

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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Locomotion Needs Your Help This February Half Term

Locomotion and S&DR200 are inviting you to join an official attempt at their first ever GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS title on Thursday 26th February at Locomotion for the greatest number of people simultaneously performing the 'Locomotion' dance at a single venue.

The official guidelines stipulate that at least 1752 people must be dancing together for at least 5 minutes, so the museum is calling on you to join the fun and help them break the record.

Video guides to help learn the choreography will be made available on Locomotion's website and social media. No previous dance experience is required to take part, but participants are asked to familiarise themselves with the dance moves in advance to help the official attempt run smoothly.

Record producer and President of Railway Benefit Fund Pete Waterman OBE is supporting the record attempt, which will be performed to Kylie Minogue's version of 'The Locomotion'. Pete worked with Kylie Minogue to re-release her version of the song in 1998, which debuted at No. 2 on the UK singles chart and remains one of her most successful single releases to date.

Pete Waterman OBE, a dedicated advocate for the rail community, shared his enthusiasm for the upcoming record-breaking attempt:

"I am delighted to support this event and the brilliant teams at Locomotion and S&DR200. As a charity, we are committed to supporting the UK rail industry and the incredible people who keep it moving.

The railway has evolved in the best possible way, transforming from its historic roots into a modern, high-tech marvel, but it is the dedicated railway people, from the engineers to the apprentices, who remain its greatest asset. I am particularly excited by the opportunity this event brings to invite more young people to learn more about, and be inspired by, the rich history and exciting future of British rail."

Locomotion and S&DR200 are inviting participants to arrive at the museum before 12.30 on Thursday 26th February for registration, warm up and a brief rehearsal, before the official Guinness World Records attempt.

The dancing is going to be led by Darlington-based experienced professional dancer and choreographer Darrien Wright. Darrien won BBC1's Strictly Dance Fever in 2006 and danced with his idol Kylie Minogue on Michael McIntyre's Big Show in 2018. Local dance groups including Harlequin Stage School, Age



UK and HC Vocal And Performance Academy will also be taking part.

This official record attempt forms part of Locomotion's 'Railway Record Breakers' half term activities, which will include a poster trail to discover more about the record-breaking vehicles in the museum's collection, plus self-led STEM record breaking activities for visitors to challenge their friends and family too. The record attempt, in partnership with S&DR200 Festival, also forms part of ongoing celebrations for the bicentenary year of the Stockton & Darlington Railway (S&DR) and Locomotion No.1, the first steam locomotive to haul a passenger-carrying train on a public railway. This world-famous locomotive will be illuminated as the historic backdrop to the world record attempt where it is housed in Locomotion's Main Hall.

Sarah Price, Head of Locomotion, said: "The thought that Locomotion might soon have its own official Guinness World Records title is amazing! We really hope as many people as possible – young, old, dancers and non-dancers, rail enthusiasts and complete newbies – join us to help us achieve this incredible goal. This will be a once in a lifetime opportunity for the community to come together in a historic setting to achieve something unforgettable."

Craig Glenday, Editor in Chief of Guinness World Records, said, "We are looking forward to adjudicating this fun and fabulous record attempt. Our call for 2026 is 'Be Part of it!', so it's wonderful to see a community coming together to dance the Locomotion. Good luck to all the kids, adults and groups taking part - you are all already Officially Amazing!"

Interested participants are encouraged to check Locomotion's website at locomotion.org.uk/whats-on/record-breaker for more details.

Photo credit © Board of Trustees of the Science Museum.

Photography Exhibition Highlights Impact of Words

A new exhibition celebrating people who are often misunderstood and excluded because of prejudices about the way they look, or how they interact with the world around them, is now open in County Durham.

From a young woman with bionic hands to a man with facial differences to a little boy with Down Syndrome - The Meaning of Being Different is a series of portraits based around well-known proverbs and idioms.

Created by portrait photographer Debbie Todd, the exhibition opened at Bishop Auckland Town Hall on Monday 16th February and will remain on display at the Durham County Council venue until Saturday 16th May.

Debbie said: "I've tried to represent a diverse range of people in the exhibition - people who are often excluded because of how they look or their lifestyle. By linking each portrait to a phrase or idiom such as 'tarnished by the same brush' or 'a face only a mother could love,' the sitters and I hope to raise awareness of the impact words can have and promote a kinder and more inclusive society."

Tilly Lockey, from Consett, is among those featured in the exhibition. After contracting meningitis as a toddler, Tilly lost both of her hands. Her family spent years raising money for Tilly to have bionic arms, which have allowed her to do almost everything people with hands can do. Tilly has gone on to become a singer and social media personality, inspiring her hundreds of thousands of followers with her fashion, lifestyle and music content.

Also featured is Jono Lancaster, who was born with Treacher Collins Syndrome, a genetic condition which meant the bones and tissue in his face grew at a different rate. Jono's parents rejected him at birth and also refused to meet him two decades later. Now an advocate for self-love, he was brought up by his adoptive mum who he says made him the person he is today.

One of the exhibition's youngest subjects is William Hughes, who has Down Syndrome.

Similar to other members of the Down Syndrome community, William has experienced a lot of stigma, as many people think the condition defines him, when he is an individual who is cherished by his friends and family.

Based in County Durham, Debbie is a socially engaged photographer who concentrates on telling stories of marginalised people, mainly from working class backgrounds, in a fine art style. She is inspired by old master painters and contemporary photographers and creates images that tell the sitter's story and encourage empathy.

The Meaning of Being Different is the first exhibition to be staged in Bishop Auckland Town Hall's mixed-use space, which also houses the venue's library.

The exhibition is free and will be available to view from 10am to 4pm, Monday to Saturday.

To find out more, visit www.bishopaucklandtownhall.org.uk.

Photo: Photographer Debbie Todd pictured her new exhibition, The Meaning of Being Different, at Bishop Auckland Town Hall.



A Slice of Shakespeare

Friday 6th of February saw 93 students from Woodham Academy venture to watch Revision on Tour: Macbeth. The students met early at school to enjoy pizzas, before making their way to Darlington to enjoy an evening of theatre. The atmosphere before departure was electric and for many of the students on the trip it was their first experience of the theatre. Joey Hayman, a year 10 student, commented "I've been to the theatre with family, but this was unlike anything I have seen before. The set and costumes were quite basic, but the acting was phenomenal. Shakespeare can be difficult to understand but the acting brought it to life."



