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Removal of A167 Street Lights Brings Mass Protest Residents' Association Open Letter to Council

Dear Sir,
The Management Committee of the Great Aycliffe Residents' Association has requested that I write to you regarding the public consultation on the proposed removal of street lights along the A167 by Newton Aycliffe. We are appalled that Durham County Council can even consider taking this detrimental step on a major A road in the southern part of Durham County. Insofar as Newton Aycliffe is concerned the stretch of the A167 is not rural or countryside but a major trunk road through an urban and built up area. This is usually busy with traffic not least people and bus services taking people to and from work in major catchment areas. That is why it is an A road and a major transport route in the South of Durham County, servicing one, if not the largest Industrial Estates in County Durham. At the time Durham County Council is asking businesses to support its

County Durham Plan for jobs and growth, it makes no sense for it to remove the street-lights from the approaches to this major economic growth-point identified in the Plan - Aycliffe Business Park. We understand that a risk assessment has declared the lights can safely be removed. We strongly challenge this for many sections of the A167 near Aycliffe. The road has a path alongside it from Aycliffe Village to Framwellgate Moor, with a significant pedestrian footfall, particularly along the Newton Aycliffe section. There are also many access routes, farm tracks and lay-bys along the section from Aycliffe Village to Rushyford. Apparently the County Council's policy foresees the removal of street-lights in rural areas between

settlements. The stretch of road from Aycliffe to Croxdale does not fit anybody's perception of 'rural', and is mainly 'industrial' or 'urban'. The road runs beside or through Newton Aycliffe, Chilton, Ferryhill and Durham Gate, and does not meet anybody's idea of 'between settlements'. We are concerned with road, pedestrian and cyclists safety in the dark months of winter and in foggy and poor visibility conditions. We could possibly

Continued on Page 8

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Aycliffe Village News

ANNUAL MEETING: The annual meeting of Great Aycliffe Village Hall Association takes place on Monday, 9th March, at Aycliffe Village Hall at 7pm. Everyone is welcome to attend and find out more about the association, and hear about our plans for this year. On Tuesday, 10th March, there will be a committee meeting at the village hall at 8pm to discuss roles and start planning the village fete on the green in July, being held as part of Aycliffe Festival.

BREAKFAST CLUB: The next breakfast club takes place on Saturday, 14th March, at Aycliffe Village Hall from 9am-noon, and is sponsored by John Wade. There will be bacon, egg or sausage buns on offer, as well as cups of tea or coffee. Plus, there will be activities for children and a book stall. All proceeds go to the village hall.

BABY SENSORY CLASSES: For parents and carers with babies up to 13 months, there is a sensory class at Aycliffe Village Hall on Tuesdays at 10am. For details, call Carly on 07881 922076.

NEEDLE AND THREAD: Anyone with a sewing project, such as patchwork, knitting, crochet or rag rugging is welcome to go along to a needle and thread group at Aycliffe Village Hall on Tuesday, 17th March, from 7-9pm. For more details, call Tricia Johnson on 01325 314735.

BINGO: It's eyes down at a bingo session at Aycliffe Village Hall on Wednesday, 18th March, at 7.30pm; all are welcome.

WI MEETING: The next meeting of Aycliffe Village WI is on Wednesday, 25th March, at Aycliffe Village Hall when Elizabeth Lewis demonstrates the art of flower-arranging. The challenge is for a Gift Fit for Royalty. The meeting starts at 7.30pm. For more information, call Sue on 07775 680804.

JUNIOR DISCO: There is a junior disco on Friday, 27th March, at Aycliffe Village Hall from 6.30pm-8pm. There will be dancing, refreshments and glitter tattoos on offer. The cost is £1 and proceeds go to the village hall.

College Students Get a Taste of Army Life



D (Rifles) Coy Fifth Fusiliers gave students from Bishop Auckland College experience of the army and how it operates and will work with them over two years. They will become better leaders and much better prepared for a career in the uniformed or public services.

They have been issued with hoodys and T-shirts with the D Coy college logo. They have carried out a complex exercise entitled "Operations Head Above Water" run by Thrills and Skills for Life - a local team building company, assisted by D (Rifles) Coy.

On Friday 27th February the students attended stage 2 of the exercise, where they visited the Army Reserve Centre in Woodhorn Lane taking rifle training, light drill (different to the rest of the British Army's drill, at 120 paces a minute) and team building tasks.

The students were taught, how the sighting system works on an SA80 Rifle, the standard infantry weapon of the British Army and were given an introduction into its workings. They all handled the weapon and got a feel for the sights.

In the Team Building tasks they had to retrieve

equipment from a simulated minefield which proved for many of them more difficult than they first imagined. Testing and improving their leadership and team work skills.

Finally the light drill was a new experience! The only regiment in the British Army to conduct this particular drill is the Rifles and as a Rifles Coy within FIFTH FUSILIERS it was taught to the students, with mixed results of success!

Katy Graham, Head of Uniform and Public Services and Sport at Bishop Auckland College said "This is an excellent opportunity for students to see the army in action.

Carl Sayers a member of the course said "I enjoyed today, the team building was fun, even though we didn't achieve the task! Learning light drill is very tough and it's made me look at the army very differently, the people are much nicer and caring than I imagined, it's made me interested in joining"

Danielle Johnson (17) from Aycliffe a former student at Greenfield said "A really great opportunity - I hadn't realised reservists were so active and so capable of so much. It's really opened my eyes to the army and I'm now open to the thought of joining which I was not before"



Centre Makes Progress Despite Setbacks

Dear Sir,
The Scout Supporters Association based at Bluebell Way would like to thank everyone who has helped them with the refurbishment of the hall and the extension to the bar/lounge, and those who helped following the recent break-ins.

After many months of planning and building our premises have now got a fresh new look and are proving to be very popular with new and old customers. The association raise the funding needed to maintain and run the Scout Centre. Most of this funding is generated from the bar sales and hall hire

which is one of the reasons an extension to the bar was considered to be necessary. This has enabled us to increase our customer base and generate more income. For the year ending 31/12/2012 the cost of the heating, lighting, rates, water, insurance and cleaning amounted to £15,427, so you can see that a great deal of money is required.

We do not get any funding or grant aid from the Council or scouting organisations - all the money is from our supporters. The centre is run by volunteers and the scouting groups use the premises free of charge.

The money spent on the building and renovations was raised over a number of years from donations and a few small grants which had been applied for to hopefully extend the premises on a much larger scale. Due to rising costs and some problems with the original plans the second hall which was planned could not be built. It was therefore decided to use the money to improve the existing building, and we are planning a small extension to the hall to provide additional toilets and a couple of small meeting rooms when funds allow.

Unfortunately due to the losses suffered during recent break-ins and the cost of repairing the damage, much of the money which was available to put towards this has been used so we do not know at the moment when we will be able to complete this part of the plan.

We would like to thank everyone who has helped with the building in any way in particular we would like to thank Bespoke Flooring, PAR Design and Build Services Ltd, B & C Building Contractors, Wades Group, Halls Plant Hire, Lee Bates Flooring, Homeflair Blinds, New Wave Furniture (who gave us contact details for our seating), the owner of the Black Boy Pub Hetton le Hole for the seating, and the members who helped

with the carpets and seating, and Clearance Bargains for the TV.

Following the break-ins we also thank Chris from C & G Cash registers, Andy Bruce Trading, Newton Aycliffe Police and last but not least Ross Wright in particular Eddie and Danny who worked all night to make new doors. We are also grateful to Newton News for all publicity given. I apologise if I've missed any one, but a big thank you to you all. Please come and visit us and help us fulfil our plans. Don't forget there's a £500 reward for information leading to the conviction of the people who carried out the break-ins. Contact the Police on 101 with any information thanks.

Karen Gray

County's Big Spring Clean is Back

Residents, community groups and schools are being encouraged to get involved in the Big Spring Clean campaign as it returns to County Durham for the fifth time. The clean-up, run by LitterFree Durham, Durham County Council's Civic Pride team, and Darlington Borough Council, got underway on Saturday 28th February and continues until Saturday, 18th April.

After its roaring success last year which saw 1,700 volunteers spend 3,000 hours collecting 1,200 bags of rubbish, the initiative is back to urge more volunteers to sign up to clear areas of strewn rubbish. In addition to this achievement, 10 tonnes of other rubbish were collected, including three tonnes from the rivers Skerne and Wear.

Gerald Lee, chairman of LitterFree Durham, said: "Each year more and more volunteers across Durham and Darlington take part in the Big Spring Clean campaign.

"Equipment and support is provided to anyone wishing to take part and we will arrange

for all bagged rubbish to be collected afterwards. We could not achieve the level of success without the support of groups, schools, partners and local residents and we thank everyone for their continued support."

Clr Brian Stephens, Cabinet member for neighbourhoods and local partnerships at Durham County Council, said: "We are delighted to support this excellent campaign, which is now in its fifth year. It's a great way for communities to come together and do something rewarding for their town, village, school or street. "Litter picking and rubbish removal makes a huge difference to the environment and helps us achieve our aim of making County Durham a safer, cleaner and greener place for all."

For more information visit www.durham.gov.uk/bigspringclean or www.litterfreedurham.org. To sign up and take part in the Big Spring Clean campaign email litterfreedurham@durham.gov.uk or call 03000 261000.

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Saturday 7th March - "AVATAR"

Gig Pit Review: I just couldn't resist the lure of my old mates in Avatar, who were playing their comeback gig with their new line up after far too long an absence! The band have been in a bit of a limbo since the departure of ace axeman Paul Nesbitt and the mighty lungs of Graham Mannion and the search to find replacements willing to give the commitment required and focus on the direction that the band wanted to go was long and hard, but in my humble opinion they've got it nailed now! Old soldiers Titch on drums, Jeff on bass and Stan on rhythm have now been joined by Skinfint's Kev Burdon on lead and ex Kimra front man, Chris Kerswell on vocals. Avatar have always prided themselves on playing the tunes as near to the original as possible and Kev is well up to the task and oozes enthusiasm during his performance as Skinfint fans will know! Chris is a natural front man with a great voice well suited to the Avatar set and a great line of patter with the crowd, you just can't help but like the guy! I was told that he was a bag of nerves before he went on, but I saw no sign of that, just a bloke having a great time on stage and sweating like a pig! If you like your music hot n heavy, Alice In Chains, Pantera, Megadeth, Ozzy, System Of A Down and that ilk, you'll not be disappointed, the crowd wasn't and yelled for more! Another great night at a great venue with a great set of lads!

