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Week Ending 15th January 2016

# Newton News

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## Aycliffe Company Wins London Building Project

Finley Structures has secured a contract to build the steel framework for a multiple unit development on the outskirts of London.

The Aycliffe fabricator won the 616-tonne project at Navigation Park in Enfield from West Midlands-civil engineering contractors A&H Construction, on behalf of multi-national Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) SEGRO.

The development is made up of three units totalling 173,000 sq ft including industrial units and office accommodation and Finley Structures has almost finished the steel frame.

Operations manager Jim Graham says "This debut contract with A&H Construction shows how the family-run business is growing into new areas. "This is the first time



we've worked with both A&H Construction and SEGRO".

It shows that we're not just a regional business and we have the capability of working nationally, competing with other steel fabricators of all sizes.

Mr Graham added: "It's another new client for us - we now have new targets and new areas to focus on. We are actively seeking new opportunities, and being more selective about our client base and project selection."

Finley Structures is also currently working on a 432-tonne building at Workington Academy in Cumbria, for Sir Robert McAlpine.

Mr Graham said: "We have a long-established relationship with McAlpine, but we still secured that contract under stiff competition. "Working further afield in different areas of the country does bring new challenges, such as transportation, supervision

and management.

But we're continually looking for efficiency gains in our processes to be competitive. It's paying off in the contracts we're winning on a regular basis. Our average weekly tonnage is continually growing as we explore new markets and secure major projects."

Finley Structures turnover climbed from £3.1m to £16.4m after a string of major contracts, while the firm also took on eight new employees - boosting staff numbers to 68.

Finley is still currently working on a major project in Leeds - a deal worth close to £4m. The family firm has also won a number of other new contracts, including a 600-tonne contract for McLaughlin & Harvey at Heathrow and a 600-tonne contract for BAM Construction at Lincoln University and a 270-tonne project for Interserve at York University's Biomed Building.

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## Driving School's Road Safety Training for Young People

Jack's Driving School would like to thank Eddie and the staff of the Navy Club Newton Aycliffe for their kind help and free use of their premises, to deliver a road safety training day to young people.

Jack's has delivered training including vehicle maintenance to young people throughout Durham for several years and firmly believes that making young people aware of their responsibilities before they become a driver can go a long way to improve their attitude towards road safety. Owning and driving a car is a huge responsibility, so training should not just start when a person gets their licence, and it should not stop simply because they pass the driving test. Learning how to check tyres for tread depth and the correct pressure, checking the engine oil, coolant and windscreen wash are all very simple tasks, but how many of us can honestly say we do these checks on regular intervals.

According to reports from the department of transport, 1,775 people were killed on



British roads in 2014 - 5 per day! 21,657 serious injuries - 62 per day, yet funding is so limited. We often deliver this training for free and really appreciate local businesses like the Navy Club allowing us to use their premises without charge. We strongly believe that driver training should be part of every

school's curriculum and that funding should be readily available.

If anyone could offer a classroom or office space coupled with the use of a large carpark/off road area so we can continue to conduct this training please contact Jack Braley on 07949 195184.

## UNITING TO IMPROVE COMMUNITIES

Dear Sir,  
Whilst knocking on doors and canvassing in the Oakfield, Ashfield, Beechfield area it

occurred to me that it may be a good idea to form a residents group in this lovely part of Newton Aycliffe.

We now have several residents groups operating in Newton Aycliffe: ACORN, WASPS, HORNDAL, WILLIAMFIELD and LINDEN PLACE. They are all building better communities and providing outings and events to bring members of the community together. Residents groups are now sharing ideas and experiences for the benefit of all who live in their boundaries.

From a nucleus of six people who would take on the roles of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Vice Treasurer, Secretary and Vice Secretary a new group could be formed to campaign for better roads, removal of litter or anything else which affects the quality of people's lives.

If any residents are interested, it would be my pleasure to help or advice on setting up such a group. Please feel free to contact me on 01325 321471 Ken Robson Chair of ACORN Residents Association.

## Aycliffe Architects Merge with Darlington Practice

Newton Aycliffe-based Blackwell Architectural Services Ltd has merged with Darlington-based ADG Architects.

Jeff Blackwell, Principal of Blackwell Architectural Services Ltd, becomes a Partner of ADG Architects, which was established more than 30 years ago, and will work closely with Partners John Bell and Paul Kelly.

At the same time, ADG Architects has taken on a very experienced Architect as an Associate, and expanded its support and administrative resources. Architect Malcolm Cundick joins as an Associate from his practice Alpha Plus: Architects, and Samantha Lowdon joins as Business Development Manager.

ADG Architects provides a comprehensive service across a wide range of commercial, Industrial, residential, interior design and 3D Modelling projects, with particular specialisms in Education, Care Home, Agricultural, Historic and Ecclesiastical buildings.

It works for a wide range of clients throughout England including: 3M, Darlington Borough Council, Glaxo Pharmaceuticals, Husqvarna, Lyons Tetley, Magnet, North Yorkshire CC, NSK Bearings, Redcar and Cleveland Council, Richmond School, Subsea Innovation, Volvo Trucks and Warburtons, among many others.

The merger with Blackwell Architectural Services Ltd adds extra resources and specialist experience in agricultural, industrial and residential work, while as a specialist in ecclesiastical buildings, the addition of Malcolm Cundick brings more than 40 years' experience of Church, Community and Historic Buildings to the Practice. An experienced interior designer, Samantha Lowdon will enhance the Practice's interior design capabilities,



as well as taking a lead role in business development.

"The merger with Blackwell Architectural Services Ltd and the recruitment of Malcolm and Samantha marks the start of a controlled growth phase for ADG Architects, which will provide extra architectural and administrative resources to support the work of the partners," says Partner John Bell.

Partner Paul Kelly continues: "We have known and worked with Jeff and Malcolm for a number of years and they share our philosophy of a personal,

partner-led, from concept and feasibility to technical delivery and completion, on time and to budget that helps clients grow their business. Partner Jeff Blackwell says: "We all believe very strongly in providing the same level of service, dedication and attention to detail on all sizes of projects, taking a bespoke approach to architecture, planning and design, so I know that we will work well together and build a more successful practice."

ADG Architects has launched a new website - [www.adgarchitects.co.uk](http://www.adgarchitects.co.uk)

## EXCELLENT PRACTICE

Dear Sir,  
Quite often these days people are quick to complain and criticise, but not to acknowledge excellent service and I wish to thank Aycliffe Dental Practice on Faulkner Road.

I have recently been there with my whole family and then had to make several visits for further treatment.

The eldest of my two daughters had to have teeth extracted on two separate appointments and the staff, in particular Jac and his dental nurse were fantastic with her, reassuring her and explaining what was happening along the way. My youngest daughter also had her check-up and was very nervous but was quickly reassured.

The whole team are very approachable, friendly and accommodating and I think deserve a little thank you for their efforts. Highly recommended to anyone in need of a dentist!

Elaine Peterson

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All band members have at least 20 years experience of playing live in various local bands and clubs around the North East, some of the bands have included: Kneejerk Reaction, Alexander's Palace, Chase and Flashpoint.

