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## AYCLIFFE BUSINESS CELEBRATES 50th YEAR



Alex Lineton (left) and Mark Lineton (right)

Aycliffe based grounds maintenance and landscape company is celebrating its 50th year in business with a significant contract win. The Education Villiage and Harrogate Hill Primary in Darlington will both benefit from Beaumont's services, as well as Boldon Sports College. Alex Lineton, director at Beaumont, and son of managing director Mark Lineton said: "We are delighted with the new contract but this is only the start of our recent growth initiative. The growing business will be carrying out general grounds maintenance including: regular grass cutting, hedge cutting and weed spraying throughout the growing season

as well as regular sports pitch maintenance and litter picking services throughout the year. We currently have another outstanding tender with Mitie for a further four schools in the region."

He added: "We are building on some strong foundations that have been established over many years and we're going

continue to grow. "We plan to build a strong relationship with our new clients to cement the contracts and build further opportunities. We currently have another outstanding tender with Mitie for a further four schools in the region."

Continued on page 2

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## Girl Guides in Concert

The Newton Aycliffe Girlguiding Division are holding a Concert 20th & 23rd March. The girls have been working towards this over a number of weeks and are looking forward to performing for friends and family. We would like to invite readers to join us on one of the evenings. Friday 20th March 6.30pm @ Methodist Church, Neville parade. Monday 23rd March - 6.30pm @ St Clare's Church.

## The Royal British Legion

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## Wilko Customers Help Dog Trust



Through the kind generosity of Wilko customers and staff the Dogs Trust were presented with three trolleys full of treats and food. Rebecca and Trixie from the Dogs Trust, came to Wilko's in Newton Aycliffe to collect the goods. Trixie has now left for her forever home, but was given a tasty treat when she got back for being so helpful.

Rebecca said "it is through the support from such businesses as Wilko, and their kind customers, that we are able to care for so many dogs and ensure they find their forever home".

Donations for the Dogs Trust will be accepted in Newton Aycliffe Wilko store until 30th April.

## Aycliffe Business Celebrates 50th Anniversary with Big Contract Win

from strength to strength. We will be providing some new services over the next few years that will enable us to offer an even more complete package to our customers."

The Newton Aycliffe based company will be hiring more staff to fulfil the contract, including Alex's sister Sophie Lineton, two full time members and an apprentice for the local area.

Beaumont is looking to employ up to four new apprentices with an audacious growth plan as it looks to the next 50 years.

With plans to double the size of the business and to expand into Yorkshire, Mark, who took over the business from his father Steve in 1991, emphasises he wants the company to remain family-run.

He said: "When you are in your teens and early twenties, you never think about being in the business in your early fifties. You become very protective over the company as it is so much part of your life."

"I'm very proud of how far we have come and in particular the reputation we have gained for being the go-to firm in our industry with great values and a

Alex Lineton (left) and Edward Surplice of Mitie



quality service."

Beaumont is currently tendering for more substantial new contracts with more schools, factories and commercial estate management companies, which it will hear the results of over

the next month.

For more information on Beaumont, please visit its website: [www.beaumontgrounds.com](http://www.beaumontgrounds.com) - or call 01325 301379

# THE TURBINIA

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"We hadn't seen this band before so we didn't know what to expect and boy did they rock the hearts! Something for everyone in the set that had the dancers on their feet, the one's I remember were, U2, Whitesnake, Killers, Kings of Leon, Tom Petty, Nirvana, Guns n Roses, The Cult, Radiohead . . . all played and sung brilliantly.  
If you haven't already seen this band, go and see them, you won't be disappointed"

**Friday 27th March - Day 1 of the Beer Festival**  
*Open-Mic / Buskers*

**Saturday 28th March - Day 2 of the Beer Festival**  
**"This Machine"**

For more information on bands go to  
[www.turbiniapub.co.uk](http://www.turbiniapub.co.uk) or 313034  
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## Newtonian Actress Brings Home the Silverware

Beth Kate Rodgers from Greenfield School recently took part in the Darlington Festival for Performing Arts. Beth came First in

3 categories including the Senior Championship. In Preparation for the competition she has been receiving London and Music Dramatic Arts tuition (LAMDA) from Deborah Meki who put Beth forward for the competition.

Beth is passionate about acting and has her eyes on a career in the industry. She is currently acting in two short films with upcoming film directors one of which will be entered into the BAFTA short film awards.



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**Thursday 26th March**

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**Friday 27th March**

**"Lily" no c/c**

**Saturday 28th March**

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# MISSING COUNCILLORS

Dear Sir,  
Once again I am asking where have all our Councillors gone? One overseas to work again, one working shifts, and the other, well, you tell me. He has attended one PACT meeting as far as I know and not been heard of again. I did ask the Council why they let this happen and was told it's the law of the land, Well this should be looked into because this is not the first time that this Councillor has gone abroad for six months, it beggars belief they stand for the position of Councillor and take the allowance but don't do the job.  
I would have thought the honourable thing to do would be to stand down, Oh!, I forgot that would cause a bye election and we might get some new Councillors who would work for us the people and do a good job and know and listen to the concerns and problems of West Ward.  
Editor: A Councillor who works as a Councillor and not have two or three job on the go but can work full time sorting out the issues in place, it's about time someone really started to think is this right and give the tax payer value for money. I also feel the people should know how short changed we are by these Labour Councillors of the West Ward  
Margaret Tomlin

# Marathon Man Runs 505 Miles for Charity



James Meade (Planet Leisure) with Marc Ellis

A Nobia UK factory worker is raising funds for a North East hospice by running almost the full length of the country in May 2015.

Planet Leisure on Aycliffe Business Park are also helping Marc to reach his target and are organising a few events in aid of St Teresa's Hospice as well as being a collection point for Marc's sponsors.

Marc Ellis has been training for 18 months to tackle a gruelling 505-mile journey - equivalent to 19 marathons - from Land's End to Darlington calling at 16 Magnet showrooms on route. The 42-year-old expects it will take almost the full month to complete the route and he hopes his efforts will help him raise £50,000 for St Teresa's Hospice in Darlington.

Mr Ellis had always intended to take on the challenge for a worthy cause, and decided to raise money for St Teresa's after suggestions from friends led him to visit the hospice. He said: "When I visited the children's area of the hospice, and saw the pictures they drew on the wall, I walked out a different person. "When I'm struggling, I'll remember a picture I saw of the sun there, and that will get me through it."

Mr Ellis, who is a factory supervisor at Darlington's Nobia UK Factory, was a keen runner during his school years but it wasn't until 2010 that he decided to get back into the hobby. Two years later he competed in the 2012 London Marathon to raise awareness for kidney disease and since then he has run five marathons and is well into his training regime, having ran 200 miles last month. He said: "You get out what you put in, and persistence and diet are key. My first run was one mile, and I struggled with that. Now I can do 70 miles a week and my aim is to complete the challenge in 30 days."

Mr Ellis is well aware that blisters will be an unwelcome companion for most of the journey, but he is looking forward to the final leg of the run on High Row in Darlington town centre, where his friends and family will be cheering him on. There is one problem that Mr Ellis was not quite prepared for though: "I can't stop losing weight - I burnt off 8,000

calories last week!" he joked. **Mr Ellis' Just Giving page can be found at [www.justgiving.com/Marc-Ellis1](http://www.justgiving.com/Marc-Ellis1)**

# MISSING BRIDGE OVER THE BURN

Residents of Whinlatter Place must be feeling cut off from the rest of the area since the connecting bridge over the burn was removed.

Local residents are far from being happy about the removal of the community bridge which was in need of repair.

Local West Ward councillors are believed to be extremely concerned over the future of the bridge and have asked for the repair or replacement of the bridge as soon as possible. The present view of the area has been described by residents as looking decrepit and questions are being asked as to when the bridge will return.

Adjacent to the bridge lies the old Elmfield School site which has laid dormant for years and is used as a doggy toilet and refuse dump. This also adds to the air of desolation in the area.

As volunteers from Friends Of West Park we try our best to keep the area clear of rubbish but junk dumped by unscrupulous residents in the Burn is now highly visible due to the dying back of weeds along the banks of the burn.

Strangely enough some birds like to nest in the long grass on the banks of the Burn and it is a lovely walk, so come on

Durham County let's have the bridge back and the rubbish removed from the Burn.  
Ken Robson

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If your organisation or company has newsworthy information they wish to share with our community please get in touch. We would be happy to hear from you and take photos/video footage if required.

Remember Newton News has a 16,500 circulation weekly, delivering to each household in Aycliffe and the surrounding villages. We also deliver to over 280 companies on Aycliffe Business Park and leave copies for people to pick up in public places.

We also have a very active website where current and past issues of Newton News can be viewed. Our popular website attracts local, national and international views each week from people around the world.

Feel free also to send in any news and photos by email to [syd@newtonnews.co.uk](mailto:syd@newtonnews.co.uk) - We look forward to receiving your next piece of good news.

*\*Items received are subject to space being available and the content acceptable. The editor retains the right to refuse items that are anonymous or unsuitable for publication.*

# Chairman's Medal for Helping Hands Founder



Due to illness Susan Sadler was unable to attend the event so her husband Ken collected the Chairman's Medal from Cllr John Robinson. The Mayor of Great Aycliffe Wendy Hillary is shown left.

Pathfinder Susan Sadler honoured for her special 'home help'. Susan can best be described as a pathfinder and most definitely a community champion.

After starting up a small group at her home, to help people who had found themselves in unfortunate circumstances, Susan founded the charity - Lifeline Community Action - which is based in Newton Aycliffe.

Susan's charity has gone on to help well over 3,000 people and families suffering from poverty, ill health, unemployment and isolation.