Saturday 14th March - "FIZZY FISH"

For more information on bands go to
www.turbiniapub.co.uk or 313034
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Concert at St. Clare's

It is probably fortunate that the roof of St. Clare's Church has been repaired or it may have been in danger of being raised last Friday when Wear Valley Music Theatre Company and The Marie Clare Singers gave their concert of Songs from the Shows. It was a truly wonderful medley ranging from Cats to Les Misarables, an entertaining rendition of Sing a Song of Sixpence arranged by Michael Disk, and included audience participation of some patriotic renditions of war time songs, ending with Land of Hope and Glory. The audience joined in with great enthusiasm and gave a standing ovation to these talented performers under the baton of George Lee, accompanied by Graham Hewitt on keyboard. It left all who attended with a truly feel good factor, many commented on leaving that we needed more performances of this standard

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Rotary Club, Barclays and Boots Support Scanner Appeal

Residents Asked to Buy Raffle Tickets

Over the last decade MRI scanning has increasingly become the preferred method used by Cardiologists and Cardiac Surgeons for diagnosing heart problems. It has considerable advantages over traditional methods, providing very detailed images of the heart, including the condition of the muscle, tissue and valves. This enables treatment to be specifically targeted, leading to significantly improved results for patients. The James Cook University Hospital in Middlesbrough currently has two MRI scanners that are available for use by all departments other than Neurology which has its own dedicated facility. In response to the continually increasing demand across the board for MRI scanning, JCUH has recently committed some £2.3M, including £0.3M from the SCHF, to replacing the oldest scanner with a new 'state of the art' machine that will be used for most of the general purpose scanning. Commissioning of the new scanner will release significantly more time for

heart scans on the second of the existing machines, for which it is more suitable than the new machine. However, its processing capacity will still be well below the 2000 per year that is recognised as desirable for the JCUH catchment area of some 1.6 million people. If heart scanning capacity is not increased to this level, the regional Cardiothoracic Centre at JCUH may lose its place in the top division of Cardiothoracic Units, with heart patients in the hospital's catchment area unable to benefit from this advanced diagnosis and treatment. There is also the likelihood that, as a consequence, it may no longer be possible to recruit and retain the best professionals. To address the above issue, the opportunity exists to refurbish and upgrade the second of the existing scanners at a cost of £0.5M to meet the required level of 2000 per year. However, because of funding shortfalls, South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has declared that it will not be in a position to commit to this investment for the foreseeable future.

It is against this background that the SCHF, with support from JCUH, has decided to mount an appeal to raise the £0.5M that is required. Middlesbrough Erimus Rotary Club has now finalised arrangements with SCHF to organise and run a region-wide raffle with the objective of raising a substantial proportion of the funds required. It is planned that the "Loving Hearts Scanner Appeal" raffle will be launched on 13th March 2015, and tickets will be sold over a period of eleven weeks, leading up to a gala charity dinner on Saturday 20th June when the prize draw will take place. Newton Aycliffe Rotary Club is supporting the appeal and will be collecting at Boots the Chemists from 9am to 4pm and Barclays Bank from 9.30am to 2pm both on 14th March 2015. Whilst the aim is to sell raffle tickets, anyone wishing to simply make a donation may do so in either establishment on that date. Barclays Bank plc will match all ticket sales or donations on that date up to a total of £1000.

£1400 FROM HONEST JOHN

Honest John's Stall has donated £400 to Under 13's Girls Football Team; £500 to Zan Shin Kai Karate Club; £250 to Burnhill Way Baby & Toddlers Group and £250 to The Cubby. I am still open and will be open as usual until October and then - who knows? Please continue with your donations in good condition until then.
 Honest John

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Due to a Family Bereavement Walkers Butchers will be closed all day on Wednesday 11th March

BUSINESSES URGED TO OBJECT TO COUNCIL'S A167 LIGHTING PLANS

Open Letter to Aycliffe Companies

Durham County Council has revealed intentions to remove street lighting from the A167, in particular the stretch that passes by Aycliffe Business Park. We understand that junctions will remain lit, but in all other areas the streetlamps will be removed. This will be done between the roundabout at St Andrew's Way (near the AIM junction 59) at the roundabout

at Cock o'the North, Durham and also, north of Durham, from the Framwellgate Moor roundabout to Chester Moor. I'm sure you are aware how passionate we are about improving Aycliffe Business Park and its surrounding area, which is why there are plans to put further signage in place over the coming months. With these aspirations in mind, it is the wrong time to make the business park area feel like the lights are out and nobody's home.

place on March 6, so all letters of objections need to be sent to the above by that date.

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Benefits Won for Local People from New Rail Franchises

The North East Combined Authority has welcomed 'Invitations to Tender' for the Northern and TransPennine Express rail franchises published today, promising a better deal for passengers, additional journeys across the region and new local accountability for how services are delivered.

The neca has been working on behalf of local authorities to secure improvements to services and devolution of decision making in the new franchise specifications.

Cllr Nick Forbes, lead member for transport on the neca and leader of Newcastle City Council, said: "We have secured a commitment to replace the much-maligned Pacer train, improvements to evening and weekend services, and a requirement for substantial investment in the region's stations."

"Whoever wins the new franchise must also support community rail partnerships and join the roll-out of smart ticketing, which the Combined Authority is already bringing to bus and Metro in the North East."

"Crucially for this region, bidders for the Northern franchise will also be required to show how they will deliver a specific management unit for North East England, giving local people a say in how services are delivered. "I now challenge the shortlisted bidders for both franchises to commit to enhancements beyond the minimum requirements in the specifications, to deliver true transformation to the region's rail network and progress towards the vision set out in the neca's long-term rail strategy."

The improvements set out in the franchise specifications are a direct result of effective partnership between the Department for Transport and Rail North, a consortium of 29 local transport authorities from across the North of England of which the North East Combined Authority is a formal member.

The Combined Authority has worked with neighbouring authorities to achieve improvements including:

- **Bidders for the Northern Franchise must commit to replacing 'Pacer' trains by 2020;**
- **Services between Newcastle and Carlisle increased to two per hour;**
- **New Sunday train services between Newcastle, Cramlington and Morpeth;**
- **Upgraded hourly Sunday services between Middlesbrough, Sunderland and Newcastle;**
- **Upgraded hourly services between Bishop Auckland and Darlington, plus new Sunday services;**
- **Free wifi on Northern and TransPennine Express trains by 2020**
- **Plans for Transpennine trains to extend to Edinburgh from Newcastle.**
- **New Northern franchisee to set up Management Unit to work with the North East Combined Authority and other councils to make sure services fits local needs.**

Rail North will continue to work in partnership with the DfT throughout the bid evaluation process and will take a major role in managing the new franchises, once they begin in Spring 2016.

Popular Model Railway Exhibition Returns



One of the stunning layouts on display

The 6th Annual Model Railway Exhibition organised by the town's Rotary Club will take place on Saturday 21st March at the Youth Centre in Burn Lane.

This will be the biggest exhibition so far with 17 working layouts in scales from "N" to "G" created by some of the best modellers in the North of England.

Subjects include models from periods from the 1920's up to the modern day and locations from as far away as Japan. Thomas and his friends will be on display along with a large working LegoRail layout.

There will be more trade stands than ever before selling new and used equipment, die-

cast models, scenic items and a specialist Thomas the Tank Engine stand.

Preservation societies from across Northern England will be present including for the first time the group building the full size North Eastern Railway class G5 tank engine. Doors open at 10am until 5pm, refreshments available all day, disabled access is available to all areas, free parking at St Mary's Church opposite the venue.

Proceeds from the event will be donated to the "Heel and Toe" charity caring for children with Cerebral Palsy across County Durham and Darlington. Entry prices are: Adults £4, Concessions £3, Family £8, Children 50p

Aycliffe Cadets and Staff Earn Awards



Rear L to R: Padre Paul Harper, Wg Cdr Harris, Flt Lt Scott, Sqn Ldr Miller. Front: Sgt Addison, Cpl Simon

Sergeant Addison and Corporal Simon from 1407 (Newton Aycliffe) Squadron Air Cadets have recently gained their BTEC 1st Diploma in Public Services. They were presented with their certificates by the Lord Lieutenant of County Durham, Sue Snowden at an award ceremony at The Bradford Armoury, Darlington. The BTEC was a culmination of teamwork and leadership skills training and a study of the

Armed Forces. Both cadets achieved the highest possible grade of Distinction. The Squadron's Padre, Paul Harper, was awarded a Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for Meritorious Service, marking his nine years of service and dedication to the Squadron and the Corps. Mr Harper has recently taken up the position of Wing Chaplain; a role that sees him help other chaplains across Northumberland and County Durham

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R.A.F.A. AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the RAFA Club, Newton Aycliffe Branch will be held on Wednesday 18th March 2015 at 8pm prompt. All members are cordially invited to attend. A Young, Secretary.

P.A.C.T. Meeting
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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

To be held on Thursday 9th April 2015 at 7.00 pm sharp

I am to inform you that in accordance with our governance and charity law the management committee/trustee's have called the above meeting. All residents welcome, but only full members, will be able to vote for items on the agenda. Please come along and support your Community Centre. Nominations for officers, committee members as per the constitution [forms from the secretary or from the centre], forms, proposals or any other business must be with the Secretary on or before March 25th 2015. All members and attendees will receive a copy of the agenda and minutes of the previous meeting on arrival at the meeting or if you want a copy up to two week prior to the meeting then please contact the Secretary. A copy of the agenda will be posted on the main notice board no later than two weeks prior to the meeting. Anyone requiring any additional and relevant information then please contact the Secretary on any of the contacts below. R.G.MITCHIE 07749 236853 Email to agnewcommunitycentre@btconnect.com Secretary on behalf of the Trustees

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OUT OF DARKNESS INTO DARKNESS!