The band are primarily a classic rock covers band, covering music ranging from AC/DC, Black Sabbath, Deep Purple, Thin Lizzy and Queen. Through to newer artists such as Billy Idol and Stereophonics, but played with a much harder edge.

**Saturday 23rd January - "Bon Jovi Forever"**

For more information on bands go to  
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**Devolution  
Musings**

Dear Sir

I wish that Ken Robson had mused about devolution in last week's Newton News before "over imbibing whisky" (his words not mine), because everything he said about it was mistaken. Devolution is NOT an extra "two layers of government", there will be NO "super council", the Mayor's office will not cost the "ratepayer" a penny, etc.. It was Mr Robson, you will remember, who a few weeks ago used the Newton News to call for "full frontal lobotomy" for burglars and "public flogging at football stadiums" for fraudsters "as half time entertainment". I repeat: "as entertainment"! Yet this man does not blush to come before the voters and seek election as a Councillor. You could not make it up.

**John D Clare**

P.S. I must thank Mr Robson for one thing: for drawing attention to the fact that Durham County Council is the only Council in England holding a poll on devolution. By the time you read this letter, you should have received your voting papers. I urge you please to read the materials, and to come to a thoughtful and sober decision.

**School Aycliffe Solar Farm Complete**

Saturday 19th December saw the Solar Panel farm go online ahead of schedule. All 17,000 panels have been installed by Electra a sub-contractor to Biosar UK Ltd approximately 1,500 panels were fitted daily bringing the installation forward.

Work has now commenced to complete remedial work, to reinstate the areas around the panels, ready for seed to be

sown, so as to enable livestock to graze around the panels. Biosar UK Ltd would like to thank motorists, pedestrians and residents for their patience during the period whilst transporting the necessary plant and equipment onto site.

The photo's show the erected panels and Mr Denis Marinakis the installation manager for Electra completing the switch on.

The farm will now be producing energy into the national grid for the next 20 plus years weather permitting.

The site is still worth a visit to see what has happened to land that has not really produced worthy crops for many years.

Trevor Sheppard

Neighbourhood Coordinator

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**£5000 Available for  
Community Groups**

County Durham Community Foundation has a wide range of funding available to voluntary and community groups and has three upcoming sessions arranged.

Funding of up to £5000 is available and the Foundation have arranged three funding sessions to give those wanting to apply the opportunity to both find out what is available and get the information they need to apply.

For the first time ever the Foundation will open its doors to voluntary and community groups to give them a chance to come and speak with a member of staff on a one to one basis in their offices.

The session will run from 10:00am - 4:00pm on Tuesday 2nd February at County Durham Community Foundation, Victoria House, Whitfield Court, St John's Road, Meadowfield Industrial Estate, Durham, DH7 8XL. There will be two funding presentations throughout the day with the opportunity to ask questions after, however please feel free to drop in at any point throughout the day and a member of staff will be available.

If you are not able to make it to the Foundation on this day do not worry, the Foundation has arranged two more sessions over the next coming weeks; dates and times below.

**Wednesday 27th January 2016**

**Wheatley Hill Community Association,  
Greenhills Centre, between 10am – 12 noon.**

**Wednesday 3rd February 2016**

**Sedgefield Community Association,  
Ceddesfield Hall between 10am – 12 noon.**

If you are a voluntary and community group in need of additional funding to support your work, please come along to the funding session appropriate to you.

To register your interest at the seminar, please contact Sarah Cauwood on 0191 378 6353 or email Sarah@cdcf.org.uk at County Durham Community Foundation, remembering to give the venue you have selected.

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# 10 Tips to Keep Burglars at Bay This Winter

It's that time of year when we stock our homes with the latest gadgets, expensive jewellery, designer goods, and a time when we may let our guard down.

The Office for National Statistics reported the year ending June 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated 750,000 incidents of domestic burglary. It's important to consider the security of your home during and following the holiday season. Although many people have contents insurance cover, nothing can compensate for the stress it causes, or replace the personal items and gifts you might have lost as a result of a burglary.

NHBC, the UK's leading warranty provider and standard setting body for

new build homes, offers the following security tips to help you keep your home and possessions safe and secure.

## Improve the security potential of your doors

It is important to have robust locks on both the front and back doors. Ensure entrance doors to your home are fitted with securely fixed locks or a multi-point locking system with at least 1000 differs (the number of possible keys for a given lock). Also ensure that you have a latch and deadlocking system.

## Do you have sliding back doors?

These should be secured by way of a multi-point locking system and have an anti-lift device fitted so that doors cannot be lifted from their frame from the

outside.

## Check your window locking systems

Ground floor windows and any others that are easily reached by climbing are recommended to be fitted with lockable devices/handles which cannot be released without a key. If you own a home built in the last ten years, this may already have modern security locks.

## Be secure, but also safe

Some doors can be locked from the inside. If that's the case with yours, and it's locked using a key, make sure you have a spare key in a convenient place nearby, so that you can get out quickly in an emergency. Newer houses are fitted with locks on the front door which have a thumb turn on the inside to provide a quick escape without the use of a key.

## View outside

Ensure that you have a wide angle view of the area immediately outside the main entrance door to check on callers. Newer properties may already have a through-door viewer or clear glazing either to part of the door or a convenient window which provides a view of the main entrance. You may also want to replace your front door if it looks tatty, it's the kind of thing that will attract a burglar's eye.

## Consider a light sensor...

Crime can be prevented by external detection security lighting that switches on after dark when someone is nearby, illuminating the general area. It's highly effective in deterring potential intruders and therefore definitely worth considering if your home doesn't already have it installed.

## ...and alarm systems

A house alarm systems acts in two ways – to deter intruders, and detect the opening of a window or a door. Some systems can also be linked up to a mobile phone number letting the owner know the alarm has been triggered.

## Lock rear entry gates

Make sure your back garden is as private and secure as possible. Many burglaries start at the back, where no-one can see them taking place.

## Keep ladders and other equipment safe

Do not leave ladders, steps etc. visible in the garden, as they attract the keen eye of the burglar and makes things easy for them, so always ensure that they are kept out of sight, ideally in a locked shed or garage.

## If you're away - try to make your home look occupied!

Leave the lights on in the evening (but not just hall or landing lights) or use an automatic time switch. But, if you're away for a length of time, arrange for a neighbour to generally keep an eye on your home while you are away.

# TOP TEN APPRENTICES RECEIVE AWARDS



2015 award winners (l-r): Kieran Laing; Ross Douglas; Adam Tervit; Kacper Siembida; Michael Spence; Michael Davison; Keiron Tague; Gary Patterson; Gavin Bellamy; and (front) Macauley Dean

Ten talented engineering apprentices who work for some of the region's leading employers have received special awards at an annual ceremony which has run for almost 50 years.

Sponsors at the 48th annual South West Durham Training awards evening included Cummins Engines, Stanley Black & Decker, Nifco, Cleveland Bridge, Surtec N E Limited and Lorimer Electrical.

The apprentices were presented with cash awards or tools and silver salvers after excelling in their training at SWDT's Newton Aycliffe centre, where thousands of skilled engineers have launched their careers over the past five decades.