And for all of her sterling work, Susan was nominated by Camilla Louise Shergold and put forward for consideration by Great Aycliffe & Middridge Area Action Partnership, for the Chairman's Medal which she received from the Chairman of Durham County Council, Cllr John Robinson, JP, at a special ceremony at County Hall.

arriving through their doors, many who are quite often in very desperate and crisis torn situation.

Helping Hands - which is part of the project - offers emergency food and basic goods parcels, while the drop-in centre provides a haven for those requiring much required support, advice and assistance to help with their varying and critical needs.

Not just content with helping out, Susan's introduced 'developing people' to help those coming through her doors to find work, improving physical health and learning practical life skills so they become more independent and resilient.

Speaking after the County Hall event, Cllr Robinson, said: "Susan's the inspiration and driving force behind all this work and 'saved' many an individual or family from hitting rock-bottom and at times the depths of despair.

"The Chairman's Medal was introduced to honour people such as Susan and she is a very worthy recipient of the Chairman's Medal."

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# Will Aycliffe Introduce Smoke-free Play Areas?

Visitors to a County Durham park are asked not to smoke when in or near the children's play area from today.

The outdoor play area at Riverside Park, in Chester-le-Street, is the first of 178 owned by Durham County Council to become a smoke-free zone.

The authority is introducing the voluntary no-smoking code as part of its work as a member of the Smoke-free County Durham Tobacco Control Alliance to reduce the harm caused by tobacco.

Signs will be placed in and around each play area asking adults to abide by the code. Evidence suggests that by reducing children's exposure to smoking and making it less socially acceptable, children are less likely to take up the habit themselves.

Almost 500 people took part in a public consultation on the initiative last year, with 81 per cent saying they strongly agreed with the idea of smoke-free play areas.

Cllr Lucy Hovvels, Durham County Council's Cabinet member for safer and healthier communities, said: "One of our key priorities is preventing children from becoming smokers and forming a habit that could ultimately kill them. "Children are most at risk of becoming smokers if they



grow up in communities where smoking is the norm. Making our play areas smoke-free is one way of reducing the opportunities for children to see adults smoking around them.

"Although the code is voluntary, the consultation showed significant support for a ban on smoking at outdoor play areas so we hope the public will support it and help to protect the health of our children." Smoke-free play areas are among a range of measures being promoted by the County

Durham Tobacco Control Alliance in an effort to protect children from smoke-related harm.

The voluntary smoke-free code covers areas which are fenced off and which contain children's play equipment. It does not cover general parks and open spaces.

All Great Aycliffe Parks are run by our Town Council and we understand this is something they will be investigating in the future.

## EXEMPLARY SERVICE

Dear Sir,

Through the power of your paper please may I say a huge thank you to Acorn Plumbing. They recently installed a wet room into my elderly parents' home.

The standard of workmanship and the care and consideration shown was exemplary and second to none. Nothing was a trouble and they worked flat out every day. They never even stopped for a coffee break and also hoovered before they left. They went that extra mile by offering to come back to put up any fittings that Mam & Dad needed once they started to use the wet room.

I can certainly strongly recommend Acorn Plumbing - an excellent job done by a very trustworthy and hard working team. Thanks again lads.

The Sproates Family  
Washington Crescent

# Hitachi Rail Win Scotrail 70 Train Contract

Edinburgh, 12 March, 2015 – Hitachi Rail Europe and Abellio are delighted to announce today that they have signed a contract for the provision and maintenance of 70 new trains for the upcoming ScotRail franchise. The trains are financed by Caledonian Rail Leasing.

46 three-car and 24 four-car AT200 EMU trains are being procured to operate along the Edinburgh-Glasgow and Stirling – Alloa –Dunblane lines and will go into service in late 2017. The contract also comprises a 10-year maintenance deal, with plans currently in place to stable and service the trains at depots in Edinburgh.

The first seven trains are scheduled to be built in Hitachi's Kasado factory in Japan, with the remaining 63 being built in their flagship Newton Aycliffe train

manufacturing facility in the UK, opening later this year.

Transport Scotland's Edinburgh Glasgow Improvement Programme (EGIP) is a crucial part of the new ScotRail franchise, and these new trains will play an important role in delivering extensive benefits for Scottish rail users and providing long term economic sustainability. The AT200 model has been designed to transform the regional commuter travel experience. With a top speed of 100 miles per hour, each car is 23 metres in length, and features cab-end and inter-vehicle gangways to facilitate the best use of passenger space. The train has a 35-year design life and is made to complement the requirements as set out and agreed with Transport Scotland.

The contract is being financed by Caledonian Rail Leasing

Ltd, a Special Purpose Vehicle created by SMBC Leasing.

Derek Mackay, Scottish Transport Minister, said: "With the new ScotRail franchise, a number of impressive infrastructure projects and these slick new trains, we are giving Scotland a railway to be proud of.

"Abellio's winning bid for the ScotRail franchise included several exciting proposals and I look forward to seeing it all take shape from their takeover of the service in just a few weeks.

"Passengers will love using these new trains, but the benefits go far beyond that. The use of electric trains on Scotland's busiest route will help reduce our carbon footprint. The improved connection can only be good for our two biggest cities. And the innovative contract has reduced the cost of the finance, as well as guaranteeing a great deal for Scotland in the longer term.

"This is real evidence of Scotland's railways being fit for the future."

Jeff Hoogesteger, Chief Executive of Abellio said: "This is an important deal for passengers and for Scotland. New trains for Scotland were a key feature in Abellio's bid for the franchise and we are excited to be pressing the button on the delivery programme. The arrival of 24 Hitachi AT200s by late 2017 and a further 46 by Dec 2018 will ensure that the full

benefits of the Edinburgh Glasgow Improvement Programme are realised for passengers; delivering faster journey times, greater capacity and higher service quality. And the effects of the investment will spread much wider than that. The new trains will be more energy efficient, and innovations in design and lightweight construction will reduce the impact of services on important infrastructure."

Jon Veitch, Hitachi Rail Europe's General Manager for Scotland, said: "We are delighted to be signing this contract with Abellio today, which will see the supply of rolling stock and maintenance services for their new ScotRail franchise. This forms the start of a long-term partnership to boost passenger services in Scotland, and we will be working closely with the operator to ensure that services are kept to a very high standard across this period.

"This is also the first contract for our recently launched AT200 commuter train. With the majority of manufacturing taking place in our Newton Aycliffe factory, this is another sign of our confidence in UK manufacturing and, in line with the delivery of our Class 800 IEP trains, will boost jobs and growth in Scotland and the North East of England."

Abellio, a leading operator in the UK rail market, was named franchise operator for the ScotRail franchise on October 8, 2014.

## Young Engineers Building Bridges at Training Centre



Pictured (l-r) are: Jack Blacklock, 14, of King James I Academy, Dave Spensley of Go Ahead Training, Andrew Coulson, 15, Georgie Gowland, 14, from King James I Academy, Andy Dunn - General Manager Nifco, Megan Jackson and Ellie Sutherland, both 15, from Whitworth Park School in Spennymoor.

Budding engineers have been building bridges at a County Durham training centre as part of a nationwide celebration of apprenticeships.

More than 200 students from seven schools across the county have been enjoying the appliance of science in hands-on workshops with local employers at South West Durham Training.

The year 9 and 10 pupils enjoyed engineering and construction activities which included building a 55 foot long cable and suspension bridge provided by the Institute of Civil Engineers, bricklaying, robotic-engineering and problem solving exercises.

The activities have been arranged to mark National Apprenticeship Week, a week-long nationwide celebration of apprenticeships and the positive impact they have on individuals, businesses and the wider economy co-ordinated by the National Apprenticeship Service.

The schools who took part were Bishop Barrington and King James I Academy in Bishop Auckland, Ferryhill School, Greenfield School in Shildon, Sedgefield School, Woodham Academy in Newton Aycliffe and Whitworth Park School in Spennymoor.

Local employers involved at the SWDT events, jointly organised with strategic partner Bishop Auckland College, included Stockton-on-Tees based car parts manufacturer Nifco, which last month announced a £50m contract with Ford which has secured 350 jobs.

Nifco's general manager (engineering) Andy Dunn, a former SWDT trainee who is a big advocate of apprenticeships, gave an inspirational talk to the students about the importance of skills development.

Trevor Alley, Chief Executive of SWDT, added: "There is no better way to inspire young people than for them to meet our former trainees who have gone on to achieve great things in industry. We are very grateful to all our industry partners who have given their valuable time to meet local students this week and stress the importance of gaining skills and qualifications."

National Apprenticeship Week aims to:

- Get more small businesses to take on apprentices.
- Promote the range and breadth of apprenticeships on offer, including those at Higher level and within blue chip companies.
- Celebrate apprenticeships and the level of success that learners can achieve.

For more information on National Apprenticeship Week visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-apprenticeship-week-2015>

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# Branching out with Your Family Tree

People with experience of researching their family tree are being encouraged to branch out and take up a new course. The Record Office in Durham is running a new monthly family history session aimed at researchers keen to move past the basics and look at more challenging records such as those dating before 1800 or those less often used for family history such as maps and trade directories. Each session will include a talk and will give participants time to browse the resources available in the research room, possibly even looking up the records of their own ancestors. Dawn Layland, education and outreach archivist with Durham County Council, said: "Lots of people attending our introductory family history courses have been asking for more so we've put together these sessions. Sessions cost £8 and must be booked in advance by calling 03000 267626. Those interested can also email record.office@durham.gov.uk for further information. Sessions are taking place between 6pm and 8pm: Monday, 23 March – electoral rolls, maps and trade directories Tuesday, 21 April – dating old photographs Monday, 18 May – tracing ancestors before 1800 And between 10am and noon: Thursday, 26 March – electoral rolls, maps and trade directories Thursday, 23 April – dating old photographs Thursday, 21 May – tracing ancestors before 1800 Further sessions may be confirmed.

# ROTARY CLUB HELP SCANNER APPEAL



The town's Rotary Club were in Barclays Bank and Boots on Saturday selling raffle tickets for the region-wide MRI Scanner Appeal for James Cook Hospital. The life-saving equipment has to be replaced and updated, but there is a £500,000 shortfall which Rotary Clubs are attempting to meet through various fundraising activities. If you wish to help in any way please contact the Rotary club through Newton News on 300212 or 320901 after hours.

# AYCLIFFE COMPANY SCOOPS AWARD FOR EXPORT SUCCESS



The outstanding inter-national success of cable protection specialist, Tekmar Energy, has resulted in the firm being presented with the prestigious Export Award at the North East Business Awards. Tekmar received the recognition on 12 March at the annual event recognising exceptional business and innovation in Durham and Wearside region. The award caps a remarkable 12 months for the firm that has seen it begin work in the United States and the Middle East for the first time while continuing to build on its position as the partner of choice for operators in Europe. In all, overseas sales accounted for an impressive 86% of Tekmar's total sales in 2014.

James Ritchie, chief executive officer at Tekmar, said: "Our overseas growth has been as the result of a long-term strategy. We are continuing to win contracts at home and overseas with the move into new international regions going hand in hand with the opening of our new manufacturing facilities in Newton Aycliffe. "It has been a busy and successful past year for us and we look forward to this continuing throughout 2015." With more than 28 years' experience, Tekmar is a market leader in the design, manufacture and supply of subsea cables, umbilicals and flexible protection systems for the oil & gas and renewable energy industry.

The company established itself in the US market after forming a strategic partnership with American company Whitman Consulting Group and has gone on to build relationships with developers and installers through the supply of its cable protection systems on numerous US wind farms which are currently in development. Tekmar has also expanded into the Middle East for the first time and won multiple oil & gas contracts in this region as well as other international markets. The worldwide growth of the company has been reinforced by the introduction to market of the firm's latest innovation, TekTube®. The product has been specifically designed as a solution for future projects to continue to help drive down cost reduction, improve offshore installation rates and ensure cable integrity for the service life typically 25 years. TekTube has been devised for installation onshore rather than offshore. Once in place, the system is then transported to the offshore project site to be secured to the jacket, sealed and prepared to be received by the cable installation vessel. The work before

TekTube is deployed offshore offers significant savings on installation vessel time and, ultimately, costs. TekTube has been developed utilising the same protection methodology as the market-leading, proven industry standard TekLink system. The TekLink system, which is designed for a 30-year life time,

revolutionises the connection of subsea power cables into monopile foundations. TekTube offers an alternative to TekLink for jacket, gravity-base and floating foundations. The North East Business Awards were presented at Ramside Hall, Durham. For more information about Tekmar, please visit – www.tekmar.co.uk

# Woodham Academy Wins Innovation Award

Sarah McGinnety, Assistant Headteacher at Woodham Academy, was recognized for her innovative work in careers education at The Northern Echo Awards at the Xcel Centre last week.

Year 9 students at Woodham Academy have been working alongside six key companies from the Aycliffe Business Park in an attempt to raise awareness of the opportunities that exist in apprenticeships. The programme was originally developed through sponsorship secured from Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership and Aycliffe Fabrications. Assistant Headteacher, Sarah McGinnety, who has responsibility for careers education, set up the new programme, because she felt students had no awareness of the career opportunities available locally in a large number of companies on the industrial estate. Each of the six year 9 tutor groups at Woodham Academy were mentored by a different business and given the task of researching career opportunities available in the company. Over the nine weeks programme for

2014 the businesses that were involved were Livin Housing Ltd, Gestamp Tallent, Finley Structures, Thorn Academy of Light, Shepherd Construction, Ebac Ltd. The challenge brief encouraged students to look at entry routes into apprenticeships, qualification levels, working/training hours, pay and career progression. Students presented their findings to an audience of business leaders, staff, parents and other students and the presentations were judged according to the challenge brief. The six groups put forward their presentations with a view to educating students in year 9, 10 and 11 about the opportunities that exist on their doorstep. The judging panel listened to all of the presentations and then elected an overall winner. The 2014 winner was 9DP with Ebac. The project is a great way for students to get hands on experience of working life with the manufacturing and engineering sector. Sarah's work has gained national recognition for excellence in careers education.

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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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# Hitachi Rail Europe Looks for New Apprentices

# Weed Killer Sprayed on Private Property

Hitachi Rail Europe is proud to invest in the futures of young people. As an organisation, Hitachi Rail Europe believes apprenticeships play a vital role in the creation and promotion of an inspired and committed workforce. Accordingly, the company is delighted to welcome a new intake of apprentices across its UK sites each year.

The Ashford Train Maintenance Centre in Kent, which has a reputation for excellence and has been open since 2007, is a flagship provider of apprenticeships across Hitachi Rail Europe's UK operations. Home of the iconic Class 395 or 'Javelin' trains, it runs its own home-grown apprenticeship scheme, taking on two apprentices each year. This four-year apprenticeship scheme allows its participants to combine a theoretical understanding of how maintenance engineering works with the opportunity to apply these skills in a 'hands-on' environment. Apprentices divide their time between Canterbury College and the Ashford site. Former apprentices are now working on the Intercity Express Programme, as the lead technician at Ashford and as technicians and maintenance engineers.

The state-of-the-art Hitachi Rail Europe Vehicle Manufacturing Facility (RVMF) in County Durham allows those looking for an alternative to more traditional routes into higher education the option to study engineering at South West Durham Training while honing their practical skills onsite.

Hitachi Rail Europe hopes to expand its support for a variety of routes into engineering with its sponsorship of the South Durham University Technical College in 2016. Hitachi Rail Europe will work closely with the University of Sunderland and Gestamp Tallent to encourage young people to study the STEM subjects and understand the practical application of these subjects in the working world.

Julia Potts, HR Manager at Hitachi Rail Europe says, "We are constantly on the look-out for the engineers of tomorrow and are delighted to actively encourage those young people who may not have considered engineering as an option the chance to explore whether this is the correct path for them."

The RVMF currently supports four apprentices in engineering, and looks forward to taking on a further five apprentices in the autumn. Across the wider business, there will also be apprenticeships available in other functions.

Hitachi Rail Europe is pleased to be able to offer its apprentices

further opportunities for development across the business once they have finished their apprenticeships, with a number of former apprentices now in permanent, full-time roles across a range of disciplines. Hitachi Rail Europe would encourage anyone that is interested in pursuing an apprenticeship to apply via our careers portal at the following web address: <http://www.hitachirail-eu.com/careers>

Dear Sir

On 10th March a County Council contractor scattered weedkiller on just about every lawn and footpath in our area. This is not the usual weedkiller used by previous contractors, most will have seen them on small tractors, spraying with a wet solution in the past. This is a white powder / pellet form of weed killer which remains visible on the surface of the grass, soil and pavements for some time.

The contractor with the weedkiller was recorded scattering it everywhere, on lawns and pavements and

even on private residents' property. They were seen walking past people's home dusting just about every patch of green space, even over plants. My lawn is covered in white powder as is my plants in tubs on my front lawn.

Who has given these people the right to walk across private property using this weedkiller? Does the County Council know what these contractors are doing? What is this weedkiller doing to dogs and cats that lick their paws? We need some answers from the Council about this.

The area concerned is Simpasture and Moule Close and an officer came round this morning to explain the reason for using pellets saying it was not harmful to animals. All weed killer is harmful to animals when first applied. If all our grass and plants die we have to get back to the Council, but what if our animals take ill? We are concerned about our pets and want to know exactly what chemical they have used.

The Council also said that their usual tractor weedkiller is yet to come round to do the pavements, so why use this granular weedkiller in the first place? More waste of Council tax payers money!

Brian Sowerby

Jimmy Bennett, the County Council's clean and green manager, said: "We have reassured Mr Sowerby that if any damage has been caused to his property we will repair it. In the summer we use a liquid weedkiller on footpaths and grassed open areas. During the winter, we use a granular product on grassed areas around trees and street furniture. Both products are non-toxic and bio-degradable. We have been using them for a number of years and they are widely used around the country."

# Turbinia Beer Festival

27th till 29th March 2015

Next weekend, The Turbinia will be running its second Beer Festival. It will feature up to 15 different 'craft' beers and 2 'craft' ciders from local & nationwide micro-breweries. A full range of beers will be available, milds, bitters, porters, blonde, ruby, etc, with varying strengths. Three brand new beers will be making their debut at the festival.

Beers available in 2 rooms, one quiet for the craic, and the other room will feature free entertainment all weekend.

**Friday night** - 'Open-Mic' featuring some great local talent, all players welcome.

**Saturday night** - 'This Machine' one of the pubs favourite bands, a GREAT night guaranteed !!!

**Sunday 4pm** - 'Big Red & The Grinners' - top band from 'Stormin The Castle'. First band booked for their 25th anniversary this year. Starred on the main stage at 'The Bulldog Bash' Europes biggest bike rally and played a HUGE

# Sports Skills Bike Winner



Our February Super Sports Skills bike draw winner was Daniel Farrer, aged 13, from School Aycliffe. The Mayor, Councillor Wendy Hillary, presented Daniel with his new bike on Monday 16th March 2015. For your chance to win a new bike get involved in our Easter 2015 Super Sports Skills programme. For further information visit our website [www.great-aycliffe.gov.co.uk](http://www.great-aycliffe.gov.co.uk) - to book your place please contact our Reception on 01325 300600.

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# Why We Needed A Rise In Council Tax

May I answer the correspondent in last week's Newton News who asked me to explain why I supported the 1.99% increase in Durham County Council's Council Tax, and why DCC are cutting services.

The answer lies in this table:			
DCC Budget	A	B	C
	2010-11	2015-16	2018-19
Gross budget	£1,390m	£1,363m	£1,297m
Income (rents/ fees etc. )	£896m	£946m	£950m
Shortfall – to be found in the main from:			
• Govt grants	£494m	£417m	£347m
• Business rates	£292m	£181m	£95m
• Council Tax	-	£55m	£59m
	£199m	£174m	£186m

**FACING THE CUTS**

Column A shows the situation of DCC in 2010 – an enterprise supporting almost £1.4 billion of statutory and discretionary services to the people of County Durham. Some of those services were chargeable, giving the Council an income of £896 million from rents/ fees etc. The shortfall was covered by £199 million of Council Tax, and £292 million in government grants. The new government in 2010 changed everything. It has slashed government grants to the Council. It also withdrew 10% of the Council Tax rebate grant (for the 65,000 Council Tax payers on benefits) which has hit DCC's Council Tax yield. The government has given councils half of the local business rate, but in County Durham, which is economically weak, this does not amount to much.

Column B of the table reveals how all of this has affected DCC. Since 2010:

- the amount of grants the Council receives has fallen by £111 million (38%)
- the amount it receives in Council Tax has fallen by £25 million. (For data geeks, this is before inflation, so 'in real terms' the reductions are much greater than 38%.) Thus the Council has been forced by the government to make unimaginably huge cuts.

**MAKING THE CUTS**

So far, most of these cuts have been to 'back-office' functions, and not front-line services. Nearly 2,000 people have been shed from the DCC workforce. However – just as DCC is running out of 'back-office' functions to absorb such huge cuts – the government has announced a further £86 million of cuts to the council's grant-funding over the next three years (Column C). That will mean that government grants will have fallen from £292 million in 2010 to £95 million in 2018.

I wonder if people fully appreciate what it means to cut such huge sums?

Consider the following three recent very difficult spending decisions the Council has had to make:

1. the closure of the Council's last five care homes ... saved about £¾ million pa;
2. the green waste bin charge ... will save less than £1 million pa;
3. the street light reduction /removal programme ... will save £2 million gross pa.

All these proposals have angered the public. So if these cuts have caused such reactions, what is going to happen when the Council has to set about cutting £86 million from services?

**SURVIVING THE CUTS**

A council by law cannot declare a deficit budget – it has to balance the books. So DCC cannot ignore the cuts in government funding. The government has found the perfect victim – DCC has to implement the government cuts, and then takes the blame for implementing them.

Column C summarises the Council's Medium-Term Financial Plan for the future. It envisages a reduction in gross activity of £66 million, 2016-2019 – the cuts will be eye-watering. You will see in the Plan that there is the presumption of a rise in income from Council Tax. Without it, the cuts will be even worse. Indeed, this year's 1.99% rise will raise £3.4 million pa – almost as much as the three recent spending cuts above – i.e. the rise will save us having to make cuts of that magnitude. That is why I voted for the rise.

I am happy to explain issues-arising if people wish to raise them. May I also stress that this is my own explanation of my own decision, and that I am not speaking on behalf of DCC.

John D Clare

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# PROPOSAL TO CHANGE SELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR QUASHED

Last week our Town Council considered the following Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor G.C. Gray.

(i) That the Council changes the way that the Mayor of Great Aycliffe Town Council is selected for nomination for election at the Annual General Meeting.

(ii) That three key issues be taken into account:

1. Time of Service to the Council.
2. Dedication to the current role that the Councillor plays within the Council.
3. Selection of the best candidate for the position.

(iii) That the three key issues should be taken into account on a politically impartial basis and scored out of 30 (10 marks for each issue) and a shortlist be produced based upon these scores and then voted upon at the Council Annual General Meeting.

The simple intention behind the proposal was for the ruling Labour group to put aside Party politics and give an Independent councillor the opportunity to serve as Mayor. The mechanism of the motion was too formal and gave the Labour group great glee in tearing it apart.

Inevitably as the debate continued the Independents gave vent to the fact that as a minority group they virtually had no say in how the Council was run.

But as pointed out by Independent Billy Blenkinsopp it was ever thus and you should expect nothing different.

Counc Hewitson made an issue of this point in an address to the Council. Counc Jim Atkinson remarked it was the first time he had ever heard Counc Hewitson speak and it was refreshing. She replied there was no point, as all decisions were decided at a Labour Group meeting beforehand. She also said she might as well stop at home and do her council work from there, representing her ward.

She referred to the current situation where the group decided what will happen and everyone is subjected to listening to the same "boring" people formalise decisions in the Council Chamber.

Deputy Leader John Clare reacted strongly to this offensive statement reminding Councillors he was elected to the position and was carrying out his duty, boring or not.

Proposer George Gray pointed out that other Councils, including Darlington, elect opposition members to be

Mayor and said he had twice nominated an Independent to be Mayor of Aycliffe which the Labour group did not support. Observers could not help but feel how much nicer and fairer it would be if a capable Independent Councillor was given the chance to be Mayor now and again instead of

Labour councillors taking the position more than once as in the case of George Gray himself when he was a Labour Councillor.

It is a non political position and even having the power of Chairman at meetings could not overrule the absolute control Labour holds.

## AYCLIFFE'S SAMWON WIN TOP SERVICE AWARD

Samwon the hydraulic fittings supplier at Northfield, Aycliffe Business Park has won the North East Services Award for Durham and Wearside.

Organised by The Journal and its sister paper The Gazette, the annual competition is held in association with the North East Chamber of Commerce and turns the spotlight on the last 12 months in businesses large and small from across the region.

All the winners from the Durham and Wearside event go through to the regional final, which will take place at Hardwick Hall in Sedgfield next month.

The purpose of the competition is to reward and recognise professional service organisations that have demonstrable strength in the following areas:

- Service Excellence
- Service differentiation
- Business Growth
- Innovation

The judges looked to identify a service company that achieved and exceeded quantifiable business goals while delivering a market leading service to their customers.

Managing Director Gary Quickfall is shown receiving his company's award from sponsor John Adamson, Director of Ramside Estates Ltd.

Gary said: "We are all very proud of the recognition as we have put a lot of hard work into the service we provide for our customers. It is also a very good addition to our 'Supplier of the Year' award from JCB last year. Everybody at Samwon Tech is



M.D. Gary Quickfall (left) with John Adamson

committed to building on the success of the award and the service we provide. We look forward to a very challenging,

but rewarding year as we will soon be announcing new additions to our major international OEM client base."

## VOTE TORY TO MAINTAIN ECONOMIC RECOVERY

by Scott Wood, Conservative Parliamentary Candidate for Sedgfield Constituency.

In May 2012 Ed Miliband met President Hollande after his victory in the French Presidential elections. Mr Miliband congratulated the President and said: "This new leadership is sorely needed as Europe seeks to escape from austerity.... He has shown that the centre left can offer hope and win elections with a vision of a better, more equal and just world".

Unfortunately what Mr Miliband said has turned out to be incorrect. Austerity is the reason the UK economy has improved, despite repeated warnings from the Labour Party that it would not, while the French economy has gone downhill. Mr Miliband backed the wrong horse here and the British public are intelligent enough to see that the British economy is performing a great deal better than that of France. Mr Miliband's economic statements betray someone who is not up to running the British economy and would put at risk all the achievements made since May 2010. Let us compare the economic data from both countries.

- Government spending in France is 56% of GDP. In Britain it is 40% and is planned to be reduced to 35.2% by the end of the next Parliament.
- President Hollande promised the French electorate in 2012,

that the budget would be eliminated by 2017, this will not happen. In Britain should we elect a Conservative Government, the projection is that the budget deficit will become a surplus in 2018.

- President Hollande raised top rate tax to 75% on all salaries above 1 million Euros. The top rate of tax in Britain is 45%
- The President restored the retirement age in France to 60 years. The Coalition Government took the difficult decision to increase the retirement age for the British people.

- The President restored 60,000 public sector workers (in the Education Sector) while Britain has created 1.85 million private sector jobs and reduced the public sector payroll by 412,000.
- The French are breaking EU rules imposed on member states.
- The unemployment rate in France in January 2015 was 10.3% in Britain it is 5.9% (and decreasing faster than any other G7 country over the past year)

- It is predicted that the British economy will soon overtake that of France to become the 2nd largest in Europe after Germany. If the British electorate wish to keep up this economic recovery they should vote for a

## Forever Picking Up Other People's Rubbish

Dear Sir,  
Re: Article "We Know Who You Are"

I am so pleased this issue has been pointed out by another, as I noticed this myself and it annoys me.

Parts of the wood area, known as the backfields and parts of the Nature park, are where these bags of dog foul are thrown into bushes or propped up against trees etc. Obviously the culprit thinks they are doing a "good thing" . . . as do those dog walkers who make a "tidy pile" next to an already full dog waste bin. Other examples would be where bags are left in car parks or along road sides - it's just not right!

If the red dog bins are full or not in sight, then take it home with you. I have also witnessed dog walkers pick up their dogs mess in open areas then discard once under cover of trees.

On a more pleasing note with regard to Finleys WW2 Memorial to Aycliffe Angels:

This is fantastic - not only in respect of the women, but it is also more interesting, information on Aycliffe. Alongside other new developments such as Hitachi, UTC College etc. Jobs, Leisure Facilities, Employment - all putting Aycliffe on the map!

Best wishes - yours, forever picking up other people's rubbish!  
Miss C. B.

## Barclays Help with Child Education



Barclays Bank in Newton Aycliffe Town Centre are offering code playground session for families. The first session was held last week and staff are looking to hold more in the future.

Code Playground is a fun way to learn the basics of coding and develop digital skills for the future. The 2 hour coding sessions are open to children aged 7 to 17 in selected Barclays branches. All they would need to bring is a laptop, and an adult. There Digital Eagles will guide your children as they take on fun challenges that introduce them to the basics of coding

"It's great that Barclays have introduced this into branches and as its now part of the national curriculum, it gives parents an understanding too, allowing them to support their children with their education" said Manager Gary Twist.