Dear Sir,
I used to teach History - first we had The Dark Ages then much later The Age of Enlightenment. It was natural evolution. It was progress and part of what Bronowski called 'The Ascent of Man'. Durham County Council, with their decision (after a flawed and prejudicial consultation process) to turn off the lights on many major urban roads within the county are turning this all on its head.

They plan to take us on a journey from enlightenment, back to the Dark Ages. It is crass and downright dangerous! What with all the gizmos, that we all concentrate on to some extent within our cars, drivers need the existing urban highway lighting. More cost effective lighting, yes, but not doing away with it.

Durham County Council have put the cart before the horse. They began with a decision to turn off the lights and then wanted evidence to prove their case. So they observed roads, such as the A 167, between Aycliffe Village and Rushyford, on such as a light, bright sunny September morning - basically when there would be few real problems - as the basis of their evidence. This beggars belief! If they had really been serious about consultation and gathering evidence, they would have informed the public that they were turning off all major urban highway lighting (none Motorway) for a period of 48 hours, in the middle of January. Can you imagine the chaos that would have caused?

But that was not the conclusion that would have fitted their predetermined decision. I predict that if this goes ahead and lights are turned off on major urban routes - the transport arteries of our town - havoc will ensue on the first foggy nights of the Winter months.

I urge Durham County

Council to think again. Well, to think for the first time, actually! What next for County Durham? Do they advise Durham Tees Valley Airport to turn off their runway lighting to save them money? Do we have to change all of our English expressions, sayings and idioms?

Is it now to be 'dark at the end of the tunnel'? Is it to be 'to shed some dark on the subject'? Do we have to now rewrite the bible within our county and change 'out of the darkness came light', to 'out of the darkness - came darkness!'

Derek G Atkinson
GATC Councillor,
Simpasture.

Easter Egg Charity Appeal

Dear Sir,
The Co-operative Funeralcare in Macmillan Road, Newton Aycliffe is appealing for help with collecting Easter eggs again this year. Staff at the funeral home are appealing to the local community to donate eggs to share between local groups and schools for children and adults with learning difficulties and children staying with their mums in women's aid refuges.

Jenette Sisson, Divisional Manager of The Co-operative Funeralcare said, "We had a wonderful response to our appeal last year and we would love to put a smile on as many faces as possible again this year".

Eggs and Easter gifts will be gratefully received at the Newton Aycliffe funeral home until Friday 27th March (opening hours 9am - 5pm weekdays) For more information please call 01325 300510

Thank you very much
Barbara Bates
Admin

The Co-operative Funeralcare

Students Spend a Night at the Museum



Year 8 Greenfield Community College students had a rare opportunity to spend a night at Newcastle's Great North Museum recently.

Seventeen Greenfield students, chosen from over 400 applicants from across the North East, spent the night in the museum in sleeping bags on the floor amongst the natural history collections and took part in activities at Newcastle University. The event was designed to give students a taster of university life and was a great opportunity for our Greenfield students.

The students had a fantastic time on the trip, one student said it was "good because there was loads to do and we found out so much about the university." Another said "it was really cool sleeping in the museum to wake up to see loads of artefacts, sleeping with dinosaurs is cool!"

Finally: "The best bit was meeting new people and the university student leaders were really funny" Others in the group commented on how the trip gave them a new positive perspective on going to university and how they couldn't wait to go for real.

At Greenfield we set out to raise aspirations amongst all our students, this creative and somewhat different approach to experiencing Post 18 opportunities has certainly inspired this group of students and raised their awareness of exciting routes

for the future. This is just one of many further education opportunities organised by staff at Greenfield, inspiring students to look at possibilities for Post 16 progression.

Illegal Tobacco Sold from Ice Cream Van near School

An ice cream van known to park near primary schools in County Durham was raided as part of the latest crackdown on illicit tobacco sales.

Trading Standards officers from Durham County Council and police officers from Durham Constabulary searched the ice cream van at its storage location on a West Auckland farm, along with several other vehicles and a house in Bishop Auckland.

The raids were carried out on Wednesday evening (25 February) following tip offs that suspected counterfeit cigarettes were being sold from the van, which has been known to stop close to some primary schools. However, it is not known if any sales were made to children.

As a result of the raids a man and a woman were arrested and 4,560 cigarettes and 20.35kg of hand rolling tobacco was seized along with a large amount of cash. The cigarettes are believed to be 'cheap whites' made especially for the illegal market and the hand

rolling tobacco is believed to be smuggled. The estimated street value of the haul is more than £4,000.

Joanne Waller, head of environment, health and consumer protection at Durham County Council, said: "It is extremely concerning to receive information about suspected illegal tobacco being sold in the vicinity of schools. "It is important to be clear that we do not know if tobacco has been sold to any children in this instance but we would obviously never wish for young people to be exposed to this type of activity.

"We know that most smokers start when they are children and every year 207,000 under 18s take up the habit, including nearly 9,000 in the North East alone. A recent survey of smokers in the region found the average age at which they start was just 15.

"Working alongside our partners in the County Durham Tobacco Control Alliance we are committed to breaking the cycle of addiction and

exposure to tobacco in every community so that fewer people are affected by this deadly habit.

"One of the alliance's ambitions is that by 2030, smoking prevalence in the county is reduced to five per cent, and this is driven by a vision to make children the future focus for protection."

Wednesday's raid was the latest in a series of joint operations between Trading Standards and police with more than with more than 53,600 illicit cigarettes and 1,249 pouches of illicit tobacco having been seized in the county since April 2014.

Anyone convicted of supplying counterfeit tobacco could face up to 10 years in prison as well as unlimited fines and their assets may be seized via proceeds of crime action.

To report information about the supply of illegal tobacco in the county in confidence call Trading Standards on 03000 261016 or email tradingstandards@durham.gov.uk

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SELL YOUR HOUSE QUICKLY

Well what a year that was!! I want to say a big thank you to Newton Aycliffe for making me feel so incredibly welcome in your town. As someone from down south, it has been great to feel like one of the family. We've had a busy but exciting 12 months; meeting some really interesting people and helping many people move into their dream homes. On top of this we have introduced 'Rent Now Buy Later' into the North East, with great success.

I would now like to take this opportunity to introduce Ray and Miriam Turnbull, originally from Sunderland, who have joined me to help take the business forward. They bring a warm, caring, family atmosphere to the shop and also mirror my values, which are to go the extra mile or 10 to get the job done. As far as business goes, I couldn't be happier with the progress that we have made in 2014. Rightmove statistics show that, after only one year, we are the **fastest selling Estate Agent in Newton Aycliffe**. To top off a fantastic year, we had a magic month in **December** where we sold an amazing **22 properties**. Not bad for what is supposed to be the slowest month of the year!

So once again, thank you for your support and I am really looking forward to helping many more people realise their property ambitions in the coming months ahead.

Best Wishes, Lindsay.



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New Group at the Agnew

Social Groups for Children and Young People with Additional Needs - MAIN provides a chance to socialise and develop necessary life skills in an open, friendly environment. Through creative play and planned activities, we encourage engagement with others and a chance to meet new friends in a safe place. MAIN hosts various groups for any child (5yrs to 18yrs) with any additional need throughout the week, afterschool and on an evening, as well as having Saturday Creative Clubs at the Agnew Community Centre in Newton Aycliffe.

If you would like any more information on our different groups, please get in touch with Melissa Mallin via email at mmallin@iammain.org.uk.

ART SHOW More and Newer Trains on Local Line

There will be an Art Show at Heighington Village Hall, on 6th - 8th March in aid of the charities of the Mayor of Darlington which are Butterwick Hospice and Phoenix House Recovery Centre at Catterick.

Preview tickets £5 (valid all weekend) Friday night 6.30 - 9pm Saturday and Sunday 10am - 4pm. £2 and includes refreshments.

The show will feature new and established artists. Tickets available from Mike or Vicki Lumb 07772 220073 mikelumb68@gmail.com or available on the door. All welcome.

The Department for Transport has announced a range of improvements to local rail services on the busy Darlington to Bishop Auckland railway line.

The improvements from part of a much wider package that will see rail services transformed right across the north and brought into the 21st century. Local rail users can look forward to the current 2 hourly service to Bishop Auckland being increased to hourly, more Sunday trains and newer rolling stock with the current fleet of aging 'pacer'

trains finally being replaced by modern, more comfortable carriages.

The improvements have been included in the new Northern franchise which is due to start March 2016 with most timetable improvements due to be in place by 2019. The franchise sets out the minimum level of service that must be provided, so local rail passengers can confidently expect the improvements will be delivered.

Charlie Walton, the Chairman of the Bishop Line community rail partnership said. 'This is



fantastic news for local rail users; we have been talking to the Department for Transport for many years now about the need to improve local train services in the north and they have finally listened to us.

'Patronage on our local rail line has increased sharply over recent years and we need more trains to deal with the extra passengers. The Bishop Auckland to Darlington rail line plays an important role in regenerating the economies of County Durham, Darlington and the wider North East, helping people get to work, to the shops and to education, and tourism, opportunities, so this is great news for our local economy as well.'

Local rail users have long complained about the ageing rolling stock used on the

Bishop Auckland line. These 'pacer' trains which date from the early 1980s are jokingly referred to as cattle trucks by long suffering rail commuters and are used on local rail services right across the north of England. The new franchise will see these old trains phased out and replaced by a fleet of modern trains over the life of the new franchise.

Charlie went on to say that 'We have long called for the removal of pacer trains from our railway lines here in the north, we don't believe this rolling stock would never be tolerated in London and the South East and is certainly not good enough for us here in the North East, we're delighted that we will soon be seeing them replaced with modern, more comfortable rolling stock.

NECA to Form Public Governance Committee

Applications Invited for Officers

An organisation that brings together councils from across the North East is looking for members of the public to join a key committee. The North East Combined Authority (neca) is appealing for two people to serve as the independent chair and vice chair of its Governance Committee.

The group plays a vital role in the authority's governance arrangements and ensures a high standard of conduct among its members.

The successful candidates will be experienced in dealing with audit or standards issues. They will also have risk management, performance management and financial governance skills, preferably with a background in a large or public sector organisation. They must live or work in the

neca's area and have a good knowledge of the locality and its communities.