The award winners included advanced apprentice Gary Patterson, 17, from Middleton St George, of Hitachi Rail Europe, who won the 2015 Electrical Award, and Kieran Laing, 19, from Tow Law, who is employed by William Cook, named Best Mechanical Trainee.

Advanced apprentice Adam Tervit, 17, of Bishop Auckland, who works for Surtech N E Limited, received the Machining Skills Award, and advanced apprentice Michael Spence, 17, from Darlington, of Cleveland Bridge Limited, secured the Fabrication Award.

Awards were also given to trainees who had achieved against the odds. Gavin Bellamy, who won the Award for Effort, is employed by steel casting manufacturer William Cook, and returned to education and training aged 30 after leaving school with no qualifications and working as a machine operator.

But the father-of-one, from Stanhope, proved it's never too late to learn after passing his engineering apprenticeship as well as Level 2 Functional Skills in Maths, English and ICT. He is now enrolled on a Level 3 BTEC diploma in engineering and looking forward to his promotion to advanced apprentice.

Tutor Kevin White, who nominated Gavin for the

award, said: "Gavin's progress to date has been phenomenal and shows great dedication. He is the epitome of what makes my job worthwhile."

Gavin, who became a dad five months ago, said he was as surprised as he was delighted to receive the award: "Thanks to the support of William Cook and South West Durham Training I am achieving things I didn't think were possible only a couple of years ago and feel really positive about the future." SWDT is a subsidiary of Bishop Auckland College and Principal & Chief Executive Natalie Davison attended the awards ceremony along with SWDT Chief Executive Lee Childs and representatives of employers and sponsors.

Natalie Davison said: "I'd like to pay tribute to the dedication and hard work shown by all the award winners, whom we wish well in their future careers, and to the superb support they have been given by their employers."

Bishop Auckland College and South West Durham Training work with more than 650 employers and are currently advertising 50 apprenticeship vacancies. An apprenticeships open evening is being held at the Woodhouse Lane campus on Thursday January 14th from 5.30pm to 7.30pm.

To find out more and pre-register visit [bishopaucklandcollege.ac.uk](http://bishopaucklandcollege.ac.uk) or email [start@bacoll.ac.uk](mailto:start@bacoll.ac.uk) or tel 01388 443000.

The full list of award winners:

**2015 Best Year 10 School Learner Award** - Kacper Siembida, Woodham Academy

**2015 Best Education Village Learner** - Macauley Dean, The Education Village

**2015 Machining Award** - Adam Tervit, 17, Bishop Auckland

**2015 Electrical Award** - Gary Patterson, 17, Middleton St George

**2015 Mechanical Award** - Kieran Laing, 19, of Tow Law

**2015 Fabrication Award** - Michael Spence, 17, from Darlington

# British Legion Branch Moves

The Royal British Legion Newton Aycliffe Branch is now located at the Newton Aycliffe Workingmen's club.

Meetings are held on the 1st Sunday each month at 11am. New members welcome.

# ST. JOSEPH'S NURSERY ACCEPT 2 YEAR OLDS

We will be starting to accept 2 year olds into our Nursery provision from April 2016 on an afternoon, 5 afternoons a week. Sessions will start at 12.45-3.45. This is free for families who meet certain criteria. They can contact the school for more details or visit the school website. We will be holding an open morning on Friday 12th February, between 9-11am, where parents can be taken on a tour of the school and see what we have to offer. If you are unavailable on this date alternative appointments can be made by contacting the school.

## Free Healthy Living Course



Make good on your new year's resolutions:

- 12 free sessions
- Free NHS Health Check
- Free personalised support

Newton Aycliffe Youth and Community Centre

Thursday 4th February

10:30 – 11:30

Please register your interest by contacting one of your local health trainers by phone, text or email:

Andy  
07826884687  
[a.stewart@nhs.net](mailto:a.stewart@nhs.net)

Leanne  
07748028006  
[leannehopper@nhs.net](mailto:leannehopper@nhs.net)

0800 8766887 Cdda-tr.WBFL@nhs.net

[www.facebook.com/CountyDurhamWellbeingForLifeService](https://www.facebook.com/CountyDurhamWellbeingForLifeService)



## Unexpected Repair Costs on your Car?

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### EXAMPLE: Repair bill is £400

You are charged £100 (debit card) at the time the loan is agreed and a further three £100 instalments at the same point on each of the following three months.

The total amount you will pay is £400



## Shafto Way Service Centre

RING DAVID or NATHAN

316839 or 316791

[www.shaftowayservicecentre.co.uk](http://www.shaftowayservicecentre.co.uk)

Merry Christmas  
to all our Customers

## Seasoned Hardwood Logs For Sale

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Aycliffe Business Park  
Newton Aycliffe DL5 6DS  
Mobile: 07738 066 723

[CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK](#)

**I am on holiday from  
Tuesday January 26th until  
Thursday 4th February**

*See you then, thanks!*



# Durham Devolution Poll

## Four Important Questions to Answer

Residents in County Durham will be asked for their views on devolution when a county-wide poll begins this week. The results will help to inform the decision over whether Durham County Council agrees to sign a final North East devolution agreement. The agreement would see more decisions made locally and £30m a year additional funding made available to help bolster the region's economy. It would also see the introduction of a regional



## Gymnastics Club Opens at Woodham

Nova Aces Gymnastics club are based in Bishop Auckland and coach general and acrobatic gymnastics to boys and girls age 5+. We have recently opened a satellite club in Newton Aycliffe so if you would like a free session, pop along to Woodham Community Centre any Friday at 6.30pm. Find out more about our club at <http://novaacesgymnastics.co.uk>

elected mayor.

People are being urged to take part in the poll, which includes four questions and can be returned by post or online. Information packs and poll papers will be delivered to all those registered to vote in the county between Wednesday 13 January and Monday 18 January.

The packs and questions have been compiled by Durham University and the poll is being conducted by Electoral Reform Services. All replies must be returned by 5pm on Monday 8

February and a decision on whether County Durham will sign up to a final devolution agreement is expected to be made by the end of February. Cllr Simon Henig, Leader of Durham County Council, said: "The proposed devolution agreement would change the way a number of key decisions are made in the North East.

"It would see more decisions about our economy, transport, jobs and housing development being made in the region instead of in London. Devolution would also see the introduction of a regional elected mayor, who would chair the North East Combined Authority.

"We believe it is important that the people of County Durham are given the chance to give their views on whether this is the right thing to do."

The proposed devolution agreement was negotiated with Government by the North East Combined Authority, which is made up of the seven councils covering Gateshead, Newcastle, North and South Tyneside, Northumberland, Sunderland and County Durham.

It was signed in October 2015 and is conditional on further public consultation, the Government's spending review, legislation passing through Parliament and agreement by each of the seven councils involved in the combined authority. Further information is available at [www.durham.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.durham.gov.uk/consultation)

## Support for Independent Candidate

Dear Syd

I was so pleased to hear that Ken Robson is standing for election in the West Ward of Newton Aycliffe. I have known Ken through his regular attendance at town council meetings over the last number of years and I believe he has the knowledge and ability to do a first class job.

As to the Labour candidate I have never seen him at any of the meetings, so good luck Ken at the forthcoming election. Bill Blenkinsopp Town Councillor

## Mocktails Lessons for a Happier and Healthier 2016 from PCP!

PCP is kicking off the New Year by cutting out alcohol as part of Dry January and helping members of the community to think carefully about what they drink.

On Wednesday 20 January, our dedicated Wellbeing for Life Health Trainers and volunteers will be on hand to help you discover the benefits of cutting down on alcoholic drinks. Alcohol contains high levels of sugar, contributing large amounts of 'empty' calories to a daily diet, as well as being an added cost just after Christmas. It needn't be all doom and gloom though as our Health Trainers have advice on how to enjoy nights out with mocktails at home and alternative drinks in town!

The Wellbeing for Life project offers free support on a one-to-one basis for clients to make their own personal health plans. You may want to cut down on drinking, give up smoking, increase your exercise or start a new hobby. If this sounds like you, then get in touch with our Health Trainer team to see how we can help you or come along on Wednesday 20th to have a chat about the support available.



## Rector Conducts Impressive Service



Dear Sir

May I respectfully draw your attention to one of Newton Aycliffe's Reverends, and guardian angels? I had the good fortune to meet Rev Christopher Pearson, under very sad circumstances recently.

Having travelled a round trip of 15 hours, to attend the funeral of my father's sister, Sylvia Pedely, I have been blessed to have been left with an indelible impression of how I wish all funerals and interments should be conducted.

The Rev Christopher Pearson showed empathy, compassion and a sincere wish to convey to all mourners, the gentleness of my aunt, and I have to say his measured tones and the time he took to read out his words to us, just added gravitas to the Service.

I particularly liked the kind

way he explained how David my cousin, was going to feel in the immediate aftermath. At the interment itself, heavy rain made its presence felt, despite all that, Reverend Christopher Pearson, kept his eyes on my aunt's coffin, and literally, kept speaking the words directly to her, as if he had all the time in the world.

I found this act of reverence not only humbling, but a revelation, because the words spoken, will be the very last ever said to anyone, at a funeral, and as such they will resonate with those assembled for a very long time to come.

It only leaves me to say, that in your midst you are blessed to have a minister of such calibre and I personally will measure all future funerals by the benchmark he has set.

Manuela Wannon, Andover, Hampshire

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Opening Hours:

Mon-Fri 8am-5.30pm; Saturday 8.30am-2pm

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### BRITISH COAL COKING PLANTS

### DEADLINE - 24 APRIL 2016

The High Court has appointed Hugh James and Irwin Mitchell as lead solicitors in a group action for conditions associated with employment at coke works operated by British Coal. Specifically:

- respiratory disease
- temporary exacerbation of asthma
- lung cancer
- squamous cell skin cancer

A closing date for the group register has been set by the Court as 24 April 2016.

If you think you or a deceased family member may have been affected and worked in a coke fuel plant as a coke oven worker and wish to consider joining the group, please contact Hugh James or Irwin Mitchell by 24 February 2016 who will send you further information and assess whether you may be eligible to join the group and claim compensation.

If you instruct an alternative solicitor other than Hugh James or Irwin Mitchell, it is their responsibility to submit notice of any individual wishing to join the litigation to Hugh James and Irwin Mitchell.

Call Hugh James or Irwin Mitchell:

0808 271 4407

Or visit:

[www.hughjames.com/cocomp](http://www.hughjames.com/cocomp) or

[www.irwinmitchell.com/cowb](http://www.irwinmitchell.com/cowb)



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# AYCLIFFE FINANCE COMPANY MOVES TO LARGER PREMISES

A finance company which manages more than £48m-worth of deals a year for clients nationwide has expanded. Commercial Expert has taken on additional team members and moved to larger premises at The HUB Workspace on Aycliffe Business Park. It now expects to see turnover increase and is looking to take on additional staff in 2016 after a record year.

The company was founded by Mike Coates in 2008 when he diversified from the residential mortgage and insurance advice career he began in 2001. Mike was based in Darlington,

and relocated to Aycliffe in 2012. Commercial Expert offers a comprehensive range of business finance to a broad spectrum of clients. Services include business loans, property investment finance, and development finance, bridging finance and crowdfunding loans.

"These are exciting times for Commercial Expert, we're very much on an upward curve," says Mike. "I'd like to think we're seen as a beacon in the world of commercial finance because we're detailed, transparent, rigorous and ethical in everything we do."

"We are delighted to be one of

a small number of commercial finance companies in the region who are directly authorised by the FCA, we have strict guidelines and procedures to follow, which are adhered to, offering our clients confidence and complete peace of mind."

"Commercial finance has become notoriously difficult to obtain from banks by business owners with many feeling that the loyalty factor has disappeared," he added.

"Banks are still lending to businesses, but are much more selective and no longer service every business sector. I heard recently from a client that his bank of 30 years was no longer able to support his business needs, and he needed to find alternative funding. It's about knowing where to go when this happens."

"There are new banks in the market place, what we call 'challenger banks'. They're big organisations with funds to lend, but they don't necessarily have a high street presence. There are literally hundreds of alternative lenders out there, it's just having the knowledge and expertise of knowing who they are, having access to their products and which of their criteria is most suitable for each client."

"For example, many banks are reluctant to lend to the leisure industry but I know of several who specialise in offering this finance and it's my job to match the client with the most



(left-to-right): Pip Colley, Colin Coates, Mike Coates, Daniel Brown and David Hodgson.

suitable lender."

"We work closely with the client providing clear and concise information, keeping them up-to-date at every stage of the process. Not only do we produce the facility paperwork, my team ensures that the client is assisted in completing any other necessary documentation including legal paperwork. All this leads to a speedier completion, so the client receives the funds required in the quickest possible time."

"As managing director, it is important to me that my work ethic and ethos are represented in the team I have around me. I am confident in the abilities of my team and their loyalty speaks volumes, in fact one of them has worked with me for over ten years."

Pip Colley is the latest addition to the Commercial Expert team, who is heading up the personal enquiries and insurance side of the

business, while Susan Driver has also been appointed office administrator.

"I am absolutely delighted with the new additions to the team and the rapid development of the company." Currently the company comprises of MD Mike Coates, company secretary Claire Coates, accounts manager Colin Coates, business advisors Daniel Brown and David Hodgson, advisory board member Mark Whitaker and sales executive Ian Baldam as well as Pip and Susan. Mike's ambitions don't stop there with plans for future growth.

"Our intention is to increase our local client base through our excellent reputation and provide a level of service in the North-East. "We are intending to take on another member of staff to service the expected increase in enquiries in the coming months," he says.

## Brafferton Village News

### BRAFFERTON GETTING FIT!

Moky Fit Durham is bringing us the ultimate dance work out. There will be lots of fun dance routines set to the latest hits and as an introductory offer the first class on Monday 25th January is FREE FOR EVERYONE! (£3 usual fee with reductions for block bookings). It is suitable for all fitness levels and coordination is not needed! The class will be held in the

village hall from 11.30-12.30 so get yourself along for a free, fun, fitness session.

We are also just in negotiations for a different evening exercise class, and are looking to set up a walking group, so there will soon be something for everyone!

As always you can find more details at our Facebook page <https://m.facebook.com/BraffertonVHA/>

## BIG ENERGY SAVING NETWORK

Find out how to save money on your household energy bills this winter by coming along to a BESN event.

You will receive one-to-one advice and help with making any changes that can help you save money and energy in the home.

For example, switching supplier could save you over £200/year.

We will check to see if you are eligible for special help such as the Warm Homes Discount, a replacement boiler, or installation of a central heating system.

**This advice will be available at:**

St Clare's Church on Friday 29th January 2016  
From 10.00am until 4.00pm.

To book an appointment please call Ernie on 01325 313449

PLEASE BRING A RECENT ENERGY BILL  
+ YOUR ANNUAL ENERGY STATEMENT

## Free Fit to Drop Weight and Size Loss Sessions (Age 16+)

Free 8 week course starting Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at  
Neville Parade Community Centre

Aimed at helping you improve your wellbeing by becoming more active and help you make healthier choices

2 sessions per week

1<sup>st</sup> session includes a 30 minute exercise session and a 30 minute weight and measure sessions

2<sup>nd</sup> session is a 30 minute exercise session

Health trainer support is also available

The sessions will include moderate to hard activity

Monday's 6pm – 7pm

Thursday's 6pm – 6.30pm

Contact Bill - 07873 190 833 to book a place

# Make a difference in 2016 Become a foster carer!



**Foster carers make a real difference to the lives of children and young people across County Durham.**

But, did you know that 450 families are needed across the North East? Come along to our information session and find out how you could be a foster carer for Durham County Council. You can meet our team, ask questions, find out about the support, training and how you can get started.

### Information Events:

Saturday 16 January, between 10.30am and 2.00pm

Monday 18 January, between 11.00am and 6.30pm

Both events will be held at County Hall, Durham.



### Contact us:

Tel: 03000 269 400

Email: [fostering@durham.gov.uk](mailto:fostering@durham.gov.uk)

Web: [www.durham.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.durham.gov.uk/fostering)





## Panto at Town Care Home



Residents and staff at Defoe Court would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year and take this opportunity to thank North East Producers for their Alice in Wonderland pantomime, the Excel Church, St Clare's Church and Woodham School for Carol Services and Ken Bartlett and Shibbymac for our Christmas entertainment.

## Road Safety Training for Young Drivers - Free

Young drivers in County Durham and Darlington can benefit from extra road safety training thanks to a free voucher scheme.

The Excelerate programme is designed to target the three main types of crashes young people are involved in by providing training at five key stages.

Durham County Council co-ordinates and delivers the training on behalf of the County Durham and Darlington Road Safety Partnership.

A new scheme has now been launched giving young people aged up to 25 the opportunity to download free vouchers to use for the training after they pass their driving test.

The vouchers, which have no expiry date, will also be available during 2016 from a number of outlets throughout County Durham and Darlington.

Paul Watson, road safety manager, said: "We would urge any young drivers who have recently passed their test to take advantage of the free safety training on offer – it's free and can reduce the risk of accidents. We would also encourage any family members and friends of young drivers to let them know about the scheme."

"Nine per cent of all driving licences are held by young drivers but according to research they are involved in 40 per cent of fatal road crashes on our roads."

"The Excelerate young driver course looks at the three main kinds of crashes

involving young drivers and works with them to help them to protect themselves and others while they're behind the wheel."

Durham Police and Crime Commissioner Ron Hogg funds the Excelerate programme and has lent his support to the voucher scheme.

He said: "Improving road safety is one of the key areas I am focusing on in my Police and Crime Plan."

"This is an excellent course for young people as it will help them to forge a sensible attitude to their driving and prepare them for a safer future on our roads. This is also an ideal opportunity which parents can take advantage of and enrol new drivers in their family on to the free training course."

For more information, and to download a voucher, visit [www.excelerateurham.com](http://www.excelerateurham.com) or [www.durham.gov.uk/roadsafety](http://www.durham.gov.uk/roadsafety)

## Town Rector's Retirement



The Rector of Great Aycliffe, Rev. Christopher Pearson, retires due to ill health at the end of February.

It is unfortunate to lose such a well-respected priest after only being in the town for such a short period.

On behalf of the townspeople we thank him for his ministry and wish him happiness in his retirement.

## PCP 2 week Closure for Refurbishment

The Pioneering Care Centre will be refurbished in February 2016, including completely replacing the striking Mall floor that has been admired for over sixteen years.

The Pioneering Care Centre in Newton Aycliffe has been open for 17 years in January 2016, providing a valuable resource and healthy living centre for local people and helping services to be delivered in the community. As with any centre it is important to maintain the facilities to a high standard and therefore PCP's Board have approved a refurbishment programme, including major works such as relaying the Mall floor.

Due to the extensive work being undertaken, the Centre will close for two weeks from Monday 15th February until Monday 29th February.

PCP apologises for any inconvenience that this may cause, but from a health and safety perspective it will be impossible for clients and the public to access the building during this period. The close down period has been kept to a minimum to cause as little disruption as possible and alternative arrangements to deliver support have been made where possible.

All members of the community are warmly invited to attend the launch party for the new refurbished Centre in early March, with a showcase of activities and services on offer. Further details will be announced in the Newton News shortly. For more information of the work being done or any of the activities run in the Pioneering Care Centre, please contact Reception on 01325 321234.

For further information contact the Pioneering Care Centre, Carer's Way, Newton Aycliffe, DL5 4SF.

Tel: 01325 321234






Email: [enquiries@pcp.uk.net](mailto:enquiries@pcp.uk.net) - Website: [www.pcp.uk.net](http://www.pcp.uk.net)

Twitter: @PioneeringCare and Facebook: /PCPandCentre

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For more information on this service, contact:

Donna Kelly, Senior Health Trainer

Tel: 07854 741673 Email: [donna.kelly@pcp.uk.net](mailto:donna.kelly@pcp.uk.net)

## Dementia Awareness

New Pathways Together meet at Dementia Cafe at the Western Area Community Centre, Newton Aycliffe DL5 7DZ on Tuesday 26th January from 10.00am until 1pm.

Members of the Alzheimers Society will be available to answer any questions and give you help and guidance.

We meet every Tuesday and Thursday morning and organise regular activities, outings, etc. Please come along and join us.

We will be celebrating our first year of meetings on 9th February and we have just been awarded a large grant which will allow us to do more activities, all are welcome.

Ring 01325 308094 / 07967 901477 for further details.

## HAVE YOU GOT NEWS FOR US?

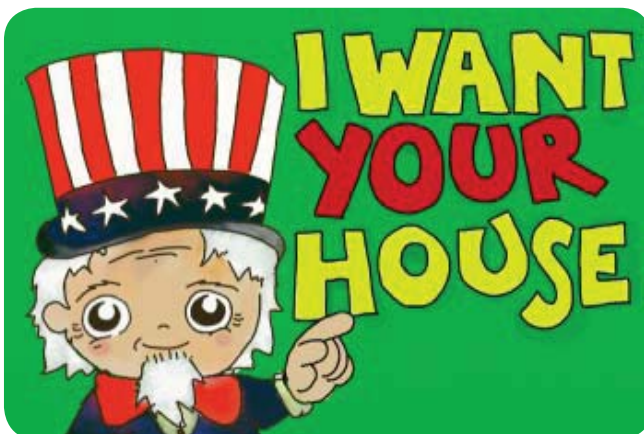
We are always interested in local news stories. We like to feature good news and interesting items on achievements & community service

Tel: Syd  
01325 300212  
or [syd@newtonnews.co.uk](mailto:syd@newtonnews.co.uk)



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**The Village Pharmacy**

Pioneering Care Centre, Newton Aycliffe

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Pioneering Care Centre, Burn Lane  
Newton Aycliffe, Co. Durham DL5 4SE

Telephone: **01325 311297**

Email: [thevillagepharmacy@intrapharm.com](mailto:thevillagepharmacy@intrapharm.com)

[www.thevillage-pharmacy.co.uk](http://www.thevillage-pharmacy.co.uk)

### OPENING TIMES

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# STUDENT VOLUNTEER TO WORK IN PERU

A LOCAL student is aiming to raise £9000 to volunteer in Peru and raise awareness of sustainable energy and climate change in rural communities.

Eve Redhead from Carwardine Close, Woodham, Newton Aycliffe has, since leaving Greenfield Community College, gone on to study Sustainable Development (MA) at The University of Edinburgh and is passionate about furthering her education outside of the lecture hall.

Miss Redhead will be volunteering on behalf of Edinburgh Global Partnership (EGP) who provides sustainable development initiatives across Africa, Asia and South America. EGP are a student-run, non-profit society based at the University that aims to assist in community led projects overseas.

In partnership with WindAid Peru, eight students from The University of Edinburgh will travel to Peru to spend their summer volunteering



in rural areas with the aim of providing electricity to rural communities, allowing them to reach basic needs through renewable energy. And to spread awareness of sustainable development and climate change in the Global South.

The project takes place over a space of eight weeks that includes – four weeks constructing wind turbines and preparing educational aids in the coastal city of Trujillo. Then onto two weeks installing turbines. As well as educating the locals on the maintenance and the importance of renewable energy in the rural village Canlle, a village an hours walk away from the nearest road. Finally two weeks travelling around surrounding villages spreading awareness to the local people and repairing previously installed turbines. Students volunteering with EGP are required to fundraise £9000 that goes directly into the project to buy turbines that are then donated to the communities. Also covering the costs of the trip. Miss Redhead kicked the fundraising off on Boxing Day by participating in the Boxing Day Dip at Seaton Carew Beach, raising an amazing £823, helping her on the way to reaching £9000!

Any donations are welcome and hugely appreciated on Eve's Just Giving page. <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fundraiser-web/fundraiser/showFundraiserProfilePage.action?userUrl=egpwindaid2015>

## Make a Difference to a Child's Life

Do you have what it takes to make a difference to a child or young person's life? If so we would love to hear from you.

The new year period is often a time when people think about changing something in their life.

Durham County Council's fostering service has launched a campaign to encourage more people to become foster carers and change their life, and a child's life.

More than 450 foster carers are needed across the North East.

As part of the campaign 'Make a Difference in 2016 – Become a Foster Carer,' which runs from January 4 to 18, information sessions are being held to help people find out more about fostering.

The sessions take place at County Hall in Durham, on Saturday 16 January between 10.30am and 2pm and Monday 18 January, between 11am and 6.30pm.

The council's fostering team and foster carers will be available to answer any questions and help people find out how they can get started.

People will also be able to learn about the wide range of professional support and extensive training that is available to foster carers in County Durham.

Florence Coulter, fostering team manager, said: "We know that foster carers make a real difference to the lives of the children and young people that they care for and we would like to encourage more people to find out about how rewarding a career in fostering is."

"Lots of people have the skills to become a foster carer, but aren't quite sure what's involved."

"Our information sessions are a great way for you to meet our foster carers and hear what it's like to foster. "We hope you will come along and find out more."

To find out more about becoming a foster carer or the information sessions, visit the fostering service's website: [www.durham.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.durham.gov.uk/fostering) email: [fostering@durham.gov.uk](mailto:fostering@durham.gov.uk) or phone 03000 269 400.

Members of the public can also find out first-hand what it is like to foster with Durham County Council by watching our online video at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIMh7xjQ\\_tM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIMh7xjQ_tM)

## BLIND LIFE IN DURHAM MEETING

The next "Blind Life in Durham" meeting will be held at Simpstone Court on Thursday 28th January.

We will have a visit by Liz Charles from Durham Community Action to talk about energy advising and assessing gas and electricity needs.

Start the New Year with a resolution to get the most out of it, we stress the 'Life' in Blind Life. Come and see what we do and what you can do with our help.

# Youthy Hungry for Funding

Members and user groups at Newton Aycliffe Youth and Community Centre are tucking in thanks to funding from Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership (GAMP). The centre successfully received funding from GAMP to help purchase new crockery and cutlery as part of plans to improve the centre's Beveridge Community Café.

A number of user groups are benefiting from the funding; these include the Come Eat Together initiative established by Age UK. This particular project will tackle the issue of social isolation amongst older residents by providing a 'Monday Carvery' luncheon club.

Vince Crosby, from Newton Aycliffe Youth and Community Centre, said: "The funding we received from GAMP will allow the centre to develop our plans to ensure that the Beveridge Café goes from strength to strength."

On behalf of the centre I would like to thank GAMP for their support." If anyone is interested in attending the Monday Carvery, please contact 'Come Eat Together' on 0191 374 6577 to book a place.

Newton Aycliffe Youth and Community Centre received £530 from the GAMP Community Grant Fund. The Community Grant Fund allowed local community groups to apply for grants between £250 and £750 after GAMP allocated £10,000 of its Area Budget towards the initiative.

Other groups who have benefitted from the grants



include: Lifeline Community Action, The Pop in Club, Walworth School, New Pathways Together, Newton Aycliffe Youth FC, Great Aycliffe Town Council, Great Aycliffe Cancer Support Group, New Friends New Places, Aycliffe Village School PTS, Greenfield Arts Centre, Aycliffe Triathlon Club, ACLE Scouts and

Agnew Community Centre. Brian Riley, GAMP Coordinator, said: "The success of the fund means it is now fully allocated and has proved to be of immense benefit to a wide range of local groups, who work within our community." GAMP is one of 14 Area Action Partnerships set up by Durham County Council.

## GREAT AYCLIFFE TOWN COUNCIL

**Dates and Times of Statutory Meetings of the Town Council and its Committees**

**Wednesday 27th January 2016**

**Council Meeting - 7.15pm**

### QUESTION TIME

A period of up to 20 minutes has been also set aside for an elector to ask questions, give evidence or make representation on any item of business included on the agenda of the Council, and its Committees.

With the exception of the Annual and Extra-Ordinary Council Meetings members of the public can submit a written question for the Council Agenda as long as it is submitted 7 clear days before a meeting.

If members of the public have any questions it would be appreciated if they could make them known prior to the start of the meeting. Agendas/Reports are available on the Council's Website on the Friday afternoon preceding the meeting. ([www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk](http://www.great-aycliffe.gov.uk))

The Press and Public are cordially invited to attend.

"The Public Entrance to the Council Chamber will be open 30 minutes prior to the commencement of meetings".



## Pay Cut for Teaching Assistants

Dear Sir,  
I find it very disappointing that the Labour group at Durham County Hall voted to cut teaching assistants wages. Can our seven Labour County Councillors tell us which way they participated and did they vote to rob these people of their wages?

In Aycliffe we have a lot of hard working Assistants, in our schools who work very hard to support and look after children. I am sure teachers will agree their Class Assistants do a very good job. Shame on the Labour Group and I trust their actions will be recalled when voting at election time comes around again as voters expect to be supported and not go along the Labour Party line.

Some of these assistants travel to work and cannot claim travel expenses unlike our County Councillors who receive good travel expenses on top of their allowance for attending meetings.

Mrs Maud Gray,  
Former Teaching Assistant.

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**FIND A DOG a home**

*Pooch sizes up a new home*

The annual season of over-indulgence has come to an end and so for many of us it's time to commit to losing weight and doing at least a little more exercise, and the team at Dogs Trust Darlington are helping a plump pooch do just that. Seven-year-old Staffordshire Bull Terrier, Jess, weighs in at 25.2kg, around 5kg overweight for her breed, so the team are keen to help her trim down to a healthier size in time for her to head off to a new home. Jess found herself homeless a week before Christmas through no fault of her own – her owners simply didn't have the time to look after her any more. She is a happy, healthy older girl who has made lots of two-legged and four-legged friends in the short time she has been at the centre. She loves playing with her toys and is used to living in a busy, family home with children so the team are hoping she finds a home soon.

Dogs Trust Veterinary Director, Paula Boyden, explains that whilst the temptation might be to treat your pooch to a doggy delicacy at any time of year, it's best to make it an occasional treat. She says:

"It's important not to over feed dogs as the excess weight puts strain on their bodies, particularly the heart and joints. Dog treats and special meals, for example dog-friendly cakes, should be occasional and certainly not a replacement for a regular diet. Such treats are often highly calorific so if you are giving them to your dog, reduce their daily meal portions accordingly."

If you think you could give Jess a home, please call Dogs Trust Darlington on 0300 303 0292 for further details. You can find out more about the dogs looking for their forever homes, by visiting [www.dogstrust.org.uk](http://www.dogstrust.org.uk)



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## By-Election Address PETER DAVIES

Dear Sir,  
It is a huge privilege to stand for election in Newton Aycliffe, and even more so as a member of the Labour Party. I believe with confidence that this town is an excellent place to live and raise a family due to the principles on which it was designed: community, aspiration and kindness. As a councillor I would demand these principles are central to every decision we make. People at the moment are stretched, they are over-worked and they are sustaining their families with every moment they have. Rather than push people further to the edge of society, as the current Conservative government is doing, I will make it my role to value each member of my community and give them a voice.

I will utilise my expertise of working with young people to help foster a sense of hope for the future which is currently being swept from under them. I will encourage strengthening links with our business community – which, by the way, makes us the envy of the North East. I will demand that our green open spaces remain that way for as long as I represent you. It has been an enormous pleasure to speak to many people over this campaign about our town and its future.



My only regret is that I will not be able to speak to every resident. I am enormously proud of the town we have created over the past seventy years. I hope to be part of enhancing a town which our children and grandchildren can be proud of too.  
Peter Lewis Davies  
Labour Candidate  
for the West Ward

## CHANGES AT TOWN CENTRE HAIR SALON

Stephen Russel hairdressing opened its doors over 30 years ago and has seen change in so many things, not only in the town centre but with the business, clients, the team and fashion. Steve said: "It is vital we respond to clients needs and last year we welcomed back our manager Bekki from maternity leave. Bekki has been popular for 16 years in the salon and has gained a fantastic reputation in the hairdressing industry". Stephen introduced two new stylists, Donna has many years experience and Katie a new graduate stylist is fast gaining a reputation as a brilliant cut and colourist. Debbie is the salon's in-house beautician with 20 years experience.



In response to client demand Stephen Russel have reopened on Mondays, 9.30am - 5pm with senior stylist Allison. A new mid-week price list started in January with selected stylists. The price list will include cut and blow dry's and colours. Cut and blow dry will be £25, a cut and colour £49 and a colour and blow dry £38. The colour will include roots, an all over colour or a t-section of highlights. Stephen added: "We have taken our colour ideas further by creating a brand new colour express service. This is specifically aimed at our colour clients who need that quick re-touch between colour appointments, and it also helps them get over those bad hair days! If you have a student card bring it down to Stephen Russel and receive £5 off all your hair charges!"

## Primary School Places Deadline Approaching

Parents in County Durham are reminded they are running out of time to apply for primary school places for their children. The deadline for people to apply for places for September 2016 is Friday, 15 January.

Parents can apply online at [www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions) where forms and full details are available.

Forms can also be requested by phoning 03000 265896 or by writing to the School Admissions and Transport Team at Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UJ. If posting, the forms should be sent back by 'Royal Mail Signed for' or 'Royal Mail Special Delivery.'

The offer of a place will be made to parents on Monday, 18 April. If you applied online, you will receive an offer email. If you did not apply online you will receive an offer letter. These should arrive by no later than 18 or 19 April.



Compiled by County Councillor John Clare

The bit.ly and ow.ly links are shortened URLs; type them into your browser to go to the relevant webpages.

### COUNCIL

- My report on this week's Cabinet meeting: [bit.ly/DCCCabJan16](http://bit.ly/DCCCabJan16)
- My report on last week's DCC Economy Scrutiny Committee (housing, spending, performance): [bit.ly/DCCEcSJan16](http://bit.ly/DCCEcSJan16)
- The Durham devolution poll has gone out to registered electors: [bit.ly/DEVOpoll](http://bit.ly/DEVOpoll) (you can read my summary of the proposals here: [bit.ly/NNJCNECA](http://bit.ly/NNJCNECA))
- The deadline for people to apply for Primary School places for September 2016 is Friday 15 January – apply online at [bit.ly/DCCSA](http://bit.ly/DCCSA) or phone 03000 265896
- Safer Communities exhibition at County Hall, 19-29 January (main dates 20th and 27th): [bit.ly/DCCSC](http://bit.ly/DCCSC)
- Free Excelerate road safety training vouchers for young drivers: [bit.ly/Excelerate](http://bit.ly/Excelerate)
- Sign up now for news on #DurhamRemembers - a series of events to commemorate the Battle of the Somme – and you could win free tickets: [ow.ly/WT68Y](http://ow.ly/WT68Y)
- Funding has been released for the King's Drive improvements: [bit.ly/DCCKDfund](http://bit.ly/DCCKDfund)
- Report those potholes! [bit.ly/DCCpotholes](http://bit.ly/DCCpotholes)
- DCC Countryside Service - January newsletter: [bit.ly/DCCCNJan16](http://bit.ly/DCCCNJan16)
- Give your views on the police budget for 2016-17: [bit.ly/PCCJan16](http://bit.ly/PCCJan16)
- Last week's update from our MEP Jude Kirton-Darling: [bit.ly/JKD10Jan](http://bit.ly/JKD10Jan)

### COMMUNITY

- My report on the Horndale PACT meeting, 6 January: [bit.ly/HorndalePACT6Jan](http://bit.ly/HorndalePACT6Jan)
- The Pioneering Care Centre will be closed 15-29 February for renovation work
- Introduction to Family History – a 5 week course at the Pioneering Care Centre from 16 January, 10-11.30am. Cost £25. To attend call 01325 321234
- MAD choir is recruiting: [bit.ly/MadChoir](http://bit.ly/MadChoir)
- Norman Cornish Exhibition – Spennymoor Town Hall: 01388 815276

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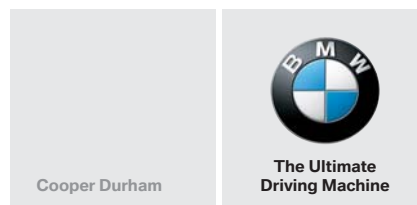
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## MP CONGRATULATES NEWTON NEWS FOUNDER ON M.B.E



Phil presents Syd with a bottle of House of Commons whisky watched by sons, (left to right) Stuart, Chris and Paul.

Phil Wilson MP visited Newton News founder Syd Howarth to congratulate him on being awarded an M.B.E. for his services to the community.

Having moved to Newton Aycliffe in 1963 it wasn't long before Syd's printing business (the first in the town) took over the local magazine and eventually gave the town its own newspaper, free to every household. Which people across Newton Aycliffe all still enjoy today.

Syd however, has done much more than provide Newton Aycliffe with its very own newspaper. A Rotarian for over 33 years, he has led numerous community projects across the town. Most notably out of these are the Nature Park behind Gestamp, the War Memorial outside of St. Clare's Church, and the refurbishment of the welcome sign, benches and the Blue Bridge.

In congratulating Syd, Phil Wilson said "It is great to see such a fantastic and dedicated man rewarded for his services to the local community. I am very pleased Syd is receiving recognition for all the hard work and time he has put into both the Newton News and community projects across the town."

Speaking with Syd's sons, it was obvious to Mr Wilson that Newton Press is more than just a business. They told Phil "we are all extremely proud of all that our dad has done and achieved over the years, he is a true gentleman and inspiration to all the family."

Commenting Mr Wilson said "it is clear that family and community are at the heart of the Newton News and Newton Press."

Overwhelmed by the congratulations and support he has received, Syd said "One of my guiding principles has been to give something back to the community which gave me, my family and my employees a living. I love my town and support it fully in every way possible. The Newton News has given residents a voice, and by reflecting public opinion in its columns has actively influenced decision making in our locality."

## Huntsman Slump to Another Cup Defeat

After 6 weeks without a competitive fixture due to the weather, The Huntsman were finally back in action last Sunday away to Gainford Cross Keys in The Heart Foundation Cup. The original fixture was due to be played at Simpature Park, however due to a waterlogged pitch, the fixture was reversed to Gainford, whose pitch was in excellent condition.

The match started very scrappy, with neither side really getting to grips with the game, possible showing signs of rust due to not playing recently. However, the away side slowly started to build some momentum, and finally broke the deadlock as a good piece of play down the right hand side provided Shaun Sproates with a good opportunity. His right footed shot stung the hands of the goalkeeper, and Reed Molloy was on hand to tap in.

This lead didn't last long however, as Gainford got a free kick on the edge of The Huntsman box in a dangerous position. Huntsman goalkeeper Anthony McDonald was left helpless, as the free kick was bent low into the bottom corner around the wall to

make it 1-1 at half time.

The home side picked up where they left off in the first half, and it was another set-piece that was The Huntsman's undoing. McDonald was adjudged to have handled outside his area from a goal-kick, and the resulting free kick was dispatched from 18 yards into the far right corner.

As much as the away side tried to get back into the game, they simply couldn't muster any further clear cut chances as the home side ran out deserved 2-1 winners.

Next up is a top of the table division 2 clash this Sunday against fellow unbeaten side Coundon Durham Ox, where the winners will go 3pts clear at the top of the table. Kick off 10:30am at Simpature Park.

## LOCAL SPORT

### Swimming Club News

Matthew Bradley and Hannah Featherstone competed in the ASA National Short Course Meet at Sheffield 17th to 20th December. Following their outstanding results at the Regional Championships earlier in the month great things were expected of them. It was a real test for both of them as many of the athletes competing were of Olympic standard.

Matthew was the first swimmer up for Sedgfield putting in a great performance in the heat of the 100 Breast Stroke,

unfortunately he pulled a muscle and following medical advice had to pull out of all of his swims.

Hannah competed in the 100 Backstroke and the 100 FS and the 50 FS and 200 FS. Three of her swims were on her best ever times but it was in the 200 FS that it all came together. She posted a time of 1:59 which gave her third place in the B Final. This is the fastest time for a female athlete in the history of Sedgfield 75 Swimming Club. A truly great performance to finish the year.

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## COUNCILLORS COMMEND ELECTION CANDIDATE

Dear Sir,  
As Labour Party colleagues of Great Aycliffe Town Council West Ward candidate, Peter Davies, the Aycliffe West County Councillors Eddy Adam and Kate Hopper have every confidence in him as a local resident.

Peter's knowledge of the town's proud past and future potential stand him in good stead to serve the West Ward community as a mature, conscientious councillor who will work hard to ensure Great Aycliffe continues to be a pleasant, safe and prosperous place to live.

As such, we would urge West Ward residents to cast their votes for the progressive and forward-looking candidate, Peter Davies.

Cllrs Kate Hopper & Eddy Adam

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## Town's Cancer Support Group

May I wish everyone a Happy New Year on behalf of Great Aycliffe Cancer Support Group

Our next Meeting is Thursday 4th February at 6pm at Newton Aycliffe Youth Centre as we don't meet in January and August so apologies to anyone who might have turned up last week.

We tried doing January last year but there was only a few attended so we decided not to have one in that month. Transport will be provided each month for those who don't have a car or who may be too ill to drive.

Trips and activities will run throughout the year so if anyone is interested or would like further information please ring Allison on 07762 258696 or go to our website [www.greataycliffecancersupportgroup.co.uk](http://www.greataycliffecancersupportgroup.co.uk)

## Bad Weather Spoils Aycliffe Junior Football Matches



A planned busy weekend for Aycliffe Juniors was again affected by the weather, with only three teams playing

but one group also enjoyed a fantastic weekend in a warmer Spanish climate.

The Under 9's were away at Billingham Wasps and despite a whole hearted effort they found themselves four goals down at half time. Two of those conceded being from unfortunate deflections.

Aycliffe managed to pull one back with Thomas finding a way past the impressive Billingham keeper. The final score showed a 6-1 loss but the seven available players did exceptionally well and showed good signs of improvement. Thomas was the man of the match for this game.

The Under 10's Russell

Foster league side played on Saturday against Velocity FC raptors, a side well established in a league the Aycliffe team have just been promoted in to. The Raptors slicker finishing was the difference as the Aycliffