

# Newton News

Incorporating The Newtonian - Newton Aycliffe's Free Community Newspaper, published on the first and third Friday of each month.  
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## Section of Original Railway Found in Newton Aycliffe

The 27th September 2025, marks 200 years since the opening of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, a railway of great importance! Unlike other primitive railways and wagon ways before it, the S&DR was the first of its kind, a groundbreaking project on an epic scale of engineering marvel, a single-track railway hauling coal and goods from the upper reaches of Wotton Park to the port of Stockton. But what made this railway more important, was the vision of a local mining and locomotive engineer, George Stephenson, who along with his esteemed colleagues, the likes of Timothy Hackworth and a young apprentice named Joseph Locke, built a railway fit for the purpose of running a NEW locomotive. Given that demand was so great for shipping coal to the south, for the first time ever, under an act of parliament, the new railway was decreed with the addition of allowing locomotives to operate with the carrying of passengers and, the first of which, was Locomotion No.1, formally named Active, but aptly renamed as it was to be the first locomotive to officially operate on the new S&DR, the world's 1st public passenger railway. On 27th September 1825, amidst a huge gathering, Locomotion No.1 left Shildon carrying passengers, stopping briefly at Aycliffe Lane (Heighington Station) where it was placed onto tracks the day before, then continuing on to Darlington and Stockton. The world of passenger railway all started right here on our doorstep. With the 200th anniversary fast approaching, there is great emphasis on this historic occasion and the route itself, most of which is no longer original. However, the section between Shildon and Hopetown museum is still the original route in its entirety, and still operational to this day as enacted 200 years ago! Finding what remains of George's original railway is practically non-existent, but recently I discovered what looks to be the remains of this highly important railway right next to Newton Aycliffe train station, after seeing a photograph of it at Preston Park Museum. Initially, many people believed that it was part of the 1970's 150th celebration, but there is no evidence to support this. Photographic evidence has shown that it pre-dates the 150th anniversary and it may go back to the 50th which, without any doubt, will be part of the original route of George's great railway, not the first incarnation, but early modernisation, if anything? A section left behind or separated to honour that railway before a major upgrade, a reminder of what it was? One thing has to be said, its placement is very odd, out of sight, out of mind. No access to it. Not even now! It's beyond legal limits...trespass. It's clearly in a secure place for a reason? Even 100 years ago, or more, it was inaccessible. To be placed here for any commemorative celebration is quite frankly off the beaten track and pointless. Why here of all places? Even though the railway itself has had many major upgrades, including a junction on to the Clarence railway at the site of the station, this old section of track or stones has been preserved due to its location. Is Newton Aycliffe holding a piece of hidden history of what remains from the route of the world's 1st public passenger railway, evidence of early modernisation due to the high demand of industry and railways? Information relating to this oddly placed section of track is extremely rare, a couple of photos and theories, that's about it. Nothing tangible. If you can shed any concrete evidence to its origins, not just theories, or have memories of it that would help in dating it in a process of elimination, then it stands a greater chance of being authenticated and honoured. Please contact The Friends of Stockton & Darlington Railway or go to their facebook group. Bill Gibson, Emerson Way, Newton Aycliffe.



## Victory in Europe Day Celebrations - 1948



Newton Aycliffe celebrated its 75th birthday in 2023. To mark the occasion, the Town Council, with funding from Durham County Council, produced two displays and a book 'Newton Aycliffe - Life and Times of a New Town'. Many residents contributed their photographs and memories to make the displays and book a success. Residents' photographs and memories are still welcome at the Council Offices, as we continue to preserve the history of the town for future generations. As the nation remembers and celebrates the 80th anniversary of VE Day, in 1945, this wonderful photograph was handed in to Newton News by a resident, who tells us that it shows local VE Day celebrations in 1948. Since the first spadeful of earth, that would mark the start of the new town, was not turned until June 1948, and the building in the background looks quite old, we wonder where this photograph was taken - perhaps Aycliffe Village?

Who are the children in the photograph? Can any other residents remember this occasion? We would love to hear from any residents who can recall VE Day celebrations in the parish of Great Aycliffe in years gone by. Please contact Amanda Donald at Great Aycliffe Town Council, telephone 01325 300700.

## Village VE Day Celebrations

**Bank Holiday Monday 5th May.**  
**We are holding a coffee morning in Aycliffe Village Hall on Monday 5th May from 10am to 12noon.**  
**Please come along and have a drink, some cake and a chat to celebrate VE Day. Everyone is most welcome.**  
**Dress up in something red, white or blue if you wish.**  
**Proceeds will go to The Veteran's Hub in Newton Aycliffe.**  
**Looking forward to seeing you.**



# Dog Walkers

Dear Sir,  
A polite request to dog owners in Newton Aycliffe, (my daughter, a dog owner, not included).  
Like many residents, my front lawns do not have a fence which makes them open to dogs and cats to step onto them, urinate and cause damage which kills off grass. The damage is not readily visible, this means time, a little effort and expense to repair the damage. Usually it is not the dogs fault, but owners who allow this, so can I politely ask owners to be a little more responsible when walking their dog?  
Hoping in anticipation.  
John Walker, Resident.

## CAR BOOT SALE

**To be held every FRIDAY  
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# Aycliffe Cricket Club Scoreboard Report

Newton Aycliffe's 1st team, sponsored by Franks the Flooring Store, were well beaten by 150 runs away at Maltby 1st XI in the NYSD 3rd division. The home side chose to bat first and reached 228 for 8 in their 40 overs despite some good bowling by both Shashank Garg (4 for 61) and Matty Greaves (3 for 40). In reply openers Tom Dearden (sponsored by Kevin Burton), who top scored with 28 off 26 balls, and Tez Smit (18 off 16 balls) took Aycliffe to 40 without loss, but the visitors then suffered an extraordinary collapse losing all ten wickets for just 38 runs. Dan Heaton's defiant unbeaten 14 off 44 balls could not prevent his side from being skittled for a disappointing 78 runs after 23.3 overs. The club's second team lost by 8 wickets, at home, to a very experienced Billingham Synthonia 2nd XI in the NYSD 4th division. Stand in captain Tony Travis (sponsored by John Wardle) top scored with 15 off 40 balls in his side's 51 all out and Ramzan Hussain (2 for 21) took the only wickets to fall as the visitors quickly reached their winning target after just 5.3 overs. This game, however, will be remembered fondly by both Jon and Isabelle Tait as they became the first father and daughter, in the history of Newton Aycliffe CC, to play together in the same side.



The club's senior ladies team began their new season with tense victory by just 3 runs away at Thirsk in the Hambleton League. Tina Masterman top scored with 15 off 13 balls and Anneliese Myers also batted well, scoring an unbeaten 13 off 11 balls. When the home-side replied they found Aycliffe bowler Carys Myers in top form as the 13 year old took 3 for 13 from her 3 overs to help the visitors to an excellent opening day win. A special mention should also go to debutante Helen Winpenny who marked the occasion by holding on to a stunning catch on the boundary during the home-sides innings. Photo: Jon and Isabelle Tait, who became the first ever father and daughter to play together in the same team for NACC.

# Cancer Support Group Coffee Morning

The Great Aycliffe Cancer Support Group will hold its next coffee morning on Friday 16th May 2025 between 10.00am-12noon in the shop and hub in Newton Aycliffe town centre, opposite Savers. We welcome everyone from the surrounding area to come along and enjoy a cuppa and home-made cakes, and to find out how Great Aycliffe Cancer Support Group supports anybody within Newton Aycliffe and surrounding towns/villages who have been affected by cancer.

This much needed local charity now has two shops open during the week, in Newton Aycliffe Town Centre, opposite Savers, and in Darlington, opposite the entrance to the Cornmill Centre. Within the Aycliffe shop is an information hub for members of the community who have received a cancer diagnosis, are living with cancer or are receiving treatment for cancer. Services provided by the charity include the following:

- Providing information on issues affecting cancer patients.
- Patient transport.
- Influencing cancer services in the future.
- Regular social activities, with others affected by cancer.
- Assistance with benefits claims.
- Day trips, social events, meals out.
- Confidential and emotional support in a safe and friendly environment.
- Use of our holiday caravans.

You can keep in touch with our future events and fundraising opportunities by visiting our Facebook page from our website: [www.greataycliffecancersupportgroup.co.uk](http://www.greataycliffecancersupportgroup.co.uk). Contact details can be found on the website or alternatively call 07442 991859.

# ACORN Residents Association

Our next meeting will be 8th May 2025 at 6pm, upstairs in the Phoenix Club. Everyone is welcome. Tea, coffee and biscuits are available. One or more of our local Councillors are usually available and may be able to answer any questions you have. We look forward to seeing you then.

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On Wednesday 7 May drop in between 5pm and 6.30pm.

If you have a passion for supporting local communities in a health, wellbeing and learning environment, we would love to meet you.

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# ACORN Whitby Escape



Acorn commenced their summer trips with a wonderful adventure to Whitby in search of Goth gathering weekend. When the weather is great in our beautiful northeast, it is a fantastic time to head for the coast and there is nowhere more amazing for an adventure than Whitby for the Goth festival. Fifty two excited passengers boarded the coach from the Phoenix Club at 9am. Families with children looking forward to the seaside, fish and chips, beach, pleasure arcades, sweet shops and, of course, those fantastic Goth costumes. It's not just families on these trips, we have pensioners and singles who love to come along too. For many the first stop was Wetherspoons for a breakfast and coffee which wouldn't break the bank then off to explore the narrow-cobbled streets in search of treasure like Whitby jet. Whitby has a large array of shops not available in Newton Aycliffe and whilst perusing these it was great to bump into fellow travellers and pause for a chat. A fleeting thought crossed my mind to climb the steps to the Abbey, thankfully it passed swiftly and we decided to alight for a while in the Duke of York hostelry for lunch and a well-earned libation before checking out the indoor market and moving ever so slowly on. The shops seemed to be packed with Gothic clothing and accessories doing brisk business throughout the day. It was a super day out and served as a welcome distraction from electioneering and the political whirlwind back home. The whole trip was an absolute pleasure and we can't wait to do it all again. Ken Robson  
Acorn Community Association.

# The Etape Loch Ness Cycle Ride



Dear Sir,  
On 27th April 2025 Michael Fitzgerald with two friends, Eric Stapleton and Michael Brown, set off to raise funds for Alzheimer's Society. They took part in The Etape Loch Ness which is Scotland's largest closed road cycling event. This is around the iconic Loch Ness, cycling 66 miles. The event must be completed within 5 hours 38 minutes. The stunning 360° route around the loch starts and finishes in the Highland capital of Inverness, The King of the Mountain stage features a 4.8-mile climb gaining 380 metres in height with a gradient reaching 12% at times.

To donate go to:  
<https://www.justgiving.com/page/lochness3roosters2025>  
Donations can also be made in Mike's Fish Bar, 5 Greenwell Road, Newton Aycliffe DL5 4DH. It would be fantastic if you could help support this worthy cause. Thank you very much. Alzheimer's Society are working towards a world where dementia no longer devastates lives. We do this by giving help to those living with dementia today and providing hope for the future by campaigning to make dementia the priority it should be and funding ground-breaking research.

# S.A.C.A.

**May Events - Annual General Meeting**  
Community Hall, Eastfields, School Aycliffe  
Monday 19th May, 7.30 to 8.30pm.  
All residents are welcome, we would love to have your input on how to increase footfall and activities at our lovely hall - all reasonable suggestions will be considered. Do you know, or know anyone, who would want to use our hall on a regular basis? Craft sessions? Saturday Breakfast Club (monthly session), board games or jigsaw puzzle group? Don't forget we have a large hall and a side room which can be hired separately, but we need reliable residents to help with supporting and to run events. You can either become a committee member or a 'friend of the hall', helping on an as and when available basis.  
**Coffee, Cake & Stuff**  
Thursday 29th May  
Please come and join us at our popular monthly Coffee, Cake & Stuff where we will be selling our gorgeous homemade sweet and savoury bakes and the opportunity to catch up friends and neighbours!  
Contact Elizabeth on 07813 523050 or Christine on 07981 992686 for details. Chris, Elizabeth and our team of lovely volunteers look forward to seeing you soon.

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## New Bereavement Support Group

Our new bereavement support group is starting in Meynell and Mason's funeral home on Stephenson Way on Wednesday 7th May, between 10am and 11.30 am.

If you have lost a loved one and just need to talk, over a cuppa, to others, our group is for you.

For more information please contact our Newton Aycliffe funeral home on 01325 301405.

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## What's Community Support?



Dear Sir,

A town the size of Aycliffe has huge potential, and that potential should be actively supported by its residents to ensure, as a community, we are behind it all the way, no matter what. We are all familiar with the term 'community support or interest', and we have all seen this in action, but to a limited level. Real community support goes well beyond charitable events, think of the children or those in need etc, etc. As a substantially large town with a broad demographic of class and income, good community support is the life blood of ensuring a community thrives at every level, whether charitable, business, sporting or creative, it's what makes us who we are and drives us to betterment, socially, financially and actively. It's good for the soul. There are many businesses, facilities, people and events across the town that are in great need of good community support, whether just to be there to enjoy what they offer and socialise, such as the many pubs that offer great live music who rely on community support to ensure a great time is had. It's at these venues where local talent can be seen and supported, and support is what they need from our town, artist and venue.

I recently acquired two albums produced by two local musicians, the fantastic Gary Grainger and a band called The Mainline. This is exactly the kind of thing that needs community support to keep it going and developing, so I urge you all, chip into our community and let's make it better. The album 'Colbalt Blue' by The Mainline can be purchased at themainlinedarlington@gmail.com and Gary Grainger's live album can be purchased at garygrainger@gmail.com. They're both really worth a listen to get an idea of what we have on this town...a growing music scene. So, let's support it and be proud of it.

Bill Gibson.

## Exploring Sustainability

### Woodham Academy's Florida Trip

As part of the government's Turing Scheme, twelve ambitious science students from Woodham Academy recently embarked on an educational journey to Florida to analyse the sustainability of tourism and explore green energy solutions. This once-in-a-lifetime experience offered them a unique opportunity to conduct research on pollution, energy conservation and biodiversity in

some of the state's most popular travel destinations. As they traversed Florida's bustling theme parks, and tranquil natural reserves, they compared various locations in terms of their environmental impact and sustainability initiatives. Their findings provided valuable insights into the challenges and advancements in eco-friendly tourism.

In Orlando, the students examined the carbon footprint of large-scale attractions such as Walt Disney World, Universal Studios and Kennedy Space Centre. While these theme parks generate massive amounts of energy consumption and waste, they also invest heavily in sustainability initiatives, such as solar power projects, water recycling programs, and eco-friendly transportation options. The students were impressed by the progress, but also recognised that more efforts are needed to make large-scale tourism truly sustainable.

Florida's warm climate and abundant sunshine make it an ideal location for solar energy. The students studied how green energy is being integrated into the tourism industry and everyday life. They visited solar farms and learned about large-scale renewable energy projects aimed at reducing dependence on fossil fuels. They also witnessed the Space X launch and its sustainable reuse policy for its launch components. Beyond the research, the trip was an unforgettable adventure. The students not only expanded their knowledge of sustainability, but also bonded over shared experiences, their journey to Florida reinforced the importance of responsible tourism and innovative green energy solutions. As they returned home, they carried with them a deeper appreciation for environmental conservation and a determination to advocate for a more sustainable future in travel and energy. An aspect which already has begun, with the students analysing energy usage in the new school building, the findings of which, they will present to the schools headteacher.



## Folk Night

A Folk Night will be held at Moore Lane Sports Club on Sunday 18th May from 8.00pm.

The main guests are 'Other Roads', a very well known band and tickets will have to be reserved as they are very popular. Please contact me on 01740 621347 for further information and to book seats. Thank you.  
Joan Edmundson.

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**Mental Health Mini Market**  
Pioneering Care Centre, DL5 4SF  
Friday 16 May, 10:00am to 12:00pm

Visit our **Mental Health Mini Markets** during Mental Health Awareness Week.

Visit our **Mental Health Mini Market** at the **Pioneering Care Centre** and find out what services are available in your community to support you and your wellbeing.

Pop in and meet local services for advice, information and ways to improve your mental wellbeing.

Pioneering Care Centre, Carer's Way, Newton Aycliffe, DL5 4SF  
Jules Howe - 07809 342 192  
[jules.howe@nhs.net](mailto:jules.howe@nhs.net)

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N.A.F.C. REPORT



Newton Aycliffe just missed out on a play-off place, finishing 6th in the Pitching In Northern Premier League Division One East; their highest ever league placing. Added to equalling their best FA Cup run (second qualifying round) and their best FA Trophy run (first round proper). The 2024-2025 has been an excellent achievement for Brian Atkinson's side.

Aycliffe were in the play-off hunt until the final day after a season which saw them scoring 93 goals (the highest in the league) along the way and with an average attendance of 236, an increase of over 20% on last season.

**19th April**  
**Sherwood Colliery 0-3 Newton Aycliffe**

Aycliffe made the long trip to Nottinghamshire to face already relegated Sherwood Colliery. The home side did start off brightly, but their haphazard defending was their downfall when Jake Petitjean made it 1-0 in the 23rd minute after a pacey breakaway. Ten minutes later Dean Thexton made it 2-0. In the 49th minute the game was beyond Sherwood when Jake Petitjean got his brace. The second half saw Sherwood try to get back into it, but Aycliffe managed the game in a well enough manner to keep the clean sheet.

**21st April**  
**Newton Aycliffe 0-1 Dunston**

This low scoring contest was probably not one for the neutral and it was decided in the 64th minute when David Robinson headed home from a cross in a crowded box. Aycliffe did send men forward towards the games end, but Dunston saw out the contest with a 1-0 win. Dunston finished the season in second place, earning a home tie in the play-off semi final on 29th April.

**26th April**  
**Ossett Town 0-0 Newton Aycliffe**

Aycliffe struggled to accomplish much of note on a very heavy pitch where the home side had the far greater amount of chances throughout the game. Sparing a few Jim Pollard saves in both halves, very little happened to write home about from an Aycliffe perspective. Most crosses and attacks forward were easily dealt with by Ossett's goalkeeper Aleks Petrovic. Results elsewhere meant Aycliffe missed out on the playoffs.

Match reports by Ryan Livingston. Photo by Yvonne Wood: Aycliffe skipper, Ethan Wood, in action at Ossett United.

		P	W	D	L	F	A	+/-	Pts
C	Cleethorpes Town	42	28	9	5	91	35	56	93
2	Dunston	42	24	9	9	82	47	35	81
3	Stocksbridge Park Steels	42	23	9	10	64	37	27	78
4	Belper Town	42	23	9	10	73	51	22	78
5	Emley AFC	42	23	8	11	58	35	23	77
6	Newton Aycliffe	42	21	12	9	93	60	33	75
7	Carlton Town	42	20	11	11	69	55	14	71
8	North Ferriby	42	20	8	14	55	46	9	68
9	Garforth Town	42	16	11	15	53	49	4	59
10	Bradford (Park Avenue)	42	16	9	17	62	58	4	57
11	Bishop Auckland	42	13	13	16	60	65	-5	52
12	Heaton Stannington	42	14	9	19	54	67	-13	51
13	Pontefract Collieries	42	13	12	17	55	70	-15	51
14	Consett AFC	42	12	13	17	59	78	-19	49
15	Ossett United	42	13	9	20	47	61	-14	48
16	Ashington AFC	42	13	9	20	50	67	-17	48
17	Grimsby Borough (-3)	42	13	11	18	46	49	-3	47
18	Bridlington Town	42	14	4	24	50	75	-25	46
R	Brighouse Town (-3)	42	11	14	17	47	73	-26	44
R	Sherwood Colliery	42	10	6	26	43	84	-41	36
R	Liversedge	42	7	13	22	49	69	-20	34
R	Sheffield	42	7	8	27	51	80	-29	29

Delivering Twiddle Muffs

Up, and out early, delivering some Twiddle Muffs to a couple of care homes. The Twiddle Muffs, crafted by Mary Bell and sponsored by Rotary Newton Aycliffe, have proven to bring a great deal of comfort to Dementia sufferers. Redworth House in Shildon got in touch and we were able to call in to speak to the staff, and some of the residents were more than happy to have their photograph taken as they got to choose their own Twiddle Muffs. The staff showed their appreciation and thanks by making a donation towards the costs of crafting a future stock of Twiddle Muffs.