The cast of Revision on Tour: Macbeth consisted of just six actors, each playing multiple parts. There was the addition of the Chorus, an actor who took on the role of the narrator. This helped pupils access the text and provided additional ideas about how they might write about the text. The performance captured the tragedy of Macbeth, whilst also providing some truly terrifying and hilarious moments. Ensuring students experience a curriculum beyond the classroom is important for the staff at Woodham Academy and school trips are an integral part of being a student at Woodham. Michelle l'anson, Head of English, who organised the trip adds, "whilst the opportunity to see a play they study at GCSE is beneficial for students in relation to their exam, the real purpose of the trip was to see the text as it was intended. Shakespeare was written to be seen and not read. The visit was an enormous success, and our hope is that, for some students, it will have ignited a passion for theatre." Woodham Academy would also like to take the opportunity to thank Olive Garden for their excellent service and delicious pizza!

JOY ALLEN
DURHAM POLICE AND
CRIME COMMISSIONER



We're Putting More Police on Your Streets

When local people talk to me about policing, they are clear about what matters most. They want to see more police officers and PCSOs on our streets, and firm action against the crimes that cause the greatest harm.

That message came through strongly in the recent policing precept consultation. Visible neighbourhood policing was your top priority. Tackling serious violence and drug-related crime followed closely behind. Your priorities guide every decision I take, and they also guide the Chief Constable's operational response. Since I was first elected as PCC in 2021, I have been relentless in lobbying government to rebuild policing in County Durham and Darlington. Under the previous Conservative government, our area lost 27% of its police officers - more than 400 fewer boots on the ground.

County Durham and Darlington is now one of just 9 forces out of 43 in England and Wales that still has fewer officers than it did in 2010. That is not because demand here is lower. It is because our low council tax base limits how much can be raised locally to invest in policing.

That is why I welcomed the decision by this Labour government to grant Durham exceptional flexibility on the police precept which gives us the ability to raise additional funding locally to protect and grow our policing service.

When the Chief Constable presented her operational plans to the Police and Crime Panel, she was clear that setting the precept at £18.50 rather than £15 would allow us to deliver exactly what residents have asked for. That included protecting neighbourhood policing and establishing a dedicated Criminal Exploitation Team to tackle drug-related crime and the exploitation of children and young adults, dismantle drug networks and disrupt those who profit from harm.

It will also enable dedicated resources to tackle antisocial behaviour linked to child exploitation and children who go missing from home, and to increase specialist investigators so we can build a future dedicated team to investigate rape and sexual assault and deliver a first-class service to victims.

The additional cost would have been modest. For a Band D household, it amounts to 36p a week. For the vast majority of households in County Durham and Darlington around 80 per cent in Bands A and B, it is around 24p week.

Despite this clear alignment between public priorities and professional advice, I was disappointed that the Vice Chair of the Police and Crime Panel, a Reform councillor and former police officer, proposed that the additional precept proposal was vetoed and the Chair, also a former police officer, used his casting vote against the additional £3.50 flexibility the Chief Constable needed to deliver her plans.

As your Police and Crime Commissioner, I am elected by local people to set the policing budget and deliver your priorities. I have therefore agreed to set the precept at £18.50, because failing to do so would have meant avoidable cuts to policing capability and turning my back on the priorities residents have consistently set.

This episode should also give us pause for thought. It shows what can happen when councillors, without a direct mandate for policing, seek to override operational policing advice and public priorities.

As national debates continue about police governance and the future of PCCs, we should be honest about the risks of moving to models where accountability is diluted. Until then, I will continue to deliver what matters to you: more police on our streets, stronger action against serious harm, and a policing service that puts victims and communities first.

Memorial Night

A Memorial Charity Night will be held on Friday 6th March 2026 at 7pm in the Phoenix Club, Newton Aycliffe.

For entertainment we have Marie St Clair and also our very own Miss Annbag as DJ.

The night is to raise vital funds for Great Aycliffe Cancer Support Group, but most of all to remember an amazing, strong lady who was part of the Charity for over 7 years. She fought to the very end.

Tickets will be available in both Aycliffe and Darlington shops, as well as behind bar at the Phoenix Club. For more information please call 07442 991859.

JOY ALLEN
DURHAM POLICE AND
CRIME COMMISSIONER

With your support
We're putting more
Police on our Streets!

When local people talk to me about policing, they are clear about what matters most. They want to see more police officers and PCSOs on our streets.

Durham Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, Durham Police Headquarters, Aycliffe Heads, Durham DH1 5TT
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Retirement & Pension Session

Are you aged 50-69 and living or working in Newton Aycliffe?

Newcastle Building Society, in conjunction with Age UK County Durham and Chapter 50, will be sharing information on pensions and investments, scam awareness and budgeting, at a FREE session on Monday 23rd February at Lifeline Community Action Hub, Newton Aycliffe, DL5 4DS from 10am - 12noon. Enjoy a free breakfast roll with tea or coffee. Book your free space now on 0191 386 3856 or email: info@chapter50.org.uk We look forward to seeing you there.

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Adventure, Adventure, Adventure in 2026

Applications are now open!

What Is RYLA?

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is a leadership development programme run by Rotary for young people. The RYLA programme will provide you with the opportunity to experience and learn

things about yourself, about working in a team, but more importantly about leading and supervising other people. These are skills employers look for in the workplace.

What's Involved in RYLA?

The selected activities on the RYLA programme are all based on elements of problem solving, communication, organisation, delegation and teamwork. While many of the activities take place outside, alongside The Pennine Way, it is not an outward-bound course! We use a variety of activities to develop you as an individual, as a team member and as a leader of a team, in a safe and enjoyable environment. There is no assessment, and no pass or fail, on this course. There are no limits on your development and we aim to help you realise your potential.

The courses are open to young people who are between 16 and 21 years old and take place at Wilderness Outdoor Education Centre, Low Birk Hatt Farm, Baldersdale, near Barnard Castle and alongside Hannah's Meadow. This has been the centre for our District RYLA camps since 2023 and is a purpose-built outdoor activity centre ideally located for watersports and outdoor activities.

The first camp is Monday 3rd August until 7th August 2026 and the second on Monday 10th August until 14th August 2026 with each week able to take up to 24 young people.

Rotary Great Aycliffe are now accepting applications, so make sure of your place in the selection process by contacting us at rotarygreataycliffe@gmail.com

or by contacting

Fiona Clark, Foundation Officer, Rotary Club of Great Aycliffe on 07851 271927.

Closing date for applications is 10th April 2026.



Lithuanian Pianist Performs for the Piano Society

Darlington Piano Society's recital series continues on Sunday 8th March with a performance from the young Lithuanian pianist, Kasparas Mikuzis.