The combined authority brings together Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Newcastle City Council, North Tyneside Council, Northumberland County Council, South Tyneside Council & Sunderland City Council.

Its Governance Committee is made up of seven councillors from the member authorities and an independent chair and vice chair who are appointed by the Combined Authority from the local community.

Further details are available at www.northeastca.gov.uk. To request an application pack call 0191 643 5339. The closing date for applications is Wednesday, 18th March.

Are You Getting DLA?

Families with disabled children: Don't miss out on financial help

Dear Sir
Contact a Family - a national charity that supports UK families with disabled children whatever their disability - is worried that local families could be missing out on a potential £21.55 - £138.05 extra each week because they wrongly think they're not entitled to Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

DLA is the main benefit for disabled children and can transform a family's income by helping to meet the extra costs of raising a disabled child like transport, heating, special food and clothing. It also helps families feel less alone by giving disabled children the chance to have fun at local activities. It can cost three times more to raise a disabled child than a non disabled child and our latest research has found that more than a quarter of families with disabled children

have additional expenses of over £300 every month.

Despite this, many parents tell us they don't claim DLA because they believe their child's disability isn't severe enough, their child needs a diagnosis first before they can make a claim or they aren't eligible because their child has a learning disability, autistic spectrum disorder or behaviour problems.

These are myths and not true. Contact a Family is here to help. Make sure your family isn't missing out on this potentially life-saving extra income. Visit www.cafamily.org.uk or call our free helpline on 0808 808 3555 so we can talk you through the rules for getting DLA and send you our DLA guide which includes tips for filling in the claim form. Una Summerson, Head of Policy and campaigns Contact a Family

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Protest over Proposal to Remove A167 Lighting

Dear Mr Reed,
On behalf of ACORN Residents' Association based in the central area of Newton Aycliffe, we would like to add our voices to the protest which is swiftly growing in opposition to the Durham County Council plan advocating the removal of lighting alongside the A167. As a group we believe ACORN is a positive supporter of our County Council but in this particular case the perceived risk to life is believed to be considerable alongside a busy highway which services many settlements in southwest Durham and therefore would

advise extreme caution. Scenarios likely to increase concern in the Newton Aycliffe area include:

- **Poor visibility for pedestrians and cyclists.**
- **Access to Newton Aycliffe and its adjacent industrial estate from the Copelaw site and Gretna Green/Premier Inn complex.**
- **Apparently under the County Durham Plan up to 900 homes are expected to be erected alongside the A167. Clearly if this is to be the case, football and cycle traffic crossing a major road in virtual darkness could result in a tragedy.**
- **Increase in traffic flow resulting from the Hitachi site and 'just in time supply traffic' to other successful sites operating from the Business Park are essential to the economy and employment in our county with good quality road access vital to the continued success of our Town.**

The thought process behind this scheme is presumably a saving of money and I can well understand from a fiscal viewpoint that line of thinking, however the safety of residents must take precedence. Coming at a time when planning is taking place for Lumiere which must have a substantial cost for the ratepayers of County Durham, this latest cost saving measure strikes me as ironic in the extreme, and I look forward to you shedding a little "light" on the matter. Hopefully at a public meeting.

Ken Robson (Chairman)
ACORN Residents Association.

Are You Getting Married?

If you or your partner live or lived in Newton Aycliffe or the surrounding vilages and are planning to get married, **Newton News** would like to record this special day, using your photo; to let our readers know about your happy occasion and recording the event in print and on our website.

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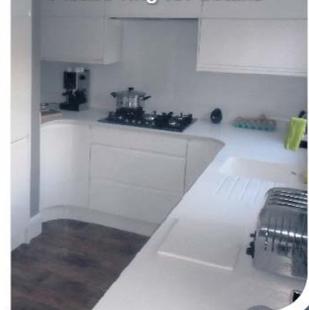
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20 Residents Volunteer to Work on Town Plan

A Neighbourhood Plan special meeting was held in Newton Aycliffe Youth and Community Centre on 21st February 2015. The purpose of the meeting was to feed back the results from the first round of consultation and encourage residents to take part in the next phase of the Plan - the working groups. Angela Corner said "There were over 50 guests in attendance and 20 of those expressed an interest in taking part in one of the working groups, which is a fantastic response". The three working groups will focus on the three key issues identified by residents during the consultation process - Retail, Housing and Environment. Each group will be tasked with turning the

issues raised by residents into planning policies. The Environment group was the first to be established and met on 5th March 2015. It is envisaged that the Retail and Housing groups will be meeting in the next couple of months. If you would like to keep up to date with the work of each group, meeting notes will be posted on Great Aycliffe Town Council Website and regular updates will be provided via Newton News and the Great Aycliffe Neighbourhood Plan Facebook page. If you were unable to attend the meeting but would like to get involved please contact Angela Corner on 01325 300700 or email angela.corner@great-aycliffe.gov.uk



BRINGING HELP TO DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE

Great Aycliffe Community Aid Partners (GACAP) held their monthly meeting at the Agnew Community Centre recently and Susan Saddler from Helping Hands advised her son Luke was working on further developing the website for the partnership. Currently our community newspaper "Newton News" offers organisations in Newton Aycliffe a FREE page on their website and GACAP will take up this offer.

The partners decided on Wednesday 22nd April from 6-7pm for the public consultation showing the benefits the Agnew building extension will bring to the people living in the area. Ron Mitchie Secretary and Centre Manager of the Agnew said the trustees of the centre were excited working with GACAP in providing a facility for those on the town who were in short term difficulties.

Although the project has not yet applied for planning permission or funding GACAP and the AGNEW are confident the proposed new building will receive support. The Agnew Community Centre will be the hub for numerous welfare groups providing rooms and facilities.

Chairperson Pauline Chambers has been working hard behind the scenes ensuring the Business Plan and other such documentation is ready for funding bids.

The Aims and Objectives of GACAP are as follows:

1. Helping residents stricken by crisis, disadvantage or ill

fortune and directing them to the best resources or partners within the area to satisfy their immediate needs and provide information, advice and guidance.

2. The resources of the group to be made available by unconditional, empathetic members of GACAP to provide, support, information advice and guidance.

3. To co-ordinate resources

to the best and most cost effective method of delivery to those in need.

4. The partners will draw down support from each other and welfare agencies, acting as referrers and first point of contact.

If you wish to join the partnership, bringing aid to disadvantaged people, contact the Secretary Joan Clark on 321504 E-mail: secretary.agnew@gmail.com

Greenfield Engineheads Nominated for Award



Congratulations to Greenfield Arts' Engineheads for their nomination for the "Class of the Year" for their work supporting Room 13, inspiring other students and teachers about SOLEs and the School in the Cloud research. They are one of 2 nominees at Greenfield Arts - our Director of Arts and Creativity has also been nominated in the Innovation Award category. Well done to the Engineheads and to Katy Milne for their nominations, its great for all your hard work to be recognised in this way - we've got our fingers crossed for you at the awards ceremony!

TWO GOLD & TWO SILVER MEDALS FOR AYCLIFFE'S STAR SWIMMER

The Northumberland and Durham Swimming Championships, were held at Sunderland Aquatic Centre, on 28th February and 1st March. Representing Sedgfield 75 ASC were Mathew Bradley, Niall Coulthard and Peter Golightly, Hannah Featherstone Jessica Hall and Rebecca Hall. Hannah won two gold and two silver medals for Aycliffe.

The six swimmers competed in a total of eighteen events and made fifteen finals. All of the swimmers improved on their times going from heats to finals.

Mathew took the silver medal in the Open 400 FS and was placed 4th in the 200 Backstroke and the 50 Breaststroke and 5th in the 200 IM, the 400 FS and

the 200 Breaststroke. Niall won the gold medal in the 100 FS and silver in the 200 Breast stroke. In the 50 Breaststroke he was placed 4th in the 12 year age group.

Hannah won the gold medal in both the 100 FS and the 200 Individual Medley and silver in the 100 Butterfly and 200 Backstroke in the Open Events. Jessica was placed 8th in the 100 FS and the 200 Backstroke and 10th in the 200 IM in the 12 year age group. Rebecca took 8th place in the 200 IM and was 1st reserve in the 50 Fly in the fourteen year age group.

Another great weekend with the swimmers performing in a way that brought great credit to themselves and the club.

Weave Like Vikings at Greenfield Arts



This week we were pleased to welcome Year 5 from Aycliffe Village Primary School to Greenfield Arts and The Greenfield Gallery. They came as part of their Vikings topic to see the exhibition by The Bobbin Shed and do some weaving of their own. After a session exploring the exhibition, learning about different types of yarn and ways of weaving, they set off weaving themselves. Not content to try traditional weaving they were adventurous and started weaving in circles! They did a fantastic job, mastering the technique and soon their great artworks started to form.

It was great to have a school group in the gallery, and we have more planned for our next exhibition "Open Art" which opens on Thursday 12th March. For more information about exhibitions in the gallery see our website www.greenfield-arts.co.uk

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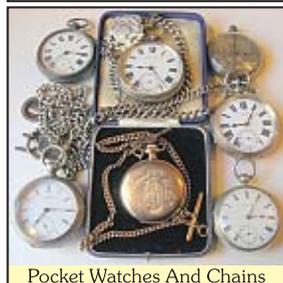
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GACAP's Great Progress

Partners of Great Aycliffe Community Aid Partnership (GACAP) who attended the last committee meeting at the Agnew Community Centre are growing in their excitement about the progress the organisation has made in its first year. Plans for an extension to the Agnew Community Centre are progressing well and we have been approached by more than one building contractor on the town expressing an interest to tender and be involved in this community aid project.

