale Elgie received a red card in the 8th minute after he had little choice but to jostle and pull at Tomas Poole as he broke away. The referee swiftly brandished the red card for a denial of goal scoring opportunity and suddenly Aycliffe had the prospect of a very long afternoon. So, it was somewhat surprising, however, when Stocksbridge didn't make their man advantage count for much in the first half. While the home side kept the Aycliffe defence under pressure, James Winter wasn't challenged much in the first half. Charlie Oglesby had a golden opportunity to score, almost immediately, after Elgie's dismissal, but he skied it from close range. Jack Dolman did find himself in a promising position just before the second half, but he decided to pass to Jack Tinker and Tinker lobbed a weak shot into the hands of Winter. The second half saw Stocksbridge again have large amounts of possession, but Aycliffe would, for the most part, hold firm. Eventually Aycliffe fell under the pressure, Jack Dolman, who had been Stocksbridge's chief threat all afternoon, broke away down the right wing and fired a low shot past Winter to make it 1-0 in the 65th minute. After that, Stocksbridge mainly used their man advantage to sit back and defend, Aycliffe could get into the Stocksbridge box frequently enough, but Stocksbridge were determined to make any attacks impossible to finish. Cieran Jackson did force a one handed save out of Ben Townsend, but, other than that, the Stocksbridge keeper didn't have too much to worry about. Late in the game Kyle Davis had a chance to equalise, but his shot missed from close range. The game would finish 1-0, in what was a somewhat harsh result considering Stocksbridge chances were very infrequent, along with both Kyle Davis and Cieran Jackson's misses late in the game. Aycliffe return to Moore Lane on Saturday 23rd March when Winterton Rangers will be the visitors. It's Non-League Day



on Saturday. With no Premier League or Championship games, due to the international break, it's an ideal time to get along & support your local club. Admission is £9 adults, £6 concessions & £3 under 18's. *Photo by Yvonne Wood: Charlie Dawson on the attack at Stocksbridge. Match report by Ryan Livingston.*

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