Kasparas Mikuzis is based in London, where he continues his academic studies. Named as one of Classic FM's 'Rising Stars' for 2025, he has performed at various highly respected venues such as the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester, the United Nation's HQ in Geneva and made his Wigmore Hall debut in December 2024. In May 2025, he was one of the winners of the Young Classical Artists Trust (YCAT) international auditions and is currently supported by the Countess of Munster Trust. He has made quite a stir on the UK's music society network, and expectations are high for his recital, when he plays works by J.S Bach, Ravel, Godowsky and Rachmaninov.


Kasparas has completed his undergraduate and postgraduate studies at the Royal Academy of Music and is now pursuing his Artist Diploma.

Greg Johnson, chairman, said "the Society regularly engages pianists endorsed by the Countess of Munster Musical Trust in its annual selection process. The Trust supports young musicians in the early years of their career and selection by the Trust is a hallmark of excellence."

Tickets are available at the door on the day, price £18 (cash and contact-less payment available), with under 21's free. Tickets are also available online at www.dpiano.co.uk alongside full details of the programme and the remainder of the six recital series. The recital takes place in Central Hall, the Dolphin Centre, at 3pm on 8th March.

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
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The County Council of Durham
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Order 2026
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 length of footpath. An 8 metre length of Thornton Close, Newton Aycliffe, to the side of No.206 Thornton Close to enable sewer repair works to be undertaken. Throughout the period of the closure, a diversion will be available to pedestrian traffic on alternative footpaths surrounding Thornton Close. The maximum duration of the Order is 6 months. The proposed works are to commence from 8am on Monday 16/3/2026 and are anticipated to be completed in 5 days. On occasions, alternative dates for the closure may be necessary and these will be signed on site accordingly.
DATED: 20/2/2026

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

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Annual Meeting

Calling all Aycliffe Village residents.

The Annual General Meeting of Great Aycliffe Village Hall Association takes place on Friday 27th March in the Village Hall at 7.00pm. This is a chance for residents and visitors to find out what has been happening over the past year.

The committee would also welcome any ideas for events or activities for the year ahead. Hope to see you there!



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Seed Sowing! Grow your own potatoes and tomatoes!

Thursday 26th February 10-12noon

Garden planning and crop rotation - Wednesday 4th March 6.30 to 8.30pm

No Dig Gardening - Saturday 7th March 1-3pm

Seed Sowing! Grow your own veg seeds - Wednesday 11th March 5-7pm

Seed Sowing! Grow your own veg seeds - Wednesday 15th April 10-12noon

Garden tips and looking after your veg plants! - Wednesday 13th May 5-7pm

Garden tips and companion planting - Wednesday 17th June 5-7pm

Taking plant cuttings and harvesting tips - Wednesday 15th July 5-7pm

Composting and looking after the soil - Wednesday 14th October 5-7pm

Please get in touch to find out more and book a place!

Join us at Clarence Chare Allotments, Clarence Chare,
Newton Aycliffe DL5 5HX. 07340606402.
Great Aycliffe Garden Guild on Facebook





Compost toilet on site!

Foodbank Donation



President Don Walker, of the Rotary Club of Great Aycliffe, along with member Gail Anderson, was pleased to be able to present a generous donation to the Aycliffe Foodbank based at St Clare's Church, Newton Aycliffe to support their work.

Bouncing at Bishop Jazz

Yet another superb lunchtime jazz gig courtesy of #bishopaucklandjazz house trio. This time they welcomed Noel Dennis on trumpet and flugelhorn and he kicked off with The Good Life followed by Moon Alley, Nostalgia at Time Square, My Funny Valentine, Love For Sale, All Blues and Au Privave. The place was bouncing with delight as a near capacity audience enjoyed wonderful solos from Noel, pianist Dean Stockdale, superb skills and effects from drummer Tim Johnstone and the ever-engaging Mick Shoulder on bass. It was a wonderful mix of Ballad, Latin and Bebop classics which left us all musically satisfied and enriched. We are so lucky to have such great artists performing in Bishop Auckland. The next gig welcomes British Jazz Legend and multiple British Jazz Awards winner Alan Barnes on 27th February at 1pm. This is a special gig in addition to the monthly dates which catches Alan on his travels in the North. This will once again be at the Bishop Auckland Methodist Church with tickets on the door at only £10.



1407 Squadron Presentation Evening



Last Thursday, 1407 Squadron proudly hosted their Annual Presentation & Enrolment Night - an evening dedicated to celebrating the outstanding achievements, commitment and progress of our cadets over the past 12 months.

The night was made even more special as we welcomed eight new cadets who formally made their Promise, marking the beginning of their journey within the squadron. They received their certificates from sector commander Squadron Leader Blount. It was a proud moment for them, their families, and our staff team.

Throughout the evening, we recognised excellence across every aspect of squadron life. From precision drill to competitive E-Sports, and from leadership to sporting achievement, our cadets have continued to raise the standard. A wide range of classification and progressive training badges were awarded - from Blue through to Silver - reflecting the dedication and hard work shown throughout the year.

This Year's Trophy & Award Recipients:

- Boddy Trophy for Best NCO - Sgt Grimshaw
- The Fryers Shield for Best Cadet - Cdt Hardy
- Probationer of the Year - Cdt Rollo
- OC's Commendation - Cdt Beattie
- OC's Commendation for E-Sports - Cdt J Smith
- Sports Trophy - Cpl James
- OC's Commendation - Sgt Clay
- Drill Trophy - Cpl Bradshaw
- Padre's Award - Cdt Kent
- Mess Tin Award - Sgt Grimshaw
- Most Improved Cadet - Cdt Ketelaar
- OC's Commendation - Cpl Clement
- Laverick Memorial Shooting Trophy - Cdt Blair
- Sedgefield Veterans' Attendance Award - Cpl Ketelaar

The evening was a fantastic opportunity to reflect on a year of growth, resilience and achievement. It was great to see some new faces collecting the trophies!

Here's to another year of success for 1407 Squadron - aiming higher, achieving more, and continuing to represent our squadron with pride!

Fibromyalgia Peer Support Group - Update!

This group is moving days and venue from Monday 2nd March 2026 - the group will be held at the Glow Church, Long Tens Way, Newton Aycliffe, DL5 6AP. The group will now meet every Monday afternoon from 12.30-1.30pm, with the coffee shop alongside for refreshments. This is a safe supportive space where you can connect, share and find real understanding from others attending.

No need to book - just pop along ... anyone can attend with you (partner, friend, carer) - Contact number for the group is: 07543 477773.