## Acorn Players Thank You



On behalf of the Local Group "The Acorn Players" a huge thank you to all the kind people who contributed to our collection in Tesco on the 14th March. The total raised was £251.91. This will help towards our next production on July 15th "One Night Only", a evening of song and dance, admission will be £2.50 for everyone and will be payable at the door, to commence at 7.15pm.

Look out for our Book Stall in the Thames Centre on Saturday 21st March 10.00am-1.00pm.

Many Thanks  
Anne Harland, Hon President.

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# Hitachi Apprentice Opportunities VANE ROAD COMIC RELIEF DAY

Sally Beadle from Aycliffe is on an advanced technical apprenticeship with Hitachi. Although her GCSE results could have allowed her to pursue the traditional route, she chose an apprenticeship to learn and gain qualifications whilst following the career path chosen. She finds that a practical style of learning really helps her understand each subject. For the past 7 months Sally attended South West Durham Training 5 days a week. 4 of these days are spent working towards our NVQ level 2 (PEO) covering 3 main areas – maintenance, bench fitting and electrical. The other day is spent working towards BTEC level 3 in engineering. As SWDT closes during school holidays for training, we are buddied up with engineers and are given the opportunity to see the work they are doing and the progress they have made. They also offer us guidance and



support with our BTEC work. Sally has been with Hitachi since September 2014 and along the other 3 apprentices had the opportunity to go to the Ashford maintenance depot where they were given a tour and spent time with the engineers who maintain the train. "I have vastly increased my knowledge and practical skills due to the training offered by

SWDT. The short NVQ course has helped me to understand the foundations of engineering and has been very beneficial when talking to the engineers from HRE about their jobs." said Sally. If you want to gain qualifications and experience but don't like being confined to a classroom, an apprenticeship is definitely for you. With my apprenticeship I am able to gain all the required qualifications whilst being paid, which I would not have done if I had followed the traditional route. Sally said there's lots of opportunity for progression within HRE. She joined the company early which means she has the opportunity to advance her career as the company expands. "I am keen to continue with learning, both practical and academic; as there is chance to undertake higher qualifications such as an HNC." said Sally.



Friday 13th March brought fun and frivolity to Vane Road School. The mission for the day was to dress up and eat cake. Parents and supporters donated money and delicious cakes which were sold to raise extra cash for this worthwhile charity. Head Teacher Mr Pavey, who also donned fancy dress for the day, was overwhelmed by the enthusiasm and generous spirit shown by everyone involved. A staggering initial sum of £544.37 was raised with this figure due to increase following a further sale of cakes which took place at the end of the school day. Well done and many thanks to everyone who took part in this special day.

Newtonian Fern Whittaker followed a Business Administration apprenticeship at Bishop Auckland College and wanted to go straight into a work environment to gain the experience whilst still studying. She spent four days in work and one day at college, and has been with Hitachi for 18 months. She attended a business ambassador training course, and a number of schools, taking part in mock interviews and skills



matching exercises. Fern has progressed and moved into the Human Resource team continuing with CIPD level 3 qualification. "I would advise young people to look at all options available and not just university. I would also say this is a good opportunity to gain the experience and gain qualifications at the same time" said Fern.


## FOTOFAYRE WINNER



While visiting family in Newton Aycliffe on 7th March, 15 week old Maisie Gardner entered and won the FotoFayre competition held in Peacocks Store. Maisie is the Daughter of Martin and Rachael Gardner (nee Buckley, ex Greenfield pupil) the family live in Portsmouth and Maisie's parents are officers in the Royal Navy. Maisie is the Granddaughter of Beverly Paton and Great Granddaughter of Aycliffe residents, Mel and Anne Harland.

## Situations VACANT

We are a local charity providing services to improve health and wellbeing based at the award winning Pioneering Care Centre in Newton Aycliffe.



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Fax: (01325) 301129  
website: [www.pcp.uk.net](http://www.pcp.uk.net)

**Closing Date for applications:**  
**Tuesday 7th April 2015 – 12 noon**

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# Athena Gymnastics Best Result from NDP Championships



Back: Calvin Beaton, Millie Turley, Maddy Wood, Isabel Petty, Sophie Andelin, Ebonie Summerson, Millie Dunn, Ellie Bancroft, Grace Pateman-Patrick, Amelia Dent, Arran Fuller. Middle: Joshua Ashton, Millie Foster, Millie Parsley, Joe Dunn, Emily Neal, Joel Turnbull. Front: Shakira Palmer, Frances Andelin, Katie Andelin, Halle May Race, Piper Younghusband, Charlotte Dent, Zoe Jackson

The North of England NDP (National Development Plan) Regional Championships took place last weekend, as Gymnastic clubs from the North competed for a place in the National Finals which are held in Stoke on Trent in May. Athena Gymnastic Club, based in Newton Aycliffe and Shildon, this year sent a large squad of 24 of the clubs best gymnasts to compete against the best from clubs from Teesside, Durham and North and South Tyneside. The competition is split into NDP Grades 1 – 6 and Disability Acro Grades 2 – 3, and into Women's Pairs, Mixed Pairs, Men's Pair and Women's Group (Trio). The commitment and training

that goes into this competition is intensive and for the gymnast starts a year before the competition so a lot of hard work has been put in by the Coach and Gymnast alike. Athena in the last couple of years have managed to get gymnasts to Stoke and a couple of years ago had a gold medal winning pair at the finals. This year Athena worked really hard with their squad and competed with their largest team of gymnasts ever put into this competition. Athena come away from the competition with a personal best for the club of 2 Gold and 3 silver, making it a very successful weekend. The first Gold came on the Saturday as Joshua Ashton and Millie

Parsley won the Grade 1 Pairs, and the second Gold came on the Sunday as Arran Fuller and Amelia Dent won the grade 5 Mixed Pairs with Athena's Calvin Beaton and Millie Turley taking the Silver in a very close competition. Arran and Amelia went one better than last year when they finished runners up but were invited to Stoke where they did themselves and the club proud with a 5th place finish in the finals. The other Silver medals from the weekend went to Emily Neal / Millie Foster (Disability Acro Grade 2 Women's Pair), and Shakira Palmer / Frances Andelin (Grade 3 Women's Pair). The club was particularly elated with Shakira & Frances silver as they beat 18 other pairs to get their places (The biggest category of the day). The club's Coaches were really pleased with the medals that were won and very pleased with the gymnasts that took part over the weekend competition as every one of them did the club proud. The club would like to thank Honest John for their help with sponsoring the gymnasts. If you are interested in joining Athena contact Sam on 01388 605946 and who knows you could be competing in the future for a place at the NDP finals.

# Farewell Hannah

LIFE Church gave one incredible young lady a big surprise party last Thursday. Hannah Frost a former youth worker – and a delightful young Christian woman with a deep faith, bags of talent and a heart for people on the margins had been on a term time placement from Cranmer Hall. Hannah is training to be an Anglican Vicar and whilst on placement has been involved in both LIFE Church and Lifeline Community Action. She loved working with the Helping Hands team and seeing first-hand how people's lives were being touched by the generosity of many people. As her placement came to an end, we just had to do something extra special for her, so with the lights out, and silence in the room, Hannah walked in everybody shouted 'surprise' and lavished her with gifts and messages of thanks. We then went on to share a tasty buffet together whilst we chatted about how Hannah had been a blessing to us all. Before she preached we wrapped 20' of bunting around her waist. Each piece of bunting had a personal message from the men, women and children who appreciated what Hannah had done for them. LIFE Church will miss Hannah.



# South Durham School of Dance Exam Success



Students at the South Durham School of Dance have achieved some remarkable results in their recent IDTA Freestyle Dance Exams, with all the students achieving grades of 'Honours' or 'Highly Commended'. The results were:-  
**Bronze** Joanne Cunliffe 90% Honours; Kate Herdman 86% Highly Commended; Anna Shaw 90% Honours; Leah Stamp 88% Highly Commended  
**Silver** Jordan Goodwin 93% Honours; Maddison Mackinlay 88% Highly Commended; Alicia Simpson 91% Honours  
**1st Gold Bar** Abbie Kennedy 93% Honours  
**2nd Gold Bar** Kira Watson 94% Honours  
**1st Star** Kasia Shaw 92% Honours  
**3rd Star** Kalya Shaw 93% Honours  
**5th Star** Jade Wakefield 91% Honours; Daniela Winwood 93% Honours  
**3rd President** Andrea Menzies 93% Honours  
**2nd Supreme** Annis Race 95% Honours  
 For the younger children and newcomers, some doing their very first exams and where the examination is either a 'pass' or a 'fail', they all did very well. The results were:-  
**1st Rosette** (3 to 5yrs) Ruby Ferguson Pass; Laycee-Lee Henderson Pass  
**2nd Rosette** (3 to 5yrs) Daisy Hackett Pass  
**2nd Rosette** (6 to 8yrs) Gracie Leigh Bailey Pass  
**1st Rosette** (6 to 8yrs) Keira Armstrong Pass  
**1st Stardance** (8 to 10yrs) Evie Foster Pass; Ryan Jones Pass  
**3rd Stardance** (8 to 10yrs) Drew Shaw Pass  
 In the Rock n Roll section, the results were as follows:-  
**Bronze** Ryan Jones 88% Highly Commended; Drew Shaw 88% Highly Commended; Jordan Goodwin 88% Highly Commended; Maddison Mackinlay 88% Highly Commended  
**2nd Gold Bar** Kira Watson 90% Honours  
**1st Star** Abbie Kennedy 90% Honours  
**Presidents Award** 4 Kalya Shaw 94% Honours  
**3rd Supreme** Annis Race 94% Honours  
 The examiner made some wonderful comments to the students and for the dance school's first full set of examinations, it is an amazing achievement and all of the students should be really proud of themselves. If anyone is interested in attending dance classes for Freestyle, Street, Acro and Flexibility, or Rock n Roll, please contact Caroline Race on 07949 911642 for further details of classes and venues.

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# Two Badminton Trophies for Aycliffe

In the recent Darlington & District Badminton League Tournaments Aycliffe Badminton Club emerged with two trophies. Firstly in the Men's Doubles Stuart Dennis teamed up with Kieron Pearce of Larchfield to win, this was Stuart's third victory in the Tournament following his triumphs in 2005 and 2008 each with a different partner! The second trophy was for Ian Boyd who was the runner up in the Men's Singles for the second time after being the beaten finalist in 2011, maybe it will be third time lucky next season! Both men are part of Aycliffes mixed doubles team who are currently pushing for promotion back to the A Division at the first attempt after last season's relegation, the team are currently 3rd in the league with the top 2 gaining promotion. The club meet at Aycliffe Leisure Centre each Friday evening at 7.30 anyone wishing to play is welcome to attend. For more information visit <http://aycliffebadminton.webs.com>



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Dear Sir,  
The recent controversy regarding the dimming/switch off/ removal of street lighting along the A167 could be easily resolved if the following criteria was implemented and strictly adhered to...  
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Currently, the majority of council/public officials, and those in the corridor of power of Parliament seem to have lost focus and forgotten that their purpose is to act in the best interests of the general public. Instead their decisions can be attributed to them following whichever Party line they are affiliated to, or from following a politically correct/ self aggrandising agenda.  
Those making these decisions should face the realistic threat of personal prosecution without the ability to hide behind the cloak of council anonymity or Parliamentary privilege.  
The additional ability of the public to pursue compensation from them personally rather than from the public purse would maybe re-focus what their job purpose entails.  
The public should not have their lives put at risk for the sake of a few quid saved!  
Yours sincerely  
Ebony Miller

Guitarist Job

Newton Aycliffe Pub Band "Ocean" are looking for a mature Lead Guitarist with backing vocals. Own gear and transport essential (60's-90's music). Contact Paul on 07801 395492.

Newton Aycliffe Juniors Round Up

U7's - last league games of the season today against Mount Pleasant at home! The first friendly game was very even. Some great saves made by Lucas Acuna Ocana. The team started to pass the ball very well and with some great play by Aidan, Harvey and Robbie a great team goal was rounded off by Rhys Galloway. Aycliffe conceded a late goal to finish the first friendly game 1-1. The second game was similar, however Aycliffe conceded an early goal. We got a penalty which was scored by Niall Armstrong. Jacob then scored a goal just before half time from a great pass by Will. With the score 2-1 to Aycliffe at HT. Mount Pleasant then scored straight from kick off to make it 2-2. A great save by Will kept the game level. Great play by Harvey, Jacob and Niall played Rhys through to win the game 3-2 for Aycliffe. Great team performances by everyone today. MOTM - Rhys Galloway and Niall Armstrong.  
U8's - no game this week  
U9's TJFA - Aycliffe Juniors U9's lined up for the final home league game of the season Aaron and Chloe were at the back, Jake, Charlie and Zack across the middle and Jacob up front. The boys dominated possession and territory in the first half but could not get the breakthrough. Our visitors defended well and look to score on the break, forcing some good stops from Thomas in goal. Lucas came on for the second half but the goal would still not come despite the team's best efforts. Zack even had a free kick hit both posts but it all ended 0-0.  
U9's Russell Foster - 'V' Catchgate Tigers. We started positively, with Isaac and Taylor getting some success down the wings. Catchgate went ahead, but we equalised almost immediately, with Bo firing home an equaliser. Catchgate regained the lead against the run of play, with a deflection deceiving Ewan in goal. A 3rd



goal for Catchgate came shortly afterwards, giving Ewan no chance. The second half was much improved - there was a mad goalmouth scramble in which Dom insisted he'd got the ball over the line, but goal-line technology suggested otherwise, meaning the game finished with a 3-1 defeat for. Players MOTM - Bo Wilson-Lee. No Fixture next week as NAJFC U9's are doing the Darlington 5km Park Run on 21st. Andy  
U10's - We played host to Hartlepool St Francis today, a team we beat in the reverse fixture earlier in the season. We found ourselves 0-2 down at half time, but not quite sure how, as we had the majority of the play, just couldn't find that killer pass or finish. We conceded 2 more after the break and got a consolation of our own. Credit must go to the lads (both teams) and also the home parents, who were a credit to the club today after an unacceptable display of discipline from the visiting adults. We always promote respect, but it was severely lacking from others today.  
U11's - We were at home today 'V' Tibs B. The lads started well, putting Tibs under pressure from the off. Aycliffe scored 1st when James played a through ball to Adam who calmly put it in the back of the net. The early goal boosted Aycliffe's confidence, with James slotting the ball home a 2nd. Aycliffe dominated and Zac got a third for Aycliffe, then, Tibs got a rare break, which resulted in a goal for Tibs, HT 3-1 to Aycliffe. Zac scored his 2nd goal & 4th for Aycliffe within minutes of the kick off. Tibs made some good breaks, which were well dealt with by Nathan, the Goalkeeper training seems to be paying dividends! 5 mins left & Jamie headed into the back of the net. FT 5-1 to Aycliffe. Well done everyone, a great team performance today. MOTM went to James Hodgson, for good all round play and a great individual goal.  
U12's - no game this week  
U13's - no game this week, at home to Wolviston this Sunday 22nd.  
U14's - We were away to Darlington "21 All Stars" unlike the home game when we beat 21 convincingly 9-2, yesterday was a much closer encounter. Aycliffe settled and coped with the wind well and were the much better team early on, and on 8 minutes Kian Fletcher was brought down in the area by the keeper, Kyron Thain converted from the spot to make it 1-0. We dominated the first half without capitalising, HT: 1-0. The 2nd half was pretty much the same with Aycliffe seeing most of the ball and we were caught offside on several occasions! Thankfully and with just 9 minutes left, Kian Fletcher made it 2-0 to secure the 3 points. The back four had a great game, 21

never looked like scoring, with a man of the match performance from Joseph Fawcett, who was outstanding throughout!  
U16's - no game this week, last game of the season on the 12th April.  
U18's - no game this week  
U23's - We were @ Hebburn today to play what we thought would be a tough game on a 3g pitch against a decent side who we drew with earlier in the season at home 1-1. The u23's had 6 players unavailable today through injury, holiday and work commitments and as a result we only travelled with 12 players. Unfortunately Hebburn were also short on players and only had 10 available to start the game, Aycliffe kicked and after 30 minutes the score remained 0-0. Aycliffe remained patient and managed to score 5 goals before the half time whistle blew with Allenby getting a brace and Allison, Smith and Winwood getting one each with Winwood scoring with a spectacular strike from the edge of the box. Aycliffe continued to dominate but credit to Hebburn, chasing every ball down. Loscombe was carried from the pitch after badly twisting his knee so Robertson returned to the action at centre half. Aycliffe went on to score 4 more goals with Smith getting a second half brace to get his hatrick and Winwood and Allenby getting a goal apiece which also gave Allenby his hatrick. I want to give Hebburn great credit as their players kept going to the end, despite the scoreline. The referee picked Aycliffe's M.O.T.M, awarded it to Jack Slatcher for his controlled performance in the centre of Aycliffe's midfield, so well done Jack.

**ANYONE FOR CRICKET?**

With summer fast approaching, a local grass roots Cricket club needs new players to join them for the 2015 season.  
Cliffe CC has 2 teams which take part in the Darlington and District Cricket League and are well known for being a really friendly and welcoming club. Cliffe play their home fixtures on the very picturesque settings of the Cliffe Estate, just outside of Piercebridge, only about 20 minutes from Newton Aycliffe. The club's 1st team Captain, Vice Captain and a Committee member all live in Newton Aycliffe, so if needed, a lift to the ground could easily be arranged.  
If you are interested in taking up Cricket again or perhaps playing the game for the first time - regardless of your age or ability, why not get in touch with Cliffe? For further details, please contact Richard Mallender, on 01325 - 319942.

AYCLIFFE F.C. CLOSE TO LEAGUE SAFETY

Mixed fortunes for Newton Aycliffe FC this past week as they seek the points needed to ensure they will remain in the First Division of the Ebac Northern League next season.  
Wednesday night's trip to Bedlington saw a tremendous Aycliffe performance with four goals securing a well deserved victory. Once again Dennis Knight was outstanding for Aycliffe and his two first half goals set up the win. The first came after 16 mins, following a foul on Ashley Coffey. Knight took the free-kick, 25yds from goal, with the keeper unable to reach with his dive to the right.  
Just before the half-hour Jordan Laidler thought he'd made it two-nil but an offside ruling denied him. The second goal came just a minute later with Knight dribbling into the box, fending off the defenders' challenges. His low shot fired past the keeper and into the net.  
With half-time approaching Bedlington contributed to their own downfall. A disastrous back pass from midfield had the keeper racing to clear but the ball fell to Aycliffe skipper Paul Garthwaite who finished cleanly. The second half lacked the excitement of the first but saw a fourth Aycliffe goal just after 56 mins. Stuart Banks latched on to a flick from Coffey and ran on to shoot home.  
Boosted by the win at Bedlington Aycliffe moved on to much tougher opposition at 6th placed Dunston. The home side started positively and Aycliffe's defence were under pressure from the start. Aycliffe's weak start was punished after

13 mins when Dunston's captain, Dale Burrell, threaded his way through the defence to score. Aycliffe fought back and five minutes later a 1-2 between Laidler and Banks gave a chance but Banks' shot was tipped round the post by the Dunston keeper Liam Connell. On 37 mins a long ball forward from the Aycliffe defence had Connell racing Banks. The keeper got there first just outside his box & while some Aycliffe supporters felt he'd used a hand the referee ruled otherwise.  
Just before the hour Dunston got their second goal following an unfortunate slip from Dan Mitton allowed the opposition forward a clear run on goal.  
With five minutes to go Aycliffe pulled a goal back. Dennis Knight took a run down the right & into the box, firing a shot across the goal & into the net. In the final few minutes Aycliffe tried to grab an equaliser but the home side hung on for the win.  
Two home games now follow and Aycliffe will be hoping to edge over the 40 point mark and close to safety.  
NAFC would like to thank all those who contributed to the Race Night by attending, sponsoring or buying a TriCast ticket. The night raised £531 for the club. The TriCast winning order was 2-3-4.  
**Forthcoming fixtures**  
Tues 17 March (h) - Conssett (7:30pm)  
Sat 21 March (h) - Morpeth (3:00pm)  
Sat 28 March (a) - Guisborough (3pm)





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# Newton Aycliffe Youth Football Club Weekly Round-up

**Under 16s** defeated Skelton United 2-1 when Zac Smith scored his one goal a season off the hip into the net! Skelton equalised soon after but it was always Aycliffe who looked the more likely to score again. Corey Denton was upended in the area and Kieran Mcwaters sent the keeper the wrong way from the spot to secure the win. Big Semi-Final this weekend away to 1st Div. Greatham. Man of the Match went to Zacarias Smith.