It is envisaged the enlarged Agnew Community Centre will provide facilities for partners to use with a special provision for Helping Hands, a Foodbank, School Uniform Exchange and other welfare aid. The extension will also help the existing Nursery to expand. If you are interested in attending our next meeting drop me a reply and I will confirm date time and location. If you would like more information about how you can become involved please contact the secretary on secretary.agnew@gmail.com

Free Fire Safety Checks for your Home

Crews from Darlington and Newton Aycliffe Fire Stations were providing free home fire advice and checks on Saturday 28 February. The event was planned following a serious house fire in Darlington on Friday 20 February. Members of the public met the crews at the incident command unit, which was in the car park of Asda in Winbush Way, Darlington on Saturday. The aim was to warn and inform people of the dangers of fire and offer people free, practical advice and help to stay safe. Fire crews were also out and about in the surrounding area carrying out free home fire safety checks and fitting smoke alarms where they are needed. Phil Innis, district manager for Darlington District, said: "Following any serious house fire we want to act quickly to ensure that people in the area have the information and advice they and their families need to stay safe in their homes. We always invite people to take up the offer of a free home fire safety check from the crews in the area." A working smoke alarm will greatly increase the chances of escaping a fire unharmed. At home, the advice is to have an exit route planned and make sure that everyone living in the property knows how to leave quickly in the event of fire. For more information visit www.ddfire.gov.uk or to book a home fire safety check with CDDFRS call: 0845 223 4221.

STUDY OF EXOTIC ANIMALS



Year 9 pupils at Greenfield Community College were lucky enough to encounter Jay's Jungle Adventures as part of their Youth Challenge project earlier this month. As part of Youth Challenge, pupils have been studying a number of different animals, researching their habitat, feeding habits, mating rituals and population.

To consolidate learning and inspire interest, we invited Jay and his selection of exotic creatures to come along and meet us at Greenfield. We were greeted by: Meer cats, snakes, lizards, tarantulas, a blue-tongued skink, frogs and toads. Pupils had decided on a list of questions to ask Jay and he subsequently shared invaluable information about his animals. The pupils were fascinated to meet the creatures first hand and were delighted to hold them and stroke them.

Jay was impressed with the range and intelligence of the questions he was asked by the young people and he admired their enthusiasm and willingness to learn. The young people were extremely relieved that the big black snake didn't strangle their teacher. Or were they?

Aycliffe History Society Needs Your Help!

Following our successful First World War exhibitions last September and the publication of our book "The Great War: Great Aycliffe, Brafferton and Coatham Mundeville Remember" (copies still available at £5) we are now beginning to research the fallen in World War 2.

We are specifically interested in those named on the War Memorial at St. Andrew's Church, Aycliffe Village, the one Commonwealth War Grave in the Churchyard and four other names provided by the Commonwealth War Grave Commission with a link to Newton Aycliffe.

If you have any information or photographs relating to the following we would love to hear from you:-

Eric Boulby	died	13 May 1945
John Brunton	died	17 June 1940
Fred Hadrick	died	16 February 1944
William Hakin	died	30 May 1940
Edgar Matson	died	17 September 1944
Jack Desmond Pepper	died	28 June 1944
Robert Edward Robinson	died	23 April 1941
Walter Rossiter	died	2 February 1942
Leslie Gilbert Scott	died	29 November 1941
John Snowden	died	8 May 1941
Harold Speight	died	17 June 1943
Roland Thompson	died	9 October 1943
George Tweddle	died	????
Harold Wright	died	23 December 1941

You may contact us via our website www.aycliffehistory.org.uk or by telephone to David Lewis 01325 319196. Thank you.

General Election Poem

Let them take you on a trip,
A trip that helps you get a grip.
With forces that are well equipped,
And snouts in troughs their assets stripped.
Too many here, they must be shipped,
At last we won't be tight lipped,
A one-horse race that should not be whipped,
At the post they won't be pipped,
Forget the others they all have flipped,
To be great again we must by U-KIPPED!
We have made mistakes in years gone by,
And given Tory, Labour, even Lib Dems a try,
They have all failed, lacking common sense,
And money grabbed at our expense.
So don't be fooled - get ten out of ten,
Give UKIP a chance - it'll be alright then.
It's all we have, so please take note,
When May comes give Farage your vote,
I'm not listening to what others say,
I've a one track mind for UKIP in May.
Please get them in and we will be out -
No longer forced to do what Brussel's spout!
by Honest John

Conservative Candidate Promises to Work Hard

The Conservative Party Candidate for the Sedgfield constituency, Scott Wood, is working hard, with his campaign manager, towards the ultimate objective of getting him elected to Westminster as the first Conservative MP in this constituency for 80 years, so that he can work damn hard for you! Canvassing took place last week in Great Stainton, Bishopton, the western edge of Newton Aycliffe, Summerhouses, Denton Walworth and farms near Redworth, Heighington and Newton Aycliffe. Reaction has

been positive and comments encouraging. Anybody wishing to campaign on behalf of Scott should get in touch with him at scott@scottwood.org.uk. Donations would also be most welcome. One of Scott's main priorities for the constituency is to improve the road infrastructure around Aycliffe Business Park. He has written a letter to the Chancellor of The Exchequer, and handed it to him on Friday, when the Chancellor stated that more investment and jobs will be brought to the area. The letter stated that Scott, seeks funds for a feasibility study for a by-pass around Redworth. This would improve the traffic flow from Bishop Auckland and Shildon to the trading estate and commuting to and from Darlington. Also in the letter was a proposal for funding to place a much better railhead and station that serves the Aycliffe Business Park.

STILL TIME TO SIGN UP FOR HOME GARDEN WASTE COLLECTIONS

Residents in County Durham are being reminded to sign up for garden waste collections. Residents can join the scheme at any time of the year but the sooner they subscribe, the sooner they will start receiving collections. For an annual fee of £20 householders will receive fortnightly garden waste collections until the Autumn. A three year subscription is also available at the discounted rate of £50.

Those signing up for the service will get a garden waste bin, if they don't already have one, and a bin sticker to show they are a part of the scheme. Having garden waste collected from the kerbside is convenient and also environmentally friendly as the waste can be composted and re-used. To find out if a property is eligible for collections and to sign up go to: www.durham.gov.uk/gardenwaste or call: 03000 26 1000.

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Council's "Operation Stop It" Targets Enviro-crimes

More than 100 people have been fined after committing a string of crimes against the environment. Latest figures show Durham County Council's neighbourhood protection team issued 89 fixed penalty notices for littering throughout January, as well as a further six for dog fouling, seven for untidy gardens or yards and failing to comply with litter clearing notices and one for flytipping. The team is tasked with tackling various issues, including flytipping, dog fouling, stray dogs, littering and antisocial behaviour. As well as issuing a total of 103 fines, 57 community protection warnings and 10 community protection notices were handed

out to properties with untidy gardens or yards. Wardens also removed 141 stray dogs – a reminder of the importance of making sure dogs are microchipped so they can be traced and returned to their owner if they get lost. A total of 25 reports of antisocial behaviour were investigated after being passed from police airwaves and 96 alcohol seizures from underage children were also carried out. And, as part of Operation Stop It, a multi-agency crackdown on people who dump waste, the following statistics were recorded in January:

- 596 flytipping incidents were reported and investigated – 74 of which are still ongoing investigations.
- 17 CCTV cameras were

deployed in known flytipping hotspots.

- 24 people were interviewed in relation to flytipping offences.
- 11 duty of care letters were sent to people reminding them to dispose of their waste properly.
- Eight stop and check operations were carried out to establish whether waste carriers were licenced. All but one complied.
- As part of the stop and checks, three people were asked to produce the correct documents in relation to carrying waste.
- 11 flytipping cases were progressed for prosecution with two awaiting court dates.

Stop and check exercises are carried out by neighbourhood wardens and police to make sure vehicles have a licence to carry, transport or dispose of waste.

They form part of Operation Stop It, which has also seen a number of successful prosecutions through the courts, including a recent case where a man dumped about 100 bags of rubbish from a pub. The man, from Peterlee, was ordered to pay a total of £366 by magistrates last month (February) after admitting the offence, which took place in Hetton-le-Hole.

Ian Hoult, neighbourhood protection manager at Durham County Council, said: "We're building on the momentum of our campaign to stamp out flytipping across the county and the number of people prosecuted as a result is testament to these efforts.

"We work closely with Durham Constabulary, Crimestoppers and the Environment Agency to investigate every report of flytipping and to determine whether the waste can be traced back to the owner. The use of extra CCTV cameras at flytipping hotspots throughout the county is also providing robust evidence to use when prosecuting offenders.

"Whilst education is always the first step, when it comes to environmental offences like flytipping our message is clear – we will not tolerate it and anyone who commits waste crime can expect to be fined or even hauled through the courts."

Domestic rubbish can be taken to any of the county's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) and bulky waste collections can be arranged through the council by calling 03000 261000. Businesses are also reminded that they must meet their duty of care in correct waste disposal by using licenced waste carriers to collect and dispose of business waste correctly.

Enviro-crimes can be reported at www.durham.gov.uk or by calling 03000 261000 and unlicensed waste carriers can be reported anonymously to Crimestoppers at www.crimestoppers-uk.org or by calling 0800 555111.

For more information about Household Waste Recycling Centres, including locations and opening hours, visit www.durham.gov.uk/HWRC.

Cross Fit at Greenfield



Over the last few weeks Greenfield Community College has welcomed 'CrossFit All Out' into school to allow pupils access to an alternative method of fitness training, focusing on strength and conditioning. The visits coincided with the health related fitness topic being covered within the curriculum, and added depth and variation to the more traditional forms of exercise such as circuit training and step aerobics.

CrossFit All Out were extremely professional and provided an excellent opportunity for our pupils to challenge themselves in a typical CrossFit style session format. They run regular sessions for young people and adults based on Northfield Way in Newton Aycliffe – it was great to be able to support a local business whilst expanding the skills and knowledge of Greenfield students. Pupils worked in teams and attempted exercises such as kettle bell swings, wall balls, sit ups and burpees.

Furthermore, they were learning new terms used in CrossFit such as WOD (Workout of the Day) and AMRAP (As Many Rounds as Possible). Their coaches stressed the importance of performing the various exercises with correct technique to maximise the reward and reduce the chance of injury. Once this was mastered, the pupils attempted the challenge of completing AMRAP within their teams. A real sense of co-operation and teamwork was on show as the pupils worked intensely in their quest to become Greenfield CrossFit champions!