Join Us In

Celebrating

The Past, Present and Future of
The Stockton & Darlington Railway

Saturday 7th March 2026 1.30pm - 4pm
St Michaels Church, Heighington, DL5 6PN

Speakers from 1.45pm prompt

Past - Women of the Railway
Present - SDR200 Festival
Future - Heighington Station

Music by North Riding

Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway
www.SDR1825.org.uk

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/friends-of-the-stockton-and-darlington-railway> or 07764368874

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County Durham Specsavers Director to Retire After Three Decades



A LONG-SERVING Specsavers director is set to retire at the end of this month after dedicating his career to providing expert eye and hearing care across County Durham.

Tim Mitchison started his career upon the opening of Specsavers Bishop Auckland in 1995 and later became a director of Specsavers Newton Aycliffe and Barnard Castle, helping to develop services across all three stores.

Having lived and worked in County Durham all his life, Tim has supported thousands of customers with their eye and hearing care, both as a dispensing optician and as a store director.

Reflecting on his time at Specsavers, Tim says: “When the Bishop Auckland store opened back in 1995, our aim was to provide high-quality care to the local community, and that focus has remained unchanged throughout my entire career.

“I’m honoured to have supported generations of families through thousands of eye and hearing checks across three fantastic stores and three rewarding decades. Doing so alongside so many dedicated colleagues is a real privilege.

“I’m incredibly proud of what we’ve achieved together, and I know all three stores will continue to thrive under the leadership of the existing partners.”

Maria Sattar, director at Specsavers Bishop Auckland, says: “Tim has been a cornerstone of Specsavers for three decades, and his experience and commitment to customer care has played a huge part in shaping the business we have today.

“He has always been passionate about supporting customers and colleagues alike, and his contribution to the people of County Durham has been significant.

“We will miss Tim dearly, but we will carry forward everything he has taught us to continue supporting our local community. We wish him a very happy and well-deserved retirement.”

The stores in Bishop Auckland, Newton Aycliffe and Barnard Castle will continue to be owned and run by the remaining partners, maintaining continuity for customers and ensuring the same high standards of care pioneered by Tim remain in place.

After Hours Parking Charges Trap

Dear Sir,

I’m sure you’re aware of the above problem in Aycliffe, but I thought I would relay my experience.

About fifty friends had a birthday meal at Elachis one Sunday evening in January. All who parked in the car parks behind the town centre, including Tesco’s, were fined between £40 and £60. Several hundred pounds being robbed (by an absent landlord) from locals supporting a hard pressed business. Signs were put up at the turn of the year, but most presumed that, as it was out of hours and as it’s a near derelict shopping centre, there would be no fine. The parking companies involved are Horizon and Parking Group. If these were car parks in busy city centres then time limits would make sense, but Aycliffe? The town centre is struggling as it is, but going out of hours to support local business can be extremely costly.

Kind Regards

Tim.

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AND MANY MORE!

Reduced Impact

Hi Fret,
Thank you for your report on your safety visit to Fornax. Your article was written from the perspective of someone who is familiar with this industry. However, most of the general public are not. You did not mention who Fornax are; where they are located and what they do. The acronym CEMS was explained, however, COMAH, HAZOP, LOPA, SIL and SIF were not. The absence of these explanations greatly reduces the impact and understanding of your report. Your article was best suited for the more knowledgeable and the technically inclined regarding this industry.
Chris Wheeler.

Heighington Matters

Millbank – The Millbank/South View road junction continues to concern many drivers. Visibility driving out of South View is poor and at times vehicles driving down Millbank excessive. Following a meeting I held with DBC a few weeks ago, a speed survey is underway and I look forward to seeing the results. A letter from DBC has been sent to residents living around the road junction, seeking their thoughts on the idea of putting yellow lines on the street corners and I am receiving emails with the residents responses. Ideas of 20mph speed limits and introducing one way systems down South View and Water Lane are two solutions being put forward which seem to be sensible solutions, but I know from past experience that a 20mph speed limit will not be introduced without traffic management and a one way system is not the answer because both the Police and DBC highways will say that one way systems encourage drivers to drive faster knowing there is nothing coming in the other direction. So, I will keep everyone informed – but irrespective of any solution that may be forthcoming, the real answer is for ALL drivers to drive slowly at all times.

Road Conditions – I thank everyone who has sent me an email about their concerns over the potholes in certain areas of my Ward. I have reported them all to DBC highways, but I would ask for a little patience as the demand across Darlington is high. Following the amazing amount of rain that we have endured, and the freezing conditions, water has penetrated the road surface and then froze, and expanded creating lots and lots of holes. The Council do employ road inspectors who check on all of our roads across the Borough and report their condition. If the damage is 40mm or deeper then repairs are organised.

Footpaths – An inspection regime is underway to report back on all footpaths in Darlington. Information will be collated and those exceeding the Highway standards will be given priority. It is expected that the inspections will be completed and solutions decided during April.

Hopelands Parking Bays – is ongoing. Following further complications, I met with a DBC Cabinet member before Christmas, and a couple of times since, to discuss the Project and ask them to provide financial and practical support to finally install the parking bays. Feedback is positive and a decision will be made in March/April – I am keeping fingers crossed, but at the same time relatively confident that they will support the Project.

St Michael's Church – Chris Lloyd evening

– Thank you to everyone who turned out on a cold Saturday evening to listen to Chris tell us about 'Four Scandals and a Gooseberry'. It was a brilliant evening thanks to Chris, the wine, the food and the venue – our old medieval church – St Michael's. Needless to say the evening went well with the help of so many church volunteers who cooked, baked, sold tickets, and greeted all who came along – a big thank you from my wife Ruth to you all. **AND** yet another evening is planned for us all to meet in St Michael's Church to enjoy the company and listen to the magnificent Ryton Singers who will entertain us with a combination of pop songs and hits from popular musicals. This wonderful evening is planned for Saturday 21st March from 5pm for a 6pm start.

Tickets cost £10 and are obtainable from Susan King - 07884 488028. Money raised will support the restoration of our church headstones.

Councillor Gerald Lee,
Heighington & Coniscliffe Ward.

The Sun Always Shines on AFWC

46 walkers from Aycliffe Fell Walking Club enjoyed a terrific day of walking in Northumberland. With walks from Brocolitia Fort, Chesters Fort and Brunton Top, on the east side of Chollerford, they all arrived safely and happy in Corbridge.