St Clare's Court, on Central Avenue, has received donations of Twiddle Muffs from Rotary Newton Aycliffe in the past, so it was good to reconnect with the staff and leave a number of Twiddle Muffs for some of their residents.

Phill & Andy, Around Town.



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# Sugar Hill - 'Over the Moon'



Sugar Hill Primary School's Leadership Team are absolutely delighted that the whole school team has shone in the recent rigorous Ofsted Inspection and is now looking ahead to a bright future in a new school building.

Under the latest framework, Sugar Hill was judged Outstanding in four areas and Good in one - an achievement the school is incredibly proud of. This latest Ofsted marks the end of an era, as it is the final inspection in the current school building. But, even as staff and pupils reflect on their success, the excitement is building for the future - literally.

"Our new school building will be opening its doors very soon," said Head Teacher Paula O'Rourke. "The whole school community is excited about the move and we know this new environment will further enhance the successes of Sugar Hill, bringing the whole community together under one roof."

The report praised pupils for their maturity, excellent behaviour and high aspirations: Inspectors also highlighted the school's strong values, with children demonstrating empathy, democratic thinking and a deep understanding of human rights. The dedication of staff and the clarity of leadership were repeatedly acknowledged.

Mrs O'Rourke shared her appreciation for every part of the school community. "First of all, I would like to thank the children. They were, as always, amazing and make us all so proud every day. I would like to thank the staff - leaders, teachers, teaching assistants, office staff, lunchtime supervisors and cleaning staff - for their tireless work. Thank you also to our Governors, especially Denise Raine, Chair of

Governors, for her continued dedication. And, of course, thank you to our parents and carers for the support you show us every single day."

She added, "Sugar Hill is an amazing place to be and one that I am very proud to lead".

*Photograph: Paula O'Rourke, Headteacher, Kathryn Legge, Deputy Headteacher, and pupils from Nursery to Year 6.*

# Bad at Parking?

Aycliffe Village Primary School Parents/Carers and Staff... come on!!! Are we really that inconsiderate and bad at parking?

Over the past few years I've noticed the parking situation getting worse and worse by the day! Inconsiderate parking, three cars parked on a stretch of road that could quite easily accommodate five. There simply isn't enough space for that extra 10ft, both front and back, around people's cars! If we all showed a little more common sense and care, we could quite easily reduce the amount of space our cars are taking up, thus leaving more space available for others. Are we really that incompetent at parking?

Increasingly, people are forced to encroach on the local residents as they battle for a parking spot. People are too bone idle to walk a few extra steps and would rather block the road and give the local bus drivers a few extra grey hairs as they try to squeeze through a gap that is ridiculously tight... why is it more important that you get your child to school on time, whilst taking as few steps as possible, than the person sat on the bus who is now going to be late for work/college

because the bus can't get through and is sat stationary in the middle of Aycliffe Village!?

Come on, we can all do better, show some common sense and above all else... consideration! Name and address supplied.

## HAVE YOU GOT NEWS FOR US?

We are always interested in local news stories. We like to feature **good** news and interesting items on achievements & community service

**Tel: Paul**  
**01325 300212**  
or paul@newtonnews.co.uk

## N.A.F.C: A Club on the Rise

Nestled in County Durham, Newton Aycliffe FC has become a pillar of local football, blending passion, ambition and community spirit. Now competing in the Northern Premier League Division One East, the club is enjoying one of its most successful eras, with a strong squad, ambitious leadership and a loyal fan-base. Founded in 1965, Newton Aycliffe initially played in the Wearside League before financial difficulties led to a temporary disbandment in the early 1990's. However, the club was reformed and steadily climbed the football pyramid. A major breakthrough came in 2009 with promotion to the Northern League, followed by a landmark 2022-23 season where they clinched the Northern League Division One title, earning promotion to their highest level yet.

Now adapting to a tougher division, Newton Aycliffe has shown resilience, producing impressive performances and proving they belong at this level. Manager Brian Atkinson, a former Sunderland and Darlington player, has been instrumental in the club's rise. Since taking charge in 2021, he has instilled a strong work ethic and tactical discipline, ensuring his side remains competitive. "We're not here to make up the numbers - we're here to compete," Atkinson affirms.

Chairman Allan Oliver has played a crucial role in the club's development, focusing on financial stability, infrastructure and strengthening ties with the local community. Under his leadership, Newton Aycliffe has grown both on and off the pitch.

Key players driving the club's success include striker Dean Thexton, whose goal-scoring ability has secured vital points, midfielder Jake Petit-Jean, who controls the tempo of games, and defender Alex Nelson, a commanding presence at the back. Beyond results, Newton Aycliffe FC remains deeply connected to the community. Moore Lane, their home ground, has become a hub for local football fans, with volunteers working tirelessly to improve facilities. Atkinson acknowledges their impact: "We've created a really good environment for the players."

Looking ahead, the club is focused on solidifying its place in the league while aiming for future promotions. With ongoing discussions about infrastructure and youth development, Newton Aycliffe FC is a club with a bright future, built on ambition, resilience and an unwavering connection to its supporters.

By Sophie Bellwood

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### The County Council of Durham (A167 Aycliffe Village) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2025

The Council on 25/4/2025 made the above Order under Section 14(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended, to prohibit all vehicular traffic from proceeding on the following lengths of road. A 7 kilometre length of the A167 extending north from St Andrews Way Roundabout, south of Aycliffe Village to the junction with Durham Road north of Aycliffe Village, the junction of the A167 with Lime Lane and a 20 metre length of West Road, from its junction with the A167 to enable carriageway resurfacing works to be undertaken. An alternative route will be available to vehicular traffic from the southern side of the closure, from A167 north westerly and northerly on B6444 St Andrews Way, to the junction with Heighington Lane leading to the western part of Aycliffe Village, or continuing north on Durham Way South / Durham Way / Durham Way North and east on St Cuthberts Way, to A167 to the northern side of the closure and vice versa. The maximum duration of the Order is 18 months. The proposed works are to commence on Tuesday 6/5/2025 and are anticipated to be completed in 9 working nights, between 7pm-6am per night (no works over the weekend). On occasions, alternative dates for the closure may be necessary and these will be signed on site accordingly.