RAILWAY HISTORY TALK

On Wednesday 11 March at 7pm in Aycliffe Village Hall Aycliffe Village Local History Society will host a talk by Chris Lloyd entitled 'Teesdale Tracks and Derailing Dukes: the coming of the Railways to Teesdale'. All welcome, members £1, non members £3, to include tea, coffee and biscuits. Enquiries: 01325 301093.

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Aycliffe Village Hall A.G.M.

THE annual general meeting of Great Aycliffe Village Hall Association takes place on Monday, March 9th, at 7pm. The meeting, which will be held at Aycliffe Village Hall, will take a look back over the year at what has been achieved, in terms of activities and events. By far the biggest change has been the completion of a process called asset transfer which saw responsibility of the village hall pass from Durham County Council to the association. This means that from now on the committee is responsible for the maintenance and repairs. As such, this makes our efforts at fundraising all the more important. Looking forward, we already have lots of activities and events planned for the year ahead, including taking part in the newly-formed Aycliffe Festival. We would love to see as many residents as possible at the meeting. So whether you want to find out what we are doing, have any ideas for clubs or activities you would like to see or could help in any way to look after our lovely village hall, then you will be most welcome.

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Aycliffe Youth Football

Under 15 Falcons entertained Middleton Rangers and started well with both teams matching each other and creating chances. We had a chance cleared off the line which proved crucial as they broke and scored from our attack.

By this stage the weather had started to change and the snow began, with a minute to go before half time they grabbed their second second half was much the same with both sides coming close to scoring. Final score 0-2.

Under 14's hosted Sedgefield in windy conditions in a game of two halves. Aycliffe started with the wind behind them but played very good football and found themselves 4 nil up at half time. Sedgefield got a couple of wind assisted goals back fairly quickly. Aycliffe needed to keep their heads and battle and managed to get another goal. Sedgefield didn't give up and got another 2 goals to make it a nervous last 5 minutes. Goals from B. Howarth (4), B. Bird (1). Final score 5-4. Man of the match Josh Hay.

Under 13 Girls impressive recent form continued against the unbeaten and very talented Boldon U12's. Our girls were more than a match for them as we set about tackling, harassing and beating them to every ball. Few chances were created in the first half as both defences stood firm but with Boldon slightly edging it. H/T 0-0. We took the game to them in the second half, but, like a few times of late, we fell behind as a cross seemed to hang in the air and was knocked in for 0-1. This only spurred the girls on and Lily Mansfield took the ball wide right, turned a defender, cut inside

the box and shot against the keeper who parried out to the edge of the box for Lottie Hall to thunder a beauty with her RIGHT foot into the bottom left...fantastic! We could have won it late on, but a draw was a fair result. Boldon knew they had been in a game but will take some stopping. Well done girls on a great performance.

Under 12 Eagles 2 - 1 Darlington Allstars. Still aiming for a top four finish the Eagles came away with another win playing against a strong side. Riley Seaman put the lads 1-0 up with a great header in the top corner off a perfect free kick from Lucas Baker. Second half Baileigh 'Mini Master' Downes put a superb free kick in to the top corner of the net 2-0. Allstars pulled a goal back but the boys kept their heads up and battled to the final whistle. Man of the match Lucas Baker.

Under 11 Falcons were away to Darlington Allstars who used the width of the pitch to stretch the back three causing us some early problems. Alfie Nichol Brown was standing firm and asking the midfield to support him as he was under pressure. Half time 0-0. Kieran Gillham got a foothold in the game and was put through before unleashing a thunderbolt from a tricky angle into the roof of the net. Tom Jasper lobbed into the far corner using his weaker right foot. 2-0. Allstars pulled one back with a tidy finish to set up a tense last 10-15 minutes. Final score All Stars 1 Falcons 2, Man of the Match was Alfie Nichol Brown.

U11 Eagles played Redcar Town in the quarter final of the challenge cup at home.

The Eagles were fantastic going forward and were 3 nil up after 10 minutes. Goals from Adam Lowe (2) and Aaron Ross (1). But that's when it fell apart. For some reason the lads just couldn't mark a man, run with their opponents, be proactive and not reactive. Half time it was 3-3. Second half was much the same, looking fantastic going forward with some outstanding football, but couldn't shut the back door. Final result 3-8 to Redcar Town.

Under 10 Eagles Peter Robinson and Ricky Milford took charge of a key game against Golden Flatts. Aycliffe pressed hard from the kick off creating several chances. A Kieran Walton free kick was smashed home in style. It was all one way traffic with Brandon Addy grabbing a second after a shot. A third followed with Alfie Backhouse firing home - Half Time 3-0. Golden Flatts pressed hard but Aycliffe never looked like conceding. Man of the Match Georgie Johnson, Kieran Walton and Goalkeeper Luke Aitkin looking really solid. Alfie and Callum both working really hard down the wings and Brandon Addy pressurising from the front. Brennan Fitz in midfield kept everyone going. Final score 3-0.

The second game was another great performance with several players changing positions. Calum Whitfield up front quickly scored a hat-trick after some excellent passing. James Sear playing on the left wing smashed home a volley and Alfie Backhouse finished the home scoring. Golden Flatts scored four good goals. Final Score 5-4 Aycliffe. Man of Match Calum Whitfield.

Final friendly for the Under 10 Girls and first friendly for Under 8 Falcons at 7-a-side with excellent football from both sides, and played with smiles on faces - what more can coaches ask for. The future is bright for these kids and for Newton Aycliffe Youth FC!

Under 8 Falcons 4-0 Saxon Juniors. Another great display by the Falcons ending in a well deserved 4-0 win with goals from Ryan Usher and a second consecutive hat-trick from Travis Dixon. Defenders Adam Shaw and Jacob Bailey-Thompson had solid performances.

Harry Bates, with some fine saves, kept his second clean sheet in a row. MOTM Travis Dixon. Second game we won 8-2 with some fantastic football played.

Alex Beattie and Dylan Stewart both scored hat-tricks with Cole Gaskarth scoring 2 goals. MOTM Dylan Stewart. **Under 8 Eagles** 3-4 Hartlepool St Francis. The boys started slow for the third week in a row and found themselves 2-0 down at half time to a hard working St Francis side. The team woke up and started to play in the second half and managed to pull back level. After getting back to 2-2 the boys again relaxed and conceded more soft goals. Only a second defeat in the league for the Eagles.

Heighington AFC Weekly Report

Heighington Under 7's hosted league high flyers and cup semi finalists Darlington Spraire Lads, in our 4th friendly, in preparation for next season. The boys played some exceptional football, the game finishing 5-1 to Heighington. Goal scorers were Joe Neild and Oliver Paylor with 2 each and Man of the Match Tyler Woodward with the other goal.

The under 8's performed well and led twice in an eventual 2-2 draw at home to the Colt Allstars with goals from Joe Neild and Louis Parnaby. Heighington u10's went down 0-3 away to Seaton Carew in difficult windy conditions. The first half was a tight feisty affair but the home side edged it going into the break one up. In the second half a couple of lapses in concentration cost us a couple of goals, but the performance on a whole was good against a much bigger and physical side.

Under 12's, after a long journey to the oppositions ground game, saw Heighington play Fishburn Park of Whitley. With the elements against them the boys started with the game on an equal footing, each side challenging each other, end to end. Heighington played some good football with a few missed chances, the wind not helping them in their battle, resulting in a disappointing goal from the home team!

Heighington saw this as a challenge and picked up their pace, pulling a goal back with some fantastic movement and ball control from Kilburn-Robinson, who picked out Mitson, who then superbly placed it in the back of the net, a well deserved goal, 1-1.

Minutes later Fishburn Park scored again, much to the disappointment of the lads, who continued to battle, 2-1. Heighington knuckled down and carried on with determination, managing to score again with Brassell putting the ball in the back of the net. The opposition's keeper however scuffed over the line to claim the ball hadn't crossed his line, forcing a decision from the referee that he couldn't be convinced there had been a goal! After a fantastic penalty save from O'Neil and a few wreckless challenges from Fishburn Park the game resulted with a 2-1 score line, a yellow and a red card for Fishburn Park and an injured Kilburn-Robinson and Shingler being carried from the pitch.

After a tough game with both sides shouting for chances Heighington were pleased with decisions made by a good and fair referee, one decision could have been a game changer but the game is the game. Man of the Match: Daniel Pouton High flying U14's are fighting for the title with only a few games left in the season.

Under 23's game was very scrappy, played in very poor conditions. Excellent battling by both teams and things were very even until midway through the first half. Norton snatched two quick goals before half time and we struggled to break their defence down and Norton showed why they are battling to win the league as even though we managed three excellent goals, a free kick from the half way line, a 30 yard lob and a bicycle kick, we were well beaten 11-3 by a clinical team. Anyone interested in joining Heighington can do so by contacting David Brassell via a text or call to 07870 777779, all teams are always looking to recruit new players.

Junior Football Round up

U8's - Faced a tricky match away to Norton & Stockton Blacks. In tough conditions and with players unavailable we had to dig deep and some excellent performances from the whole team saw us run out 3-1 winners with goals from Jason (2) and Lewis. Parker showed some excellent passing ability and Sam made important saves in goal with Cody and Rob strong in defence. MOTM Cody Barnes. The Under 9's travelled to play Middleton Rangers in a top of the table TJFA division 1 clash. Our opponents were the only team to have beaten us this season but that result was reversed with a fine 1-0 win. The goal was a cleverly worked free kick between Aaron and Charlie which Charlie thundered in to the net in the game's only goal. The whole team performed exceptionally well with Harry, Aaron and Chloe all putting in a strong defensive effort at different stages. Charlie, Zack and Jake battled for every ball in midfield. Jacob was denied what would possibly have been goal of the season whilst Lucas always posed a threat up front. U10's played at home against Leven F.C. Both teams played some great football in the first half and were well matched, but it was Leven who scored to go 1-0 in the first half. Aycliffe never stopped working and were rewarded with a fantastic team goal to draw level. We had to fight hard to get the draw with the end result being 1-1. Both games throughout the season against this team have resulted in a 1-1 draw.