The weather was fantastic, considering the rain and snow of recent days, and the winter sun shone through the trees with a real intensity. There were some lovely snowy scenes, especially in County Durham on the journey up to Hadrian's Wall but less so to the north of Hexham. However, on the walk, the snow laid crisp and even in some parts, but mostly had thawed in the sunshine with some quite muddy sections to negotiate. This didn't trouble these seasoned walkers with many choosing to walk routes via Acomb and Hexham before climbing out of Hexham to Fellside and some glorious views.

Back in Corbridge, the walkers gathered at numerous establishments, but many were particularly taken by the visit to The Pele, a two floor hostelry inside a tower in the centre of the town, selling good real ale. In other establishments walkers enjoyed the televised rugby until it was time to go home. The next walk on 14th March will visit the Coquet Valley in Northumberland with walks between Rothbury and Warkworth on the Northumberland Coast..

Aycliffe Fell Walking Club is a very friendly walking club. Please look at the website aycliffefellwalkingclub.com for further details or if you are interested in joining us. Annual membership of £10 runs from January to December with each walk outing costing £15 to cover the cost of the coach. Feel free to join us on the next walk. We look forward to your interest.

Roar-some Half Term Family Fun at Gala Durham

Families can look forward to the return of Zog to County Durham this half-term.

Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler's classic, feel-good story, will be brought to roaring, soaring life in a delightful musical for children at Gala Durham.

From Tuesday 24th to Thursday 26th February, Freckle Productions' adaptation of Zog will delight audiences with its mix of live music, puppetry and laugh-out-loud storytelling.

Audiences will watch the keenest, most accident-prone dragon in Madam Dragon's school as he tries to finally win his own golden star. With the help of Princess Pearl, can Zog overcome his biggest challenge yet? First published in 2010, Zog quickly became a family favourite, with more than 4.8 million copies of the story selling worldwide.

Lizzie Glazier, culture venues and programme manager, said: "We are delighted to once again welcome Zog to Gala Durham. Julia Donaldson's much-loved classic has enchanted audiences for the last 15 years and, featuring joyful songs by Joe Stilgoe and beautiful puppets by Little Angels, this charming smash-hit production is a treat for children and adults alike.

"It's the perfect excuse for a half-term excursion, with a number of performances running across the three days. And, with the production recommended for children aged three and over, it's also a great opportunity to introduce younger family members to the joy of theatre and spark their love for the arts."

To find out more and to book tickets, visit www.galadurham.co.uk/zog or call Gala Durham on 03000 266 600.



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School Aycliffe Community Association (S.A.C.A.)

Community Hall - Located at the bottom of Eastfields, School Aycliffe.

Please follow the white/brown information signs.

February Events

Community Choir – held every fortnight.

Our next session is on Monday, 23rd February, from 7pm until 8.30pm, the cost is £3, including light refreshments.

Please contact Julie McGarh for further information on 07742 015609.

Up and Coming Events – please make a note in your diary!

Ladies Night – held every 1st Wednesday in the month.

Our next session will be on Wednesday, 4th March, 7pm to 9pm when we will be making Easter Crafts.

Please contact Christine for further info on 07981 992 686, £3, including light refreshments.

Bingo Night – Friday, 13th March, 7pm to 10pm (cash only).

This is a ticketed event – £5 per person – goody bag included (NO UNDER 18s).

You can either bring your own food and drink, or Huntley's Fish & Chip mobile van will be in attendance from 8pm.

Don't worry if you don't have a dabber, as these will be on sale with additional bingo cards for those that are feeling lucky!

Newton Aycliffe Pipe Band



Newton Aycliffe Pipe Band has appointed a new band major.

Peter Prideaux, a former British Army piper, was previously pipe sergeant with the band, which has a history dating back to 1961.

Former band major, Bill Farrell, is credited as saving the band when it faced membership challenges six years ago.

The band now has 40 members and is regarded as one of the leading pipe bands in the region.

Photo: Peter (left) and Bill (right).

There will be a raffle on the night too, so bring some cash! Please contact Georgette on 07951 758118 or Julie on 07742 015609 to purchase your tickets, we also offer on-line payment too – so you have no excuse!

Dates for mobile food vans to visit our hall:

Wednesday, 18th March – Weird Dough. Time to be confirmed

Please visit our new Facebook page

School Aycliffe Community Centre,

we're at the heart of our community and a warm, welcoming space for people

of all ages and backgrounds to connect, learn and grow.

Thank you for supporting our events and hope to see you soon

The Committee Members, School Aycliffe Community Association.

Town Parking Charge Issue

It was about the fifth car park I'd tried to get into that day, after finding the one near the medical centre closed. I finally spotted a spare space in the left-hand part of the car park on Greenwell Road, adjacent to Costa and Wilson's Vets, opposite Barnado's and Aldi. I was astonished to receive a Parking Charge Notice, in intimidating language, from Civil Enforcement Ltd., the private company which operates the car park, a couple of weeks later - to the extent that I went back to the car park to check what I'd missed. I'd driven in on the left (of course), heading left because that is where I'd see the space. I had not seen the notice on the right, part-hidden by foliage, nor the many, prominent signs in the right-hand car park. There were none where I'd parked, so I had no reason to think that the charges applied there.

I appealed via CE's website. CE makes it hard to do anything but pay or appeal, and this has to be done within the time-limit. The 'Contact Us' button just led back to the Pay/ Appeal page.

I received a reminder some time later, in a similar tone. I don't believe they considered the evidence. While the route to appeal to POPLA was given on the letter, somewhere in the process CE claimed that POPLA rejected a high percentage of the appeals against CE, presumably to encourage people not to bother, just to pay up.

I escalated the appeal to POPLA. A few days later, CE withdrew my appeal, and I received a letter with straightforward wording from CE confirming cancellation of the charges.

The last time I checked, there were still no signs in the left-hand car park, although CE says that charges apply in the whole area. As far as I know, there are no consequences for CE from my appeal - no obligation to put signs up there. So, there is a risk that unwitting

drivers could be caught out.

There is signage only in a small area, but the charges apply to a much larger area.

If you have received a Parking Charge Notice from a private company:

1) If you parked wrongly and should have known better, do the right thing: 'fess up and pay up.

2) If you feel the charge is unfair, don't pay it. Payment is considered admission of liability. You can appeal to the charging company and escalate to POPLA, if need be.

3) Guidance can be found on <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/reclaim/private-parking-tickets/>, at <https://news.sky.com/story/a-consumer-experts-guide-to-appealing-against-private-parking-fines-13354771> and via Citizen's Advice: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/parking-tickets/appealing-a-parking-ticket/>. Other sources may be available. Name and address supplied.