DATED: 2/5/2025



**Helen Bradley**  
Director of Legal & Democratic Services  
County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UL

### The County Council of Durham (Sid Chaplin Drive, Sampson Place and Bakewell Place, Newton Aycliffe) (Temporary Footpath Closure) Order 2025

The Council proposes to make an Order under Section 14(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended, to prohibit all pedestrian traffic from proceeding on the following lengths of footpath. **Sid Chaplin Drive** A 45 metre length from the rear of Number 370 Sampson Place, extending southwards to the main road; a 68 metre length from the front of Number 358 to the rear of Number 352 Sampson Place; a 67 metre length from the front of Number 39 Bakewell Place to the front of Number 45 Bates Close; a 38 metre length from the side of Number 15 to the side of Number 9 Bakewell Place; a 63 metre length from the rear of Number 15 to the side of Numbers 1 to 4 Bakewell Place; a 30 metre length to the rear of Numbers 6 and 7 to the side of Number 8 Bakewell Place; a 48 metre length from the side of Number 280 to the front of Number 281 Scott Place; a 116 metre length from the rear of Number 337 to the side of Number 350 Loraine Walk; a 70 metre length from the rear of Number 302 to Number 313 Booth Walk; a 77 metre length from the rear of Number 325 to Number 314 Booth Walk; a 36 metre length from the side of Number 298 to the rear of Number 302 Booth Walk; an 82 metre length from the side of Number 290 to the rear of Number 286 Hedley Close; a 47 metre length to the side of Numbers 286, 285 and 282 Hedley Close and a 69 metre length from the rear of Number 285 in a clockwise direction to the rear of Number 282 Hedley Close. **Sampson Place** a 65 metre length from the side of Number 362 to the rear of Number 358 Sampson Place. **Bakewell Place** a 50 metre length from the side of Number 27 to the rear of Number 39 Bakewell Place and a 55 metre length from the side of Number 20 to the side of Number 26 Bakewell Place to enable gas main replacement works to be undertaken. Throughout the period of the closure alternative routes for pedestrians, where available, will be signposted on site. The maximum duration of the Order is 6 months. The proposed works are to commence from 8am on Monday 19/5/2025 and are anticipated to be completed in 13 weeks. On occasions, alternative dates for the closure may be necessary and these will be signed on site accordingly.

DATED: 2/5/2025



**Helen Bradley**  
Director of Legal & Democratic Services  
County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UL



# Finalists Named for Make Your Mark Awards 2025

The shortlists have been revealed for the 2025 Make Your Mark Awards, celebrating the best of Aycliffe Business Park and Newton Aycliffe. The Make Your Mark Awards will be held in the Coleman Suite at Hardwick Hall Hotel on the evening of Thursday 8th May, in association with Senstronics - when eleven awards will be handed out to mark the achievements of businesses and individuals across Newton Aycliffe.

## Company of the Year

Contego Environmental Services, Husqvarna UK and BTS Facades & Fabrications will battle it out for the Company of the Year award this year. They're hoping to follow in the footsteps of Senstronics, 3M, Stiller Warehousing & Distribution, PWS, Finley Structures and Tekmar Energy in taking away the big honour of the night.

## Small Business of the Year

Murtek, C&A Embroidery & Print and Dart Industrial Services are the finalists in the Small Business of the Year category, while Carol Gaskarth (Pioneering Care Partnership), Lee Childs (NC Group) and Marcia Atkinson (BTS Fabrications) are shortlisted in the Businessperson of the Year category.

## Lifetime Achievement

Barry Wedgwood of Primex Plastics, Brian Corker of NC Group and veteran Aycliffe butcher Don Walker are hoping to take away the Lifetime Achievement accolade.

Fifty nominations were received for the 2025 Make Your Mark Awards which, for the second year, are being delivered by Resolution Media & Publishing on behalf of Aycliffe Business Park Community (ABPC).

ABPC acting chair, Pamela Petty, said: "Yet again we're delighted with the response to this year's awards, not just with the quantity of entries, but the quality of them - as well as, of course, the fantastic support of sponsors. The 2024 Make Your Mark Awards was a fantastic evening, but I'm sure the organisers will deliver an even bigger and better spectacle for us this year."

The Make Your Mark Awards are sponsored by Senstronics, Business Durham, Husqvarna, The Auckland Project, GEM Partnership, Moonrise 24hr Recruitment, Roman, South West Durham Training, Swinburne Maddison and Masfix.

There are now only two category sponsorships remaining, while tickets are also on sale for the event, priced £85 (+vat) per person, or £800 (+vat) for a table of ten, which includes a welcome drink, three-course dinner, table wine, souvenir programme and the awards ceremony. Those interested in either sponsorship or buying tickets can email: [martin@resolutionpublishing.co.uk](mailto:martin@resolutionpublishing.co.uk) or call 01642 450255.

## THE SHORTLISTS

### Newcomer of the Year

Sponsored by Husqvarna UK

- Dart Industrial Services
- Metrick Consultancy

### Small Business of the Year

Sponsored and shortlisted by Business Durham

- Murtek
- C&A Embroidery and Print
- Dart Industrial Services

### Apprentice of the Year

Shortlisted by Roman

- Kelsea-Jo Watson (SW Durham Training)
- Matthew Davis (3M)
- Ruth Alderson (Contego Environmental Services)

### Community Champions

Sponsored and shortlisted by The Auckland Project

- Sisters of Support
- Palram
- ALP Active at Greenfield Academy

### Innovation Award

Sponsored by Husqvarna

- Tidal Services
- Digital Edge
- Contego Environmental Services

### Service Business of the Year

Sponsored and shortlisted by Moonrise 24hr Recruitment

- Murtek
- Metrick Consultancy
- Pioneering Care Partnership

### Environment Award

Sponsorship available

- Newton Press
- Husqvarna UK
- BTS Facades & Fabrications

### Engineering & Manufacturing

Sponsored and shortlisted by GEM Partnership

- Durham Precision Engineering
- Senstronics
- Husqvarna UK

### Businessperson of the Year

Sponsored and shortlisted by Aycliffe Business Park Community

- Carol Gaskarth (Pioneering Care Partnership)
- Lee Childs (NC Group)
- Marcia Atkinson (BTS Facades & Fabrications)

### Lifetime Achievement Award

Sponsorship available

- Barry Wedgwood (Primex Plastics)
- Brian Corker (NC Group)
- Don Walker (Walker's Butchers)

### Company of the Year

Sponsored and shortlisted by Senstronics

- Contego Environmental Services
- Husqvarna UK
- BTS Facades & Fabrications



# Applause Theatre Arts



A Theatre School based in Newton Aycliffe is celebrating 17 years. Applause Theatre Arts which holds vocal, drama and dance tuition in Newton Aycliffe is celebrating its 17th anniversary by offering free places to local students who would like to learn more about musical theatre, teamwork and recording.