**Under 15 Falcons** were at home against Hardwick and started the game better but found themselves 1-0 down. Grant H. equalised for a first half 1-1 scoreline. Grant H. added his second of the match. Josh G. volleyed home for 3-1. The boys switched off allowing Hardwick to score straight from the restart. Within a minute it was 3-3 and incredibly they netted the winner, all within in a 5 minute spell. Gutted!

**Under 14s** travelled to Seaton Carew and took the lead within 10mins. Second half saw them press the home team and then Aycliffe grabbed another to

make it 0-2. Then, after going down to 10 men, a reshuffled Aycliffe team took control and even managed to get a third goal. Full time 0-3. Goals from B. Howarth (2) and one from I. Breckon. Man of the Match went to B. Howarth

**Under 13 Girls'** travelled to Hebburn Honey's and recorded a very comfortable win. Martha Humble and Lily Mansfield (2) netted early on. Honey's never gave up and found the net to reduce the arrears. Lydia Shale then scored her first goal for the club! Chloe Ryan netted a quick-fire 4 goals before Lottie Hall added another. The hosts' kept plugging away looking for another consolation - they did - but not before Lily completed her hat-trick. Charlie Nicol-Brown impressed and was unlucky in front of goal. Final score 2-10.

**Under 12 Eagles** hosted Norton & Stockton "Amber" An unfortunate own goal put Norton 1-0 up. The Eagles then decided to wake up and play some good football at times but still for the second week running most of our play was kick and hope. Full time 1-0. Man of the Match was Lucas Hay.

**Billingham Juniors 8-2 Under 11 Eagles.** The scoreline doesn't reflect the game at all. The boys made chance after chance throughout but just could not get the ball into the net. We did however score 2 good goals. Dylan Bowater and a header from Joey Howarth. The difference was Billingham converted their chances. Bring on next week and hopefully we can put ours away.

Only one game for the Under 11 Girls' against South Durham & Cestria, with only 6 players and by the time we got to the full 7 players, we were 2-0 down, the girls could have got back into the game as Aaliyah hit the post, then their goal keeper launches a huge kick which beats everyone with one bounce it was in the net, A final goal in the final minutes made it 0-4.

**Under 10 Eagles** were away to 21st All Stars. Brennan Fitzpatrick was brought down in the box for a Penalty, which he converted 1-0. Second half goal from Calum Whitfield made it 2-0 and game over. Man of the Match performance from James Sear!! Second game and Aycliffe quickly went 2-0 up, a further two

goals followed but only after All Stars got back in the game with some good finishing. Final score 4-4. Goals from Leo Umudi (2) and Kieran Walton 2. Man of the Match in second game went to Luke Aitken.

Another Saturday in the development of a promising Under 10 Girls' squad v Consett Girls. A early scrambled goal by Consett provided the spark for an outstanding display by our girls, a long range shot from Ocean Tia made it 1-1 at half time. In goal, Faith helped by Neve, Chloe and Emily never looked troubled in the second half as Hattie, Olivia and Ocean Tia passed around the Consett defence for Ocean Tia to slot her second, the squad was working hard with Ebony and Ellie Kate slotting in and looking comfortable, the final word was left to Hattie to hit a screamer into the top corner from 20 yds. FT 3-1

Second game v **Spraire Eagles** - who looked solid and organised but Hattie slotted to give us a half time 1-0 lead. It was now down to the girls to push on a show plenty of movement, they did and it was Hattie who benefitted with two superb individual goals to complete her hat-trick. Full time 3-0.

**Under 8 Falcons** where away to Leven Juniors. Cole Gaskarth opened the scoring with a penalty to make it 1-0 and then tapped in from 5 yards to go in at half time 2-0 up. It then all went wrong after the break as Leven got a goal back. They scored an equaliser and soon after got the winner. They could have had a lot more if it wasn't for a Man of the Match performance by Harry Bates with some fine saves. Second game was evenly matched. We scored the 1st goal with Alex Beattie side footing into the bottom corner. They scored late on in the 2nd half to earn a



draw. Man of the Match went to Jamie Pape.

Local derby day today with the **Under 8 Eagles** playing Newton Aycliffe FC. A fantastic performance by the Eagles who ran out 11-0 winners. The boys played arguably their best football of the season. Manager/coach and supporters were all impressed with the team. Jayden Jones and Ashton Houllahan scored four and Joe Kennedy scoring three. Jack Greenwell impressed at the back. Daniel Heaton was composed and distributed the ball well in goal. Well done boys - the win was dedicated to Noah Scott.

## Personal

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## Public Notice

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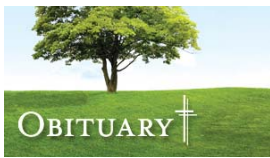
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# TAKE THE LEAD ON LOCAL ISSUES

People in County Durham are being offered the opportunity to take the lead in improving their community. The 4 Together Partnership currently has one vacancy for a public representative and one vacancy for a business representative to sit on its board. The Area Action Partnership (AAP) is responsible for delivering local priorities in the Ferryhill, Chilton, West Cornforth and Bishop Middleham areas. The new board members will play an active role in local projects and consultation and bring their skills and knowledge to help continue the success of the 4 Together Partnership. Applicants will be required to attend six board meetings a year as well as forum events and other activities. Anyone aged 16 years and over who lives, works, volunteers or studies in the 4 Together Partnership area is eligible to apply for the post. The deadline for applications is Friday 3 April. For more information or an application pack contact Paula Stockport, AAP support officer, on 03000 267 212 or email paula.stockport@durham.gov.uk



## J.W. GOWLAND Heighington

It is with regret I inform you and residents of Newton Aycliffe that one of your contributors - J M Gowland of Heighington has passed away. He bore his illness with immense courage and great dignity. Our family were early residents of the town and Malcolm went to school in the 'Flats' prior to the opening of Sugar Hill School. He attended Milton and Marlowe Hall School's followed by evening classes in Business Studies at Darlington Technical College. Malcolm - my brother was Assistant Manager of Fine Fare and ultimately Manager in the town centre in the 1960's. His career went from strength - he held senior management positions in the UK and Overseas. Malcolm leaves behind three children - Craig, Andrew and Jenny, four grandchildren along with his much loved partner Lynn. Malcolm touched many people's hearts in Newton Aycliffe. I know many of his friends do not buy the Northern Echo, but thought the people of Newton Aycliffe should know of his demise. Funeral Monday 23 March 11:45am at Wear Valley Crematorium.

# Aycliffe's Flora Uses, Stories & More

Aycliffe's Flora will be on display at St Clare's Coffee Morning on Saturday 28th March at 10am to noon. Ric Hargreaves' photographs are used to tell the stories, myths and uses of the flowers and plants around Newton Aycliffe, and shows some of

the beauty that is all around us in this lovely town. Also some of Ric's other photos and his American scrap book which tells the story of his dog Kizzy. Everyone is most welcome to our Coffee Morning, there will also be a lovely cake

stall and a well stocked book stall.

## In Memoriam

### Margaret Kelly

24th March 2009

Forever in my thoughts.  
Love you always  
Paddy xxxx

### Tina-Louise Allan

*If I could only find the words to say what is in my heart. A lifetime lost my beautiful Sister.*

Love always, Jacquie

## ATHLETICS NEWS

Last Sunday two of our members took part in the Lightwater Valley 10K. This is a multi-terrain race in and around the Lightwater Valley Theme Park. John Surtees had another outstanding run, finishing 9th in a field of nearly 250 runners in 37:47 and Tracy Surtees did equally well and was 7th female finisher in 44:45. On the previous day club athletes were busy in Park runs. In the Sedgefield Park Run, Lee Wren came in 2nd in 19:54 and it was a first timer for Mick Beadle, 21:20. The following all achieved PBs:- Vivian Pow, 24:17, Mandy Heywood, 26:28, Judith Porter, 26:38 and Amanda Jane Garvey Kovac, 35:28. Meanwhile at Shildon, the Hackworth Park Run celebrated its 2nd birthday. Sandra Collins was presented with a certificate for female with the most points and Trish Kay achieved another PB of 24:53. For more information about Aycliffe Running Club and their training visit ayclifferunningclub.org.uk

# Heighington AFC Boys Match Reports

**Heighington Under 7's** continued their preparation for their first league season with an impressive two games against Newton Aycliffe Juniors. Heighington started very slowly in the first game, and had Goalkeeper Joe Neild to thank for keeping the scores level. Heighington composed themselves after this slow start with great defending from Harvey Yale and Kenzie White. Oliver Paylor scored twice in quick succession to put Heighington 2-0 ahead. Man of the Match Tyler Woodward grabbed the third before Joe Neild scored from his own box and then saved a penalty. Final score 4-0 to Heighington. The second game saw Heighington win 9-3. Aycliffe again started the brighter and Maddox Marcus did well to save at his near post for Heighington with the game at 0-0. Man of the Match Joe Neild scored 5, Oliver Paylor added another 2, with Tyler Woodward and Layton Collier scoring his first for the club, grabbing one a piece. The improving Tyler Gibbon almost scored at the end but Aycliffe's keeper made a great save. **Heighington Under 8s** played well but lost 4-1 to a strong SRC Wasps side. Heighington's man of the match was Joe Neild and goal scorer was Ned Lewis. **Heighington Under 9s** played away against Darlington Young Bulls on Saturday. The first game was an evenly contested affair, and in a game of few chances Young Bulls got the all important goal. Final score 1-0 to Young Bulls. The second game was more of the same, Young Bulls once again got the break this time an own goal which was extremely unlucky from Heighington's point of view. Heighington put severe pressure on Young Bulls in search of the equaliser, but were caught on the break and ended up narrowly losing 2-0. The teams meet again next week. **Heighington Under 10s** ran out 5-0 winners against

Stranton Tigers, in what was arguably their best performance of the season. The home side dominated the first half with countless missed opportunities, but went into the break 1-0 to the good. The second half was more of the same but the lads were a lot more clinical with 2 goals from man of the match Leyton Falconer, one goal from the yet again impressive Brandon Pape, Owen Evans netting again, and one for for Thomas Connell playing up front for the first time. Really pleasing performance from the boys. All age groups are always looking for new players, so if you would like to get involved with any of our teams please contact David Brassell on: 07870 77779 or david.brassell@hotmail.co.uk

## Licence Applications

### Goods Vehicle Operators Licence

Mr Stephen Barlow trading as Stephen Barlow Transport Ltd of 22 Milford Meadow, Rosemont, Bishop Auckland DL14 6SJ is applying for a licence to add an operating centre to keep 2 vehicles and 2 trailers at Newton Aycliffe Truck Stop, 1 Spring Road, Aycliffe Business Park, Newton Aycliffe, Co. Durham DL5 6AJ. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioners Office.

20-03-2015

## Congratulations



### Sue Curtis



#### Happy 70th Birthday Sue

Congratulations to Sue Curtis of Aycliffe Village on her 70th Birthday, on Wednesday 11th March, shown here centre with husband Roger and their family.

### Rene & Billy Gill



#### Diamond Wedding Anniversary

To Rene and Billy on your Diamond Wedding Anniversary on 26th March 2015. 60 happy years, gone too fast

**BARBARA OLIVER** Happy 60th birthday Barb. All my love, Rob xxx  
**BARBARA OLIVER** To a special Sister and Auntie. Congratulations on your 60th birthday on 25th March. Love always, Pauline, Bruce, Michael and Stephen xxxx

## Birthday Remembrance

**IRIS ANGUS** 20th March. A dear Sister-in-Law and Auntie. Loved always and missed so much. From Ann, Neil and family xxx  
**IRIS ANGUS** 20th March. A dear Sister-in-Law and Auntie. Loved always and missed so much. From Ann, Neil and family xxx  
**IRIS ANGUS** Birthday wishes to a very good friend. Wish you were here to celebrate with us. But we will be thinking of you on the day and remembering all the good times we have had. Good night and God bless from your friends, Doreen, Margaret, Norah and Jackie xxxx

## Obituary

**LILIAN CARLYLE** Died peacefully at home on 5th March. Loving Mother, Grandmother and Great Grandmother. Deeply missed and loved by all. Funeral to be held at St Clare's Church at 12.15pm on Wednesday 25th March. Then onto West Cemetery and finally the celebration of her life at Newton Aycliffe Working Men's Club from 1pm.  
**SHEILA BRODIE** Passed away in hospital surrounded by her family on 10th March. Beloved Wife of the late Jim; much loved Mam; also dearly loved Grandma and treasured Great Gran. Private Funeral.

## Thank You

**I WOULD** like to thank everyone for their cards and gifts and their well wishes on my retirement. I have enjoyed every moment serving the residents of Newton Aycliffe on the Eden Town Service Bus. Thank you. Alan (No 17 Eden Bus Town Service Driver)  
**ALICE WATSON** would like to thank her wonderful family at this most difficult time. Also friends and neighbours for the cards of condolence, flowers and phone calls; Father Whalen for his very kind words and David Scott of the Co-op Funeral Service for his help. Thank you all

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Website: www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk



## Get Sporty This Easter

Why not encourage your little one to get more active this Easter as a series of sporty fun activities for young people take place.

Four fantastic days of fun are taking place in the south of the county with football, cricket futsal and tennis on offer.

Tuesday, 31 March, Junior Indoor Football Tournament, Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre, 10am until 4pm.

Wednesday, 1 April, All Star Futsal Tournament for the over 14s, Spennymoor Leisure Centre, 1pm until 5pm.

Wednesday, 8 April, Tennis Training Camp for those aged between 8 and 14 at Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre, 10am and 4pm.

Thursday, 9 April, Junior Cricket Fun Camp for those aged between 8 and 14 at Spennymoor Leisure Centre, 1pm and 5pm.

All of the sessions are being delivered by Durham County Council's sports development team with support from staff at both leisure centres.

John Walker, sports development officer, Durham County Council said: "What could be better than an Easter holiday full of sports for boys and girls which provide both training sessions and competition?"

The sessions aim to build on the success of similar activities which took place during the February Half Term holidays and saw 319 young people take part.

For more information members of the public should log on to [www.durham.gov.uk/youngactivities](http://www.durham.gov.uk/youngactivities) or email: [john.walker3@durham.gov.uk](mailto:john.walker3@durham.gov.uk)

## Aycliffe Sprinter Takes 60 metre Championship

SHILDON RUNNING and Athletics club's "Sprint Squad" have enjoyed a memorable winter season as Newtonian Rachel Bennett (12 yrs old) and Kyle Walton (13 yrs old) excelled during successful Indoor campaigns. On February 1st the pair travelled to Sheffield's E.I.S arena for the North of England Indoor Championships which is contested by athletes from Derbyshire up to Northumberland and from Hull to Liverpool. Rachel won all 3 of her races in impressive style to be crowned U15 girls 60m sprint champion in a new pb and club record of 7.96s. Kyle also competed in the 60m sprint (U15b) and after coming through heats and a semi final, recorded a new pb of 7.71s (club record) in the final to take home the bronze medal.

Next on February 15th, the pair tackled the North East Counties Indoor Championships and once again found themselves amongst the medals. Rachel once again easily came through a heat and semi final to set up a titanic tussle with the U.K no.2 ranked athlete from Gateshead Harriers. In the final a devastating drive phase took Rachel clear of her rival to finish in 7.96s and add the North East counties title to her North of England crown. Kyle finished 3rd in the 60m final in a time that was just outside of his lifetime best. Finally our dynamic duo headed once again to the E.I.S Arena in Sheffield for the English National age group Championships. Again contesting the 60m against older and more experienced



competitors the pair were never fazed. 12yr old Rachel Bennett was looking to add to both her Under 15 girls 60m Northern and North East Championship titles and showed good intentions by winning her heat in 7.96 seconds equalling her PB and club record. The semi final proved a more difficult race with a photo finish required to separate a number of athletes with Rachel producing another good performance to be given 2nd place in 7.98 seconds. In a very competitive final, Rachel started slowly but managed to recover to finish 6th in a close race which saw 4 athletes (3rd to 6th place) finish in 8.1s. Meanwhile Kyle qualified from his heat in a new pb of 6.64s, then improved his pb further to 6.60s in the semi-final to finish in an automatic qualifying position. In the final Kyle got away well only for his older and more powerful competitors to come back strongly in the final 30m. At the finish Kyle had equalled his pb to finish 6th in 6.60s. Rachel is currently ranked inside the U.K top 10 and with another year in the age group will harbour ambitions of a National title in the near future though her more immediate focus will be on the English Schools competition in July. Kyle's pb has given him a U.K ranking of no.22 and with many of the athletes ranked above him moving up to the u17 age group next year Kyle has vowed to return in 2016 with the aim of securing a national medal and climb the u.k rankings! However his more immediate aim is to qualify for the English Schools finals in July where he hopes to contest the 100m and progress as far as possible in the competition.

A club spokesman said - February has been a fantastic month for both Kyle and Rachel who are competing at the lower end of the U15 age group against older and more experienced athletes. They have exceeded all expectations in achieving the above results at 3 major indoor Championships in the space of a month. Both should be proud of their achievements and take inspiration from these exceptional performances as they now prepare to compete in the outdoor season.

## WALKERS WANTED

A series of led walks are taking place across County Durham and it is a chance to get out and about and find out more about walks in your local area.

The short walks are also a popular way for people to take their first steps in improving their health and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. On Walk4Life Day, there is a choice of 30, 60 or 90 minute long walks at the following locations:

- Derwentside; Blackhill Lodge in Consett
- Durham and Chester-le-Street; County Hall in Durham City
- Easington; Peterlee Pavilion
- Sedgefield; Pioneering Care Partnership in Newton Aycliffe
- Durham Dales; Bishop Auckland Town Hall

Each event will begin at 10am with walks taking place from 10.30am.

For more information and to book a place contact Walk4life on 03000 266 555 or email [walk4life@durham.gov.uk](mailto:walk4life@durham.gov.uk) or visit the website at [www.durham.gov.uk/walk4life](http://www.durham.gov.uk/walk4life)

Registration is required to take part in the Walk4Life events and completed registration forms need to be brought along at each event. Group bookings are also available.

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