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I'm really pleased that County Durham will receive an additional £10 million in funding from this Labour government on top of the record £170 million budget increase already agreed last year. After 14 years of chronic underfunding under the Conservatives, our community is now seeing the investment it deserves. I'm proud that Labour is giving our area the funding it deserves.

I recently voted to lift the two-child benefit cap, a change that will improve the lives of around 3,000 children locally. This is a significant step forward in tackling child poverty and easing pressure on working families. For many parents who are doing their very best to make ends meet, this change will provide meaningful support and help ensure that every child has the opportunity to thrive. I was proud to back this measure and to support a policy that will make a real difference here at home.

My number one priority as your MP is to attract better, higher paid jobs in our area. As part of that work, I've been meeting leaders in the space sector to talk about how to best support the brilliant space companies we have locally. I'm really proud of the innovation that takes place in places like NETPark in Sedgefield, with businesses there playing a key role at the cutting edge of satellite technology, advanced manufacturing and AI. These jobs are crucial for driving opportunities for people locally and I'm pushing for more jobs like these with industry leaders and government.

I'm also really pleased that in our area NHS waiting lists are going down so people in our community will receive the care they need sooner. The government has also announced a new National Cancer Plan focused on faster diagnosis, speedier treatment, and better support. Billions will be invested in new scanners and tests and across the country there'll be more local diagnostic centres open at evenings and weekends, including in our community, so care is closer to home. This will help us reach a goal of 75% of people diagnosed with cancer living for five years or more – and I'm really proud that, under Labour, everyone diagnosed with cancer will receive a personal support plan covering treatment, mental health and employment. Finally, I recently sent out the latest edition of my e-newsletter. You can also stay up-to-date with my work in Parliament and across the constituency by signing up to receive regular updates here: <https://alanstricklandmp.eo.page/h2n1w>

NAFC REPORT



The recent wet weather has led to a fixture backlog. The home game against Pontefract Collieries will be played on 10th March with the visit to Hallam to be re-arranged.

Aycliffe welcome Heaton Stannington to the Aschcourt Stadium on Friday 20th February with Silsden following on Tuesday February 24th 19:45. North Ferriby will complete the hat-trick of home games on Saturday 28th February.

Aycliffe find themselves in 16th, three places outside of the relegation zone. Despite this, Aycliffe have games in hand on opponents above them.

3rd February

Dunston UTS 1-1 Newton Aycliffe

Aycliffe picked up a point at Dunston for the first time since September 2016. Brian Atkinson's side were the better team throughout the game, particularly in the second half where a well martialled defence consistently stifled the home side. Aycliffe fashioned a few chances of their own. Dunston found the net first with a header from David Robinson in the 32nd minute, but Andrew Nelson found the equaliser in the 40th minute. Aycliffe were down to ten men late in the second half after Callum Luck was judged to have been a last man while he challenged Sado Djalo near the edge of the box, but Aycliffe held on for a point.

Match Report by Ryan Livingston

Photo by Yvonne Wood - Charlie Dawson in action at Dunston.

Diabetes Peer Support Group

Are you a diabetic (Type 1 or Type 2) or a parent of a child with diabetes?

We are looking for people to join us at the next peer support group in Newton Aycliffe.

Held on the 1st Tuesday of the month (next one is 3rd March) from 1pm-3pm at Pioneering Care Centre.

Come along for an informal chat and support.

Email: info@pcp.uk.net for more info or call 01325 321234.

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
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UTC South Durham Celebrates National Apprenticeship Week

UTC South Durham proudly marked National Apprenticeship Week by hosting its annual Careers Event, bringing together a wide range of local providers, universities and employers to inspire students as they plan their next steps beyond UTC.

The event welcomed representatives from leading regional employers and education institutions, giving students the opportunity to explore career pathways, ask questions and build valuable connections. Designed to bridge education and industry, the Careers Event reflects UTC South Durham's commitment to equipping young people with the skills, knowledge and confidence to succeed in the workplace. Among the employers in attendance were Husqvarna, CPI, Northumbrian Water, 3M and Wilton Engineering. Students engaged directly with professionals across engineering, manufacturing and technology sectors, gaining practical insight into apprenticeships, degree routes and employment opportunities available, both locally and nationally.

UTC South Durham continues to see strong outcomes for its students, with many progressing into high-quality apprenticeships and further study. Among them is Chloe, who secured a competitive apprenticeship with BAE Systems after completing her A Levels at UTC. Dan successfully enrolled onto a degree level apprenticeship with Filtronic, supported by Sunderland University, combining academic study with hands-on industry experience. Alara, following her GCSEs, began an apprenticeship with Gestamp, one of UTC's founding partners, demonstrating the strength of the college's long-standing employer relationships.

Catherine Purvis-Mawson, Deputy Principal, said "Celebrating National Apprenticeship Week with our alumni, who are now fulfilling their apprenticeship careers along with inspiring our current students is what the UTC is about. Exams and results are important, but having outstanding destinations for a successful future and being able to support the North East economy and skills needs is what the UTC does best."

Applications are currently open for Year 10 and Year 12 students looking to join UTC South Durham. An Open Evening will take place on Thursday 19th March, offering prospective students and their families the opportunity to explore the college, meet staff and students and learn more about the specialist pathways on offer.

For more information about UTC South Durham and to apply, please visit utcsouthdurham.org or contact office@utcsouthdurham.org.

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to book an appointment

Aycliffe Village WI Update

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday 25th February at 7.00pm in Aycliffe Village Hall. This will be our annual AGM, with cheese and wine and the speaker will be our local federation representative. Non members and visitors are very welcome to join us and it is a great opportunity to discover the meetings, events and visits of last year and the programme we have for our next year, when we will celebrate our 15th year together. Aycliffe Village WI prides itself as having a very friendly and welcoming atmosphere for a wide range of events to suit everyone. For example, we have made jewellery, meditated and learned about the introduction of railways and what it meant to women. We support a local food bank, craft with residents of St Clare's Court care home, run a monthly book club and have supported events for VE Day and made bunting for the King's visit to Durham. There have been visits to Harrogate Flower Show, Saltburn, Salt's Mill and many opportunities for tea and cake and meals out together. The programme for the next year is just as exciting and we already have plenty of trips and visits planned. If anyone who would like to join our WI please contact us via email on - aycliffevillage@durhamwi.co.uk

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Wheel chair, £20; lots of fishing rods and gear, £70. Tel 01325 320800

10 Steps to Pain Management

Starting on Tuesday 24th February, 12 noon, for 8 sessions (10th March, 24th March, 14th April, 28th April, 12th May, 26th May and 9th June) - books are available to accompany the programme for £4. If you would like to be part of this, please contact the group on 07543 477773. This will take place at The Bus Conservation Museum, Aycliffe Ind. Estate, DL5 6BL (behind Aycliffe Physio).

In Memoriam

Barbara Reeder
28th February 2025

Forever in our hearts and thoughts. Beloved Wife, devoted Mother, loving Sister. In the hearts of those who loved you, you will always be, treasured forever in our memories. We keep you in our hearts, the love of the past, for there it was planted, forever to last. Your presence we miss, your memory we treasure, loving you always, forgetting you never.

Irene Margaret Wiggett
(née Issott)

10/10/49-14/2/23
Beloved Wife of Ian and Mother of Adrian and Andrea. Lost, but never to be forgotten, on Valentines Day. The Boston Two Step will never be quite the same without her partnership.

Val Morgans
(née Hurst)

Passed 2/3/22
Until we meet again. Your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure. You are loved beyond words and missed beyond measure. Love and miss you every day. Your loving Son Gareth and all the family.

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In Loving Memory of a Wonderful Husband, Dad and Grandad
Alan Ward



27th April 1954 – 24th February 2024
Two years without you, and not a day goes by that we don't think of you. Your strength, your kindness and that infectious laugh, that filled every room, are missed more than words can say. You were our steady hand, our voice of reason, and the heart of our family. Life feels quieter without you in it, but your love and the memories you gave us carry us through. We hope there's a bar up there and that you're making sure to have a pint, sharing stories and laughter just like you always did. You deserve the best seat in the house. We miss you so much. Always loved, always remembered, forever in our hearts. All our love, your loving Wife and family.

Paul Stevens
17th February

22 years of missing you. You have Mam there now to look after you, like she always did. Forever in our hearts x. Love, Dad, Julie and all the family.

Obituary

Margaret Elizabeth Burke



Of Newton Aycliffe, passed away peacefully at home on 31st January 2026, aged 92 years. Dearly beloved Wife of the late Joe, a much loved and respected Mam of David, Ann and Jean. A dear Mother-in-Law to Mary, Kenny and David. A treasured Nana and Great Nana. Our hearts are broken, but we take comfort knowing she is at peace and reunited with Dad. We feel pain because we were loved. Will family and friends please meet for a service in St. Clare's Church, Newton Aycliffe on Tuesday 3rd March at 1.45 pm. To be followed by committal at Wear Valley Crematorium. Family flowers only please, by request. Formal attire please.

Olive Isabel Jordan

30th January, passed away peacefully in hospital, Olive Isabel, aged 90 years, of Heighington. A beloved Wife to Doug and Mam to Mark. Would friends please meet for a service at Darlington Crematorium on Thursday 5th March at 11.00am. Family flowers only please.

David Gibson
(1940 - 2026)

Passed away on 3rd February, after a short illness, at St. Teresa's Hospice. Sadly missed by his beloved Wife Mary and Sister Sylvia, Loving Father of Stephen and Ricky, a dear Father-in-Law to Jennefer and Margaret. A dearly loved Granddad to Sammie, Ross and Davinia and Great Granddad to Levi, Quinn and Rayleigh. Will family and friends please meet at Wear Valley Crematorium on Thursday, 26th February 2026 at 9.30am. Family flowers only. Donations accepted for St Teresa's Hospice and Cancer Research.

Thelma Davies

Thelma passed away peacefully at home, on 4th February, surrounded by love. Thelma was a beloved Mother to Greg, Grandmother, Great Grandmother, Godmother and cherished friend to many. Would friends kindly meet at Wear Valley Crematorium on 27th February at 3.30pm. Family flowers only and donations to be made in lieu to the Dogs Trust.

William Gutteridge (Bill)

Peacefully passed away on the 4th February, at Lindisfarne Nursing Home, Newton Aycliffe, aged 85. Beloved Husband of the late Jean, loving Father to Kim and the late Trevor. Proud Grandad, and Great Grandad, and a good friend to Charlie and his family. Funeral service and cremation to take place on Friday 6th March in Wear Valley crematorium at 12.30. Will friends please meet at crematorium. Family flowers only please, donations in lieu to Leukaemia Research.

PUZZLE CORNER

Sudoku

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

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Durham City Welcomes the Year of the Horse

Durham City has come alive with colour, dancing and music this week to celebrate the Chinese New Year, also known as the Lunar New Year and Spring Festival.

The city will ring in the Year of the Horse with an exciting line up of family activities and events, to mark the official New Year on 17th February.

Starting on Monday 16th February, Durham Amateur Rowing Club hosted a Spring Festival Fireworks Celebration.

A series of free events will then be on offer across the city centre on Saturday 21st February, for all ages to enjoy, organised by Durham County Council and its partners, including Durham University, Durham Markets and Durham BID.

From 10.30am until 3.30pm, children can drop into Clayport Library to create their own lanterns and horse-themed paper crafts. Families can also enjoy drop-in language and calligraphy taster sessions with Durham University.

At 12.30pm, the traditional Lion Dance will

make its way through the Market Place and city centre, with the Mayor hoping to catch the lucky lettuce to bring good luck to the city for the coming year.

From 1pm until 3pm, families with children aged between five and 11 can visit the Oriental Museum for free and make some decorations for the museum's Year of the Horse celebration later this month.

Finally, from 2pm until 4pm, visitors can enjoy a performance of music, song and dance at Durham Town Hall as members of the Chinese Scholars and Students Association, the Han Fu Society and Durham Chinese School will take part in a music, dance and costume show, introducing traditional Chinese costumes and instruments.

Cllr Karen Allison, Durham County Council's Cabinet member for leisure, tourism and high street, said: "We can't wait to celebrate the Chinese Lunar New Year and welcome the Year of the Horse this weekend. The

horse symbolises energy, opportunity and social activity which will be on offer in abundance across the city centre.

"Alongside a host of free activities, visitors can experience different cultures and traditions, create their own crafts and come together to celebrate and experience an incredibly warm welcome to Durham."

A full programme of events can be found at: www.thisisdurham.com/chinese

Cuppa with a Copper

Cuppa with a Copper will take place on the 27th of February 2026, 10am-11am. Join officers for a cuppa and a chat in Newton Aycliffe town centre. This will be held at Lifeline Community Hub! Officers from Newton Aycliffe Neighbourhood team are looking forward to meeting you.

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Newton Aycliffe Juniors

A round up of Newton Aycliffe Juniors Action.
W/E 08/02/2026

Under 7's faced Darlington Young Bulls in a close game between two sides who really enjoyed the game. Leo and Lennon were the Aycliffe goalscorers.

Under 8's Juniors travelled to Middlesbrough Sports Village to face Prissick Rover Reds and produced a strong away performance. POTM was Seb, who was outstanding upfront, calmly scoring a hat-trick. Ethan (2), Noah and Oscar added the other goals.

Under 9's Blues played the first round of the league cup in a reversed fixture at Riverside Juniors United. With the opposition five leagues above, Aycliffe knew the challenge ahead. Aycliffe put in a fantastic performance to match their opponents with goals from Nate, Leland and Jude. PPOTM was Carter for making brilliant saves. CPOTM was awarded to the whole squad for the performance.

Under 9's Juniors played Marton Whites away. Aycliffe dominating the game with Cooper grabbing two goals and Alfie adding the third.

Under 10's Reds faced Eaglescliffe Elementis Blues who sit a couple of divisions higher than Aycliffe in a cup tie. Aycliffe put in an impressive performance scoring goals through Fox (2), Thomas, and Michael. The assists were provided by Thomas (2), Fox and Orig. POTM was Michael who was great down the right. PPOTM was Thomas who played amazing up front.

Under 14's Juniors travelled to face North Ormesby in a very entertaining game. After going two goals down in the first 10 minutes, Aycliffe pulled it back to lead at the break with two goals from Lucas and a further goal from Jonah. Into the second half, it was MOTM Lucas who completed his hat-trick, with Jonah adding his second goal to give Aycliffe the 5-3 victory. OMOTM was Jonah.

W/E 15/02/2026

Under 7's played against Kader Rangers in what was a complete team performance. Aycliffe scored an amazing thirteen goals through MOTM Frankie, who showed a cool head in front of goal to score four of the goals. Lennon also scored four goals, Leo (2), Arthur (2) and Henry scored the other goals.

Under 12's Blacks entertained Stockton Town Royals in the cup. In what was an entertaining affair, Aycliffe eventually bowed out 2-4. The goals were scored by JJ and Layton, with Liam and JJ adding the assists.

Under 12's Reds faced Spraire Lads in the cup. The game was even in the first half with the score level at 2-2. Into the second half, Aycliffe played outstanding attacking football to get the 6-4 win. Alfie (3), Laitia, Yash and Koa scored Aycliffe's goals. Laitia was awarded MOTM.

Under 15's entertained TIBS in the cup, running out 13-2 winners. Oscar J (3), Layton W (3), Ryan (2), Sam (2), Grayson, Alex and Layton H scored Aycliffe's goals. MOTM was awarded to Oscar J.



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Aycliffe Youth Football News

Wildcats Girls Development and Little Eagles Boys Development

We now have spaces available for year 1 boys and girls at our development academies. If you are interested and need more info contact Berni 07939 045242.

Not many games again this week.

Boro Rangers v U7 Wildcats

The girls had a break from the league this week, so travelled to Boro Rangers for a friendly. Unfortunately the Wildcats regular goalie was poorly, however Olive and Amelie stepped up and kept unbelievable clean sheets. Wildcats passed well throughout the game and the goals followed and they earned an impressive team win. Goals from Esther x2, Myla x1, Olive x1 and Erin x1.

U8 Wildcats v Gateshead Cleveland Hall

A comprehensive performance and result in our last league match of our first season together as a team. The girls teamwork, passing, structure, desire to get a win and hold onto the clean sheet shows how much they have progressed since the start of the season and how competitive they will be going forward. Goals from Chloe x2, Boe x2 and Lydia. FT 5-0. POTM Sophia.



U16 Angels 5 v 2 CLS Panthers (County Cup)

A strong performance in the QF of the County Cup takes the Angels through to a semifinal. A good match on a sunny afternoon found Faith in good form with four superb goals for a star player performance. Emily picked up an impressive for assists and Poppy headed home our 5th. Good performances all over the pitch as they grew stronger as the game went on.

Hartlepool Stags 1 v 2 U14 Eagles

A tight and well fought first half saw the Eagles create plenty, but the Stags took the lead mid way through the half, but the lads dug deep to restore the balance with a great strike from Sam Maddison, with pressure and some great build up play the Eagles asserted, Tarek scoring to give the Eagles the win.

Boro Rangers Barca v U7 Eagles (cup)

A game against one of the top teams at their age group was always going to be a difficult game, but the lads put in a huge performance to match their opposition. Lincoln, in goal, pulled off a string of outstanding saves to frustrate Boro Rangers. Two goals from Hunter weren't enough to progress to the next round. Huge well done to the whole team.

U10 Wildcats v Consett

The girls started brightly, taking control of the game in the first ten minutes. Excellent play between Matilda and Freya allowed the former to score the opener and a goal from a corner provided the second. The girls then lost the competitive edge and allowed Consett to grab a goal just before half time. In the second half, our girls responded to the half time team talk and upped performance levels. We should have got a third to kill the game, however, Consett drew level on the counter attack with five minutes remaining. Tough result to take as the girls did enough to win the game, but they will come back stronger next week. Two goals from Freya.

Springwell Village Golds 3 v 5 U13 Eagles

The lads faced a tough, aggressive Springwell team. The challenge was to stay focused and not be derailed on the ball and avoid emotional traps off it. Aycliffe went 2-0 up through Teni & Oliver, but they equalised before HT. Oliver restored the two goal lead, but a penalty made it 4-3. Teni then scored to secure a 5-3 win. After a long lay-off, the lads got back at it as if they'd never stopped.

Newton Aycliffe Women's Institute

We are over half way through the winter (according to the gardeners' calendar) and slowly daylight hours are increasing, which gives us extra time to be outdoors. Your local WI is in the planning stage to organise day trips and visits to activities, which will start in the Spring. These include entertainment at the History Wardrobe at the Word, South Shields, Sing the Musicals at Darlington Hippodrome theatre, then days out including Helmsley Market and Hawes Creamery. Further excursions will be added as we move into summer.

We meet on the second Tuesday of each month at 7pm in **St Clare's Church Hall in the town centre*. We have speakers on varied topics, craft evenings, auctions and parties. We have access to all manner of informative and varying workshops at WI House, all at reasonable prices to suit your budget.

There is no need to be lonely as a WI member.

Come and join our friendly and welcoming Newton Aycliffe WI. All women are welcome. If you have any questions or queries please contact our President Christine Robinson on 07981 992686.

**At the time of writing, we are unable to use St Clare's Church Hall, therefore February meeting has been held at The Phoenix Club*.

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