The musical theatre school, which runs every Friday evening during school term times, operated originally from Bishop Auckland before moving to Newton Aycliffe after the Covid restrictions, has gone from strength to strength over the years and has seen students gaining UCAS points through LAMDA (London Academy of Dramatic Arts) examinations.

Kate Ruddick, the Principal of the school, said, "we have had so much joy, fun and development over the years in Newton Aycliffe that we thought we would offer the chance for someone to receive a free place at the school." She added "The students get so much from the extra curricular activities we offer, they grow as individuals, more poise, better social skills and just become more confident within themselves, it really nice to see them develop over the years."

The free to enter competition is done by email or via the schools Facebook page, Applause Newton Aycliffe, and will also offer free sessions in dance, drama and singing for runners up, so there really is no reason not to enter.

The email address for entry is [learning@playful.com](mailto:learning@playful.com) or simply find the school on Facebook. If you would like to learn more about the school and what it does, you are more than welcome to call Kate Ruddick on 07912 891934.

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To celebrate St. George's Day, it was a real privilege to secure an invitation for Mark Solan, founder of the Solan Connor Fawcett Family Cancer Trust, to No. 10 Downing Street for a special event. I was proud to secure this recognition for Mark and his team for all the incredible work they do in our community. Team Solan was established in 2015 to help improve the quality of life of children and adults who have been affected by a cancer diagnosis or bereavement. This local charity supports many families in Newton Aycliffe. They have provided bespoke help and support for thousands of people who have had their lives turned upside down by a cancer diagnosis.

At the event, Mark was thanked by the Prime Minister, Gary Lineker and even Ross Kemp. It was a pleasure, as your Member of Parliament, to be able to thank this amazing organisation which has helped so many people and raised £2m over the last decade. In Parliament, I've been proud to support a number of important measures which will benefit our community. The government's new deal for GP's will see an increase of £889m to improve access to services and will put an extra 1,500 extra GPs on the frontline. The government is also cutting red tape which will allow more practices to take on GPs and bring back the traditional family doctor role. Another big priority is speeding up access to operations and tests. I met so many families on the doorstep who had been stuck on waiting lists; progress on this has been a big priority. NHS waiting lists have now fallen seven months in a row thanks to this investment and more people are being treated and diagnosed quicker with an extra three million appointments since Labour came to power. This is crucial to ensuring residents are treated quickly and get the surgery they need to get on with their lives.

This week also marked the start of free Breakfast Clubs in two local schools. Part of the first 750 free breakfast clubs across the country, this government initiative aims to make sure kids start the day with a hungry mind, not a hungry stomach. And evidence shows that attending breakfast clubs before school improves young people's learning, which is incredibly important. Having access to free clubs will also save parents hundreds of pounds a year and enable all pupils to attend, not just those who can afford paid provision.

I also held a well-attended constituency advice surgery, meeting residents to provide support with a wide range of issues. Helping local families with individual issues is an important part of my role. This can include resolving issues with social housing providers, challenging inaccurate benefit decisions, raising complaints with a variety of organisations or asking for a review of decisions by NHS trusts. If I might be able to help you with an issue you're having, please get in touch. To book please email me at [alan.strickland.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:alan.strickland.mp@parliament.uk).

## WATER POLO UPDATE

Sedgefield Water Polo Club celebrated the success of our members at our seventh annual presentation night on 12th April at The Big Club. We would like to congratulate all those who won awards: Trophy winners were:

### Level 8 Top Performer

- Male (Shared) - Taylor Jay Francis / Jacob Head
- Female - Charlotte Lower

### Minis

- Players Player - Dylan Moss
- Male Coaches Player of the Year - Dylan Moss
- Female Coaches Player of the Year - Emilia Watkins

### Juniors

- Players Player - Kyle Alderson
- Male Coaches Player of the Year - Kyle Alderson
- Female Coaches Player of the Year - Ilesha Tharakan

### Seniors

- Players Player - Matthew Taylor
- Male Coaches Player of the Year - James Pratt
- Female Coaches Player of the Year - no members in this category this year

### Most Improved Player

- Rohan Henderson

### Club Person of the Year

- Ryan Griffiths

### The George Carpenter Cup for Overall Achievement

- Ben Alderson
- In addition, our 2024 Wakefield & District U16's team were presented with their medals for winning the league last year,



and we had certificates to present to our Level 8's. Our current U16's were presented with their bronze medals for their recent Northern League success.

We would also like to thank Sean for organising the event, in addition to Elaine and Sarah who coordinated the fundraising activities for the evening. Our DJ, John (Aytan Beats), was outstanding as usual and the karaoke was amazing. 'Wrong Direction' was the highlight of the night for many! Also, a massive thank you to all our coaches and volunteers who kindly give up their time each week in order to allow all our members to enjoy the sport. We're currently offering a juniors beginner session on a Saturday afternoon for those wishing to try this fun and exciting sport. All sessions need to be booked in advance, so please check our website or Facebook Page for further information and joining instructions. Contact 07579 030598 or email [sedgefieldwp@hotmail.com](mailto:sedgefieldwp@hotmail.com)

## Super Slimmers Donate Clothes

Slimming World members in Newton Aycliffe & Sedgefield have raised £3,300.00 for Cancer Research UK by donating the clothes they've slimmed out of to the charity's shops. The Big Slimming World Clothes Throw with Cancer Research UK is an annual event that takes place in Slimming World groups across the UK. It sees members donating good quality clothes, shoes and accessories that no longer fit - and they're confident they will never need again.

The Newton Aycliffe & Sedgefield Slimming World groups, who meet weekly at Woodham Community Centre & Sedgefield Methodist Church, collected 110 bags to help support life-saving research.

Slimming World Consultant Sam Hudson, who runs the groups, says she's proud of how her members came together to support the charity, as well as to celebrate how far they've come on their own weight loss journeys.

As well as raising funds for Cancer Research UK, the Big Slimming World Clothes Throw raises awareness of how maintaining a healthy

weight reduces the risk of 13 different types of cancer. Overweight and obesity is the second biggest preventable cause of cancer in the UK - causing more than one in 20 cancer cases. Over the years, Slimming World has raised more than £25 million for Cancer Research UK through a variety of campaigns including The Big Slimming World Clothes Throw and supporting the charity's Race for Life event series.

Last year, Slimming World members, Consultants and head office staff raised £2.9m for Cancer Research UK through The Big Slimming World Clothes Throw and are aiming to make this year even bigger and better. The Newton Aycliffe Slimming World group is held at Woodham Community Centre in Newton Aycliffe every Monday & Wednesday and Sedgefield Methodist Church every Tuesday. For more information or to join Sam's group, either pop along or call her on 07970 451284.