U13's - made the short trip to play Spraire Lads in Darlo. We knew it was going to be tough

as they are sat 2nd in the table, but having beat them last year, we knew 3 points could be a possibility or so we thought. Spraire were on top form, and we were being out played for the first time this season. We battled hard but they were a far better team than us on the day. We were 4-0 down at half time and although we improved second half, we couldn't get near them. MOTM goes to our keeper Ethan Stoker, for a fantastic performance.

U14's - 13th and last home game of the season against North Ormesby. The conditions were difficult with strong winds. In the first half we had the wind blowing at our backs, but failed to capitalise until the 23rd minute, when, after some good work, down the right we finally found the net. By the 26th minute we were 3-0 up, tearing Ormesby apart in a 5 minute spell. I was slightly concerned with the strength of the wind in the second half, but it wasn't long before we scored again to make it 4. On 45 mins Ormesby pulled a goal back, but we scored again to restore the 4 goal advantage. The game ended 8-1 and pushed us to the top half of the table.

U16's were away to Dormanstown FC who have lost all their games bar one which they drew. They have been beaten by double figures nearly every week so to still have 11 lads turning up every week knowing what to expect they are a credit to themselves and their club. The banter between themselves and our lads was great! The score was irrelevant and sharing it doesn't seem right - all that matters is we got the 3 points. MOM was picked by the

match official and he awarded it to Nathan Acuna Ocana.

U18's - After a good performance against Gateshead we took on Hilda Park for the return fixture. They went ahead with a volley from 20 yards, but, not too long after, Fitzgerald Drew Aycliffe level. Hilda were strong, and scored a second, and third putting them 3-1. Taylor got Aycliffe back into the game when a goal kick missed everyone out and played Taylor through. Hilda got a 4th before half time. Second half we didn't start well with Hilda on the attack. They scored 2 more and then were awarded a second penalty. The game finished 9-4 to Hilda Park. The lads go again next week hoping for a better result.

U23's faced another tough test at home against a decent Gateshead side. After last week's great result we were looking to maintain the same high standards and raced ahead with Smith opening the scoring within 5 mins and Lupton adding a second with a great strike from the edge of the box. The score remained 2-0 until 5 minutes before half time when Gateshead rallied. They were then awarded a penalty, however Williamson made a terrific save. Gateshead did score just before the half time whistle from a deflected shot. HT 2-1 to Aycliffe.

No changes at half time, and Howe coolly slotted the ball home to give Aycliffe a deserved 3-1 lead. Aycliffe now looked comfortable and Gateshead rarely troubled them in the second half, FT 3-1 to Aycliffe. MOM awarded to the industrious wing back Adam Smith.



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Methodist Church Events

There are a number of special events planned over the next few weeks at Neville Parade Methodist Church. We extend an invitation for you to join us at any or all of them.
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Saturday 21st March 10 - 2pm Spring Craft & Gifts Fayre
Thursday 2nd April 10am Messy Church
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Public Notice

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RSPCA North Tees & District cats and kittens for adoption, fee applies to cover 1st and 2nd vaccination, also neutering and ID chip. Please Tel 311 215
TABLE TOPSALE and Coffee Morning on Saturday 21st March in Heighington Village Hall from 10am to 12noon. In aid of St Michael's Church Funds. To book a table (£7) call 01388 772360

Phone Repairs

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Details on A167 Lights at GARA Meeting

Councillors & Officers Invited
Great Aycliffe Residents' Association has invited John Reed, County Council Head of Technical Services, to their next meeting, together with Cllr Brian Stephens, the Portfolio holder on the Cabinet, on the issue of removing lighting from the A167. The meeting, which is open to the public, will be on Thursday 19th March commencing at 7pm in St Mary's Church, opposite Tesco. Our Police Commissioner, Ron Hogg, has been asked if he has any concerns over Durham County Council's proposal to switch off and remove lights along the A167, specifically those running past Newton Aycliffe and it's Business Park.

COFFEE MORNING

Visit the lovely village of Heighington for Morning Coffee on Saturday 14th March from 10am till noon in the ancient Church of St. Michael's on the village green. Take home a quirky flower or plant arrangement in a boot, shoe or tea cup and saucer whilst enjoying the ambience and good company with friendly people from both near and far. Admission £2.50 includes refreshments.

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3 BEDROOM Property available to rent in Eskdale Place, Newton Aycliffe. The property is spacious and has 3 bedrooms. There is an enclosed garden to the rear and open plan grassed area to the front. If you are interested then please contact Kevin on 07775 811527 for further details.
1 x 2 BEDROOM and **1 x 3 bedroom** house in old part of Newton Aycliffe to let. Tel 07546 226608
3 BEDROOM semi detached house available for rent in Newton Aycliffe. £100 per week. Fully carpeted, large fridge freezer, new electric cooker, combi-boiler with remote control, blinds on all windows. Contact for details 07908 435874

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Turbinia Presents Wishing Well Cheque Gunged for Comic Relief



The Turbinia held their annual Joe Ewin Memorial Darts Competition on Saturday 28th February and kindly donated £200 to the Wishing Well at their Club Meeting on Tuesday 3rd March. The event was organised by Gary Soakell, David Armstrong and the team at the Turbinia and the members of the Wishing Well Club would like to thank them for their kind donation and for keeping the memory of Joe alive.

Do You Want to be an MP?

Anyone considering standing as a candidate in the General Election in County Durham is invited to attend a briefing session this week. Durham County Council is holding the sessions for prospective candidates and agents at County Hall, Durham, on Thursday (5 March). The General Election is due

to take place on Thursday, 7 May and there are six constituencies in County Durham including our own, Sedgfield. The briefing session starts at 6pm. Anyone who wishes to attend, or who would like more information, should contact David Collingwood, Durham County Council's electoral services manager on 03000 261 201 or email david.collingwood@durham.gov.uk. Further information for prospective candidates and agents can also be found at www.electoralcommission.org.uk

In Memoriam

George Smith

5th March 2009

George, we know that you are still with us, especially today, because we share a closeness, even death can't take away. We've got that special golden thread from here to Heaven above, that keeps you ever close to us, it's called the bond of love. Loved and never forgotten. Madge, Sue, Roly, Christopher and Fiona. Great Grand Children Charlie and George xxxx

PETER SOULSBY 10th March 1999. Silent thoughts of times together, special memories last forever. Love, Valerie x
GLADYS HARBOTTLE Died 7th March 2013. Two years have gone by without our dear Mother, who's constantly in our thoughts and missed every day. Vera, Lavinia and Andy xxx
THOMPSON, Margaret Rose, 07/03/2015. Everyday in some small way, Memories of you come our way, Though absent, you are always near, Still missed, loved, always dear. From your loving family xx
CHARLES HEDLEY (Charlie). 14/2/1926 - 4/3/2013; his Wife Joyce Hedley 4/12/1928 - 2/7/1995; their Son Michael Hedley 14/2/1953 - 3/11/2008. Fondly remembered by all the Hubery family
RICHARD MILLER Died 11th March 2011. Our thoughts and love will always be with you. Peter, Sheila and Lisa
MARILYN BAKER We are still not ready to accept you are gone . . . we are working on it, but we have to admit that day has not yet arrived. Maybe it will never come. Miss you, Mam, Nan and GNan from your Gang xxx

PHYLLIS BLENKINSOPP 9th March 2014. Your memory is so special, your presence missed so much, you will always be within our thoughts and loved so very much. Time slips by and life goes on, but from our hearts you are never gone. We think about you always, talk about you too. We have so many memories, but most of all we wished we still had you. Always loved by your Sisters, Brothers-in-Law, Nieces and Nephews
PHYLLIS BLENKINSOPP 9th March 2014. I thought of you with love today, but that is nothing new, I thought about you yesterday and days before that too. I think of you in silence, I often speak your name, all I have are memories and your picture in a frame. Your memory is my keepsake with which I'll never part, God has you in His keeping, I have you in my heart. All our love, Ian, Jackie, Nicola, Graham and Daddy. Love and kisses, Zach and Mia xxxxx
BLOWES Sylvia and Vic. 5th March 1999 and 24th February 2012. Our lives go on without you, but nothing is the same. We have to hide the heartache, when someone calls your name. Sad are our hearts that love you, silent are our tears that fall. Because living without you both, is the hardest part of all. You did so many things for us, your hearts were kind and true. When we needed someone, we always relied on you. God bless you both from all your loving family xxxxxxx
DERICK YOUNG 2-3-2005. Ten years since you left us. Loved and remembered every day. David, Louise and Family xxx
DERICK YOUNG 2nd March 2005. Ten years have passed since that sad day. In my heart you will always stay. Loved and remembered every day. Love, Mary xxx

Alice the customer services receptionist at Gregg Little Garage will be getting 'tarred and feathered' at 3pm in aid of Comic Relief next Friday 13th March. The staff are also holding a Bake Off every day next week leading up to Friday, even our mechanics get involved - last year Norman made VW cupcakes!

Alice is gathering sponsorship now - she will be gunged in red oil from a height and then 'feathered'! Folk can come down and join in the fun and enjoy some lovely cakes too - The staff hope to raise £350.

Acknowledgement

For Sale

"ALL SORTS" selling anything and everything for Charity. Every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, 10am to 1pm at St Clare's Church. New stock arrived, 50% discount
LADIES black tap dancing shoes, worn twice, size 8. Tel 316326
TRAILER for sale, new tyres fitted, 6ft x 4ft, offers. Tel 316326
SAPPIRE Micro scooter, £100. Tel 01325 301651
MORPHY Richards soup maker, used once, £25; Sony DVD home theatre system, back hub needs slight attention, £25; 59 Commando Comics, £20. Tel 301158
26" LCD Technica TV, excellent condition, remote, Freeview, £55. Tel 315654
CANON ink, genuine cartridges, Pixma 540-541, opened in error, never used, £18. Tel 01325 315654
HOTPOINT VAT20 tumble drier, £70. Tel 07789 502173
TOSHIBA 32" LCD ambilight TV, £40. Tel 07789 502173
PANASONIC 27" LCD TV, £40. Tel 07789 502173
SINGLE divan bed with headboard, mattress protector and quilt, unused, size 6ft6" x 2ft6", £45. Tel 311144 or 07814 539584
BRAND NEW double divan with quilted Damask mattress, can deliver, £120. Tel 07789 113343
COMPUTER table, dark wood, has lots of space, 31" wide x 20" deep x 31½" high. £25. Tel 07816 021265
MOBILITY Scooter, on the road or pavement. Road taxed, still under warranty, only used four times, looks like new, less than half price. £650. Tel 310024

Councillors' Surgeries

Shafto, Central and Neville Ward

Councillors Sarah Iveson and Jed Hillary will be in attendance at St. Mary's Meeting Room, Burn Lane on Saturday 14th March from 11am - 12 noon.