Or, for more information, call 0344 897 8000 or visit: [www.slimmingworld.co.uk](http://www.slimmingworld.co.uk)



If anyone has access to my Facebook page it focuses on my two new admissions. Lexi from School Aycliffe came in last Friday and Little Jack from Moore Lane Park on Sunday. Lexi has turned a corner but the top of her head has been strimmed, we need people to check before they strim please, Jack will be ok hopefully too. They are very small just a little over 400 grams each and they were starving hungry. The ground is very hard, so food and water is scarce, poor Jack has a parasite burden and he is very underweight, but he has started treatment for what ails him.

There are people who I would like to mention this week for their efforts in putting food and water out 365 days of the year, Carol and her husband, she works at Tesco, Jackie and John, Lynda, Steve and Lesley, who I have known for years, but recently I have met Laurie and his partner at School Aycliffe.

I know that there are many others, I can't thank you enough because the more we support feed, the better the outcome for these poor souls. It's also getting close to baby season, hoglets are very small, the size of a 50 pence piece, there are usually six to a litter. They are trained by mum to forage and when they get to 250 grams they all go their separate ways.

Donations are also appreciated, Julia, Jackie and John, Lynda and also Jonney, Franchise Manager of McDonald's donated funds for a new cage for the rescue. Thanks to everyone who regularly donates, it's a great help, thank you.

My final thank you is to Angela and her staff of Grange Vets, I have a good selection of antibiotics, painkillers etc here for every eventuality. Pictured above are Lexi (back) and Jack. Enjoying being cared for and comfortable, full tummies too.

The British Hedgehog Preservation Society number is 01584 890801 My Facebook Page is Pricky Haven Hedgehog Hotel Email [prickyhaven@yahoo.com](mailto:prickyhaven@yahoo.com)





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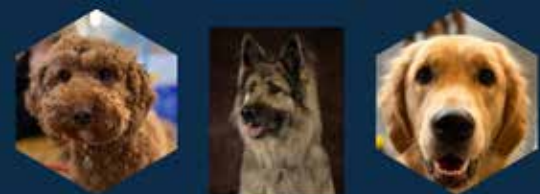
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# Winners Announced in Knife Angel Art Competition



Budding young artists from seven local junior schools were challenged to create a design inspired by the powerful Knife Angel sculpture – which is coming to Newton Aycliffe this June, a first for our local area. One winner was chosen from each school, all of which recently hosted special assemblies for Year 5 and 6 pupils to learn more about the Angel and the message behind it: that carrying a knife is pointless. Sergeant Andy Boyd from Durham Constabulary and his team visited each of the winning pupils in person to share the exciting news and present them with a £30 Amazon gift voucher, kindly provided by Police and Crime Commissioner Joy Allen.

The winning designs have also inspired the final look of the official Knife Angel logo, produced by the town's training and apprenticeship provider, Optimum Skills.

All of the amazing artwork will be proudly displayed throughout the Knife Angel's stay, so be sure to come along in June and see the creativity and effort that these youngsters have put in.

The arrival of the sculpture will also mark the start of a month-long initiative by Durham Constabulary named 'Pointless', raising awareness about the risks, consequences and emotional impact of knife crime.

You can find out more at [www.durham.police.uk](http://www.durham.police.uk)

### Pictured:

Ruby - Woodham Burn Community Primary School  
Morgan - St Mary's Catholic Primary School  
Sienna-Mae - St Francis Church of England (Aided) Junior School  
Abdel - Stephenson Way Academy and Nursery School  
Brooklyn - Sugar Hill Primary School  
Laiken - Walworth Primary School  
Jackson - Byerley Park Primary School

## Obituary

### John Kidd

Of Middridge, 18th December 1946 to 14th April 2025, peacefully at home, surrounded by his loving family. Much loved Husband of Jean; Dad of Michelle, Donna and Vernon; Grandad of Jake, Olly and Ava; Brother of Nora and Father-in-Law of Peter and Teresa. A funeral service will be held in Wear Valley Crematorium, Coundon on 6th May at 2.30pm. Following the service, the family warmly invites everyone for refreshments at the Shildon Civic Hall. Family flowers only please, and any donations to Cancer Research. Dearly loved and forever missed.

## In Memoriam

### Garry Westgarth

26th April 2022  
Deep in our hearts you will always stay, loved and missed every day. Loving Wife Anne, Daughters Karen and Lesley xxx

### Michael Burn

14th May 2023  
Loved and missed every day. Deep in my heart you will always stay. Loving Wife, Susan xxxxxxx

### Mick Allen

2nd May 2024  
A year has passed since you left us all too soon. You've left a great hole in our lives. Missed, loved and remembered every day by your loving Wife Kath, Sons John and Craig, Tracy, Sarah and families.

### Agnes Hills

1948-2014  
Always loved, never forgotten. Your ever loving Husband, Tommy x

## Congratulations

### Cairns



### Happy 90th Birthday

It's a pleasure to wish my Husband, of 61 years, a happy 90th birthday on 3rd May. From your Devoted Wife, Ellen.

### Special Birthday Wishes

To a much loved Dad and Grandad Les on his 90th birthday. Enjoy your special day. From Philip, Andrea and families.

## For Sale



### Organ For Sale

Technics model SK-FA3 with owners manual and lots of music. L: 110cms (43 1/4"), W: 56cms (22"), H: 100cms (39 3/8"), £100. Tel: 07783 926533.

# PUZZLE CORNER

## Sudoku

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

# New Support Group

## Struggling with Fibromyalgia and feeling alone in the journey?

Our BRAND NEW PEER SUPPORT GROUP is now up and running. Weekly meetings held to cater for everyone. This is a safe, supportive space where you can connect, share and find real understanding from others attending. Refreshments will be available.

Upcoming dates:

Tuesday 6th May at 1pm-3pm

Tuesday 13th May 2025 at 11am-1pm

Wednesday 21st May 2025 at 6pm-8pm

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## Unfair Fines

Dear Sir,

I am writing to share an issue that I believe affects many residents and local businesses in our community - the use of unfair parking fines by a private car park operator, Parking Group Limited, in Newton Aycliffe town centre. I have lived in Aycliffe for over 30 years and, as a former business owner in the town centre, I've always supported our local businesses.

On the day of the incident - a dark December afternoon - I had visited the town centre for some shopping and a haircut. When I returned to my car, the car battery suddenly failed. I had to wait for help and, as a result, exceeded the maximum parking time (2.5 hours) by 16 minutes (I entered the car park at 15.08 and exited at 17.54). I could not extend my stay as the car park does not have this option, even in case of emergency. I also want to note that the signage in the car park is not clearly visible in low light, which made it even harder to clearly see the terms and conditions and it could easily catch others out too.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Bosch Car Service - Hilton Road Garage who lent me a power bank - their kindness turned a stressful moment into a reminder of the strong community spirit we're lucky to have in Aycliffe.

Despite explaining the situation and providing evidence, the parking company initially acknowledged it was a genuine issue and offered to reduce the fine to a £20 'admin fee'. However, when I appealed to POPLA in hopes of having the charge waived completely, I lost - and the full £100 fine was reinstated.

This feels not only deeply unfair, but also disheartening for residents who are simply trying to shop locally and support town centre businesses. If these kinds of practices continue, they risk driving people away from Newton Aycliffe's town centre altogether. With local elections approaching, I believe that now is the time to raise this issue. I hope that by sharing my experience, others who've faced similar situations will feel encouraged to come forward - and that local candidates will consider how to better protect residents from overly aggressive private parking enforcement.

Thank you for your time and for being a voice for our community.

Name and address supplied.

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## Lineside Signs to Celebrate Railway 200th

Almost 90 years ago the London and North Eastern Railway (LNER), installed huge signs on the railway lineside between London and Edinburgh to indicate to passengers places of interest and the distance to their destinations while travelling on their new streamlined Coronation train hauled by Gresley A4 Pacific steam engines.

Now, to mark the 200th anniversary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway and celebrate 200 years of passenger rail travel, new signs to a similar design will be erected along the surviving parts of the 1825 line between Shildon and Stockton to make passengers aware of the historical significance of the line they are travelling on.

While many of the original 1930s signs along the East Coast Main Line (ECML), were scrapped in the 1960s at the time of the Beeching cuts, several did survive. The most famous of these is the half way sign between London and Edinburgh situated north of York. Just north of Darlington Station a sign was erected to mark the route of the Stockton and Darlington Railway which, on 27th September 1825, ran the world's first scheduled locomotive hauled passenger train hauled by George Stephenson's Locomotion No 1. This track crossed the ECML on a flat crossing and remained in use for freight traffic until 2nd July 1967. The original LNER sign is still in position and was recently restored and is now a listed building.

To coincide with the 200th Anniversary celebrations of the S&DR this year, an idea to install five new signs on the Shildon to Stockton on Tees line and inspired by those of the original LNER of the 1930s, was suggested by Maurice Burns to Network Rail two years ago. From the very outset Network Rail were very supportive of the idea and the 'S & D sign project' was developed by Maurice with support from friends Richard Barber, Gordon Best and Nick Carter. The proposal was to install five signs located at Shildon, Heighington, Darlington North Road, Urray Nook (near Allens West station) and Bowesfield in Stockton on the principle that Network Rail would install them if Maurice could coordinate the design, supply of materials and oversee the order for fabrication. Maurice and colleagues have worked closely with the charity Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway (FSDR) to turn ambitions into reality. Niall Hammond, the Chair of Trustees for the FSDR, secured grants and all involved are grateful to The Railway Heritage Trust, Durham County Council and Northern Trains for their generous support. The project team are also exceptionally grateful to Network Rail and their sub-contractors Amco Giffen, Construction Marine Limited and QTS Group for their in-kind support and the Network Rail commitment to install and care for the signs in future. Five signs will be erected on the Shildon to Stockton route, and agreement has also been reached for a sixth sign to replace a 'lost' one which indicated the branch westwards north of Darlington. Originally this pointed towards the 'Lake District, Teesdale and Weardale' but with the closure of the Stainmore route to Penrith and the Lakes, and the branch to Middleton in Teesdale in the early 1960s, the sign was cut down by British Railways. By chance, back in 1965, Maurice was doing some steam engine photography, saw the remains of this scrap sign lying on the ground and recorded it on film. The new sign, to be located on the ECML, will promote the route to Shildon, Bishop Auckland and Weardale where, today, it is still possible to travel from Darlington to Stanhope in Weardale using the heritage line from Bishop Auckland to Stanhope on days it is operating.

With funding in place and agreements confirmed, the order has now been placed for six signs to be manufactured by Northern Heritage Engineering based in Darlington, only a stone's throw away from the location where the original signs were made at Darlington North Road works. Once manufacture is complete, all the signs will be installed at agreed locations during 2025 to coincide with the 200th anniversary. Once the signs are in place, a dedicated webpage will be added to the Friends of the S&DR website celebrating the project and encouraging those passionate about rail heritage to visit and look out for the signs as they travel along the world's oldest public passenger railway.

Photograph by Maurice Burns





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## Aycliffe Cricket Club Scoreboard Report



On a dry, but a genuinely freezing cold, day the start of the new cricket season got off in style for Newton Aycliffe's senior teams as they both chalked up maximum 25 points victories thanks to some outstanding individual and team performances.

Newton Aycliffe's 1st team, sponsored by Franks the Flooring Store, playing their first game back in the NYSD 3rd division after last season's relegation, had a tough game at home to Whitby 2nd XI, but eventually came out on top by 91 runs. Electing to bat first, new opener, Tez Smit, batted superbly to top score with 83 off 86 balls and with good support from captain Chris Palmer (sponsored by Vanilla Design & Print), who smashed an unbeaten 70 off 58 balls and Dan Heaton who hit an aggressive 49 not out from 56 balls, Aycliffe were able to set an impregnable total of 250 for 3 in their allotted 40 overs. In reply, the visitors fought hard to try to save the match and bat out for a draw, but Aycliffe bowlers Leo Mercy, who finished with career best figures of 5 for 23, and 16 year old Will Dearden (3 for 27) helped to dismiss Whitby for 159 with just 3.1 overs remaining.

The club's young second team travelled to pre-season promotion candidates Darlington RA 2nd XI in the NYSD 4th division and came away with a remarkable victory by 38 runs. Electing to bat first, Aycliffe were quickly in trouble at 12 for 3, but a fantastic 4th wicket partnership of 146 between Ramzan Hussain (73 off 62 balls) and captain Dan Weldon (sponsored by Midland Structural Services), who scored 64 off 64 balls and a late order 23 off 34 balls by 13 year old Freddie Lawler, helped their side to reach an impressive 204 all out after 33.4 overs. In reply, the home side looked well placed at 111 for 3, despite some good work by young opening bowler Freddie Lawler (2 for 22). However, the introduction into the attack of veteran Tony Travis (5 for 35), who was playing his first game for six years, together with Dan Weldon (2 for 13) had a dramatic effect as the pair bowled superbly in tandem to help dismiss Darlington RA for 166 after 29.5 overs.

*Photo: Newton Aycliffe 2nd team captain, Dan Weldon, in action with the bat.*

## History Day

'How the Railways Came to Shildon' is a talk taking place on Saturday 17th May at the Railway Institute, Shildon DL4 2JJ, from 1.00pm until 4.00pm. Speakers from 1.30pm, bar and food available, stands, books and memorabilia.

Tickets are £5.00, children free, contact 07970 600631 or 07513 991584 (or pay on the door), all proceeds go towards saving Heighington Station.

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