Births

David and Kimberley Rowland



Congratulations on the safe arrival of "Bobby Rowland" on 21st February 2015, weighing 8lb. "The New Managing Director of Bargain Buys!!" From Andrew, Samantha and the Girls and all your employees at Bargain Buys

Congratulations

Maddison



Happy 80th Birthday
11th March, 2015

Happy birthday Aunt Doris, have a wonderful day. Love and best wishes from Carol, Alan and family

Happy 80th Birthday
Doris

Enjoy your day. Love and best wishes from Sister Jenny xxxxx

Rita Robson



Happy Birthday
80 years old on
12th March, 2015

To the most amazing Mother, Grandma and Great Grandma. Lots of love, Heather, Liz, Mel, Hilary, Paul, John and all the family.
PS: Happy Mothers Day xxxxx

Obituary

Patricia Walker

(Pat) of Newton Aycliffe. Peacefully on February 26th aged 62 years. Dearly beloved Wife to Colin. Much loved Mam of Lisa and Dennis. Dearly loved and treasured Grandmother and Great Grandmother. Also a dear Sister. Family and friends please meet for Service at St Andrews Church (Aycliffe Village) on Wednesday 11th March for 12.30pm.

William Tilley (Bill)

Passed away peacefully on 1st March, aged 94 years. Loving Husband of the late Nancy; Father to Billey, Doreen and Trevor; also a loving Father-in-Law, Grandfather and Great Grandfather. Funeral Service to be held on Friday 13th March at Neville Parade Methodist Church at 10.15am, prior to cremation at Wear Valley Crematorium at 11.00am. Would family and friends please meet at the Church. Resting at and floral tributes to John Meynell Funeral Service, Cemetery Chapel, Stephenson Way. Tel 01325 301405

LONGSTAFF (nee Ryder), Beatrice of Newton Aycliffe Peacefully on 21st February, aged 83 years. Dearly beloved Wife of Cec; much loved Mam to Denise, Christine, Roy and the late Susan; also a loved Grandmother and Great Grandmother. Service was held at Darlington Crematorium on Thursday 5th March.

RICHARDSON Tragically at home on 25th February. Ann (Annie, nee Shevels), aged 72 years. Beloved Wife of the late Tom; loving Mam of John, Julie, Dean and Samantha; also a much loved Sister, Nana and Old Nana. Will family and friends please meet for Service and cremation at Wear Valley Crematorium, Coundon on Monday 9th March at 3.30pm. Family flowers only, donations in lieu may be made to MIND, plate will be provided at the crematorium. Together Again.

Jessica Butterworth



Happy 13th Birthday
8th March, 2015

Happy birthday Jessica. Love from Mam, Matthew, Grandma and Grandad xxxxx

EMILY NEAL well done on getting Silver in the Regional NDPS and qualifying for Nationals. So proud of you. Love, Mam, Billy, Brad and Layla xxxxx
KATIE HYMAS 04/03/2015, Happy 21st Birthday Katie, hope your birthday is as special as you are. Lots of love, Mam and Kev xxx

KATIE HYMAS. Happy 21st Birthday Katie. Have a brilliant day! Lots of Love and Best Wishes, Uncle Scott, Auntie Jacky, Laura & Aran xxx
HEATHER MERCHANT, 10/03/15, Happy Birthday Mam and Grandma, lots of love, Tara & Kev, Dan & Wendy, and Katie & Michael xxx
KATIE HYMAS Happy 21st birthday Katie. Love and best wishes, Grandma and family xxx

Birthday Remembrance

RAY PATTISON Best wishes to you Ray on your 80th birthday. No card to send, just our love. You are sadly missed. Your dear friends, Hazel and Shirley

Rugby Club win 9 out of 10 Matches

A disciplined performance by Newton Aycliffe Rugby Club saw them gain another bonus point win on the road at Richmondshire. Despite only having a squad of 17 players to choose from and having a disrupted pre-match, Aycliffe were able to score 4 tries in a 26 - 15 win against spirited opposition.

Aycliffe had the advantage of the slope and the wind in the first half and the backs soon took advantage when James Thacker scythed through the opposition to score under the posts; Luke Tinkler added the conversion. Aycliffe soon added further points after a good lineout, the ensuing maul saw Aycliffe close on the line before breaking off and forming a ruck, from the back scrum-half Warren Parsonage picked up and twisted over the line.

A second Tinkler conversion saw a 14 point lead. More good work from the backs saw Tom Hogan-Wharton score his second try in two weeks, before Aycliffe took their foot off the gas rather. A period of concerted Richmondshire

pressure saw them score first a penalty and then a try. It looked as though the lead would be too narrow with the elements against Aycliffe in the second half, but, with the last play of the half, Thacker added his second try and Tinkler the conversion for a 26 - 8 lead at the break.

Girding themselves for a battle in the second period, Aycliffe decided to keep the ball tight in the forwards and, despite being out-powered in the scrummage, it proved successful. Fine defence saw the home team only score a single converted try, whilst, when in possession, Aycliffe ran down the clock, threatening to score at the same time. In the end it was a comfortable win at a location that has been a bogey ground in the past. The 26 - 15 win was Aycliffe's 9th in their last 10 league games as they remain safely in third place.

On 7th March, Aycliffe host friends and rivals Sedgfield at Moore Lane, the match will kick off at 3pm. Aycliffe Rugby are sponsored by S Cars and Whitehouse Funeral Service

AYCLIFFE F.C. IN LEAGUE DANGER ZONE

Last week Newton Aycliffe Football Club hosted Sunderland RCA and Billingham Synthonia when we played two home league games inside a week.

On Tuesday evening NAFC started off well against Sunderland RCA with two corners inside five minutes. The first shot of the match came within 10 minutes when Martin Young shot wide. The next 30 minutes saw NAFC kicking the ball high up the pitch, however, the RCA defence were always there to clear any danger. RCA did hit the woodwork

with a Callen shot. Seconds before the half-time whistle Jordan Laidler took a corner which Mark Stephenson headed just wide. Within 10 minutes of the re-start RCA went ahead with a Megran goal. Megran capitalised when NAFC failed to clear the ball from a goalmouth flurry. Aycliffe's best chance in the second half came from Richie Archie who shot way over the cross bar towards the Gretna. Result - Aycliffe 0-1 Sunderland RCA.

On Saturday, Aycliffe hosted Billingham Synthonia. Within

3 minutes Ashley Coffey had a shot which just breezed past the post. A few minutes later Aaron Brown threw the ball into Dennis Knight whose shot went just wide of the post. Aycliffe didn't have to wait long for a free kick which was taken by Dennis Knight on the right hand side. Dennis' kick failed to touch any player in the box and floated over the keeper's head to put Aycliffe ahead.

Straight off the re-start Billingham's young star Sweet equalised from close range. A couple of minutes later Aycliffe's Captain, Paul Garthwaite, had a shot at close range saved by Billingham's keeper Peter Burke.

On 21 minutes Dennis Knight had a header saved from an Aaron Brown cross. On 37 minutes, Sweet again scored to put Billingham ahead.

The second half did not have much of the excitement we'd seen in the previous 45 minutes. With less than 15 minutes to go, good work from Coffey and Stuart Banks put Knight in for a shot which went just over the crossbar. Man of the Match Knight again made Burke go to ground with a save. Aycliffe never gave up and they had a header cleared and a shot went wide before the referee blew for full time.

Result - Aycliffe 1 - 2 Billingham Synthonia. Aycliffe are in need of points if they are to stay in the EBAC Northern League One. They are at home on Saturday when they host Durham City FC.



Aycliffe Running Club



Five members of Aycliffe Running Club recently took part in the Snake Lane 10, a popular race on a flat and fast course over 10 miles. The course starts and finishes in the market town of Pocklington and as its name suggests, has a winding stretch that snakes its way through the East Yorkshire countryside at the foot of the Wolds.

First finisher for the club was Robert Young in 1:13:44, followed by Sandra Collins, 1:22:16, John Young, 1:22:19, Clare Rose, 1:24:33 and Dave Mackenzie, 1:30:22 who also got the 2nd V/70 prize.

In the Sedgfield Park Run Michelle and Jane Dixon both achieved new PBs recording 23:45 and 24:16 respectively and in the Hackworth Park Run Dez Fielden and Sandra Collins were both first in their gender categories. Trish Kay also achieved a course PB of

25:10. Why not join us in our circuit training sessions every Tuesday from 6-7pm. Non-members welcome. For more information about Aycliffe Running Club and their training sessions visit ayclifferrunningclub.org.uk

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Aycliffe Gymnasts in Regional Competition



On Sunday 8th February Woodham Academy gymnasts competed in the regional sports acrobatics and tumbling competition. This included one mixed under 14 pair, four under 14 girls' tumblers and one under 14 male tumbler. The gymnasts performed really well across both events. The under 14 mixed pair came in second place and narrowly missed out on going on to represent the North in the national finals. In the tumbling event Daniel Wilkinson came second in a very tough category, where, alongside the gold medallist, he will go forward to represent the North in the national finals in Stoke-on-Trent in May. Another excellent achievement for the Gymnastics Academy.

Film Show

St Clare's Church FEEL GOOD FILM SHOW on Tuesday 10th March will feature the 1967 comedy western "THE BALLAD OF JOSIE" Starring Doris Day, Peter Graves and George Kennedy. A young woman is determined to make a go of sheep farming, much to the annoyance of the cattle farmers. Tea and coffee served at 1pm, included in the £2. The film starts at 1-15pm. A variety of chairs are set out for your comfort, and tables too so you can bring a spot of lunch to eat. EVERYONE IS MOST WELCOME to join us and watch the film in friendly company. Further details from Ric Hargreaves 01325 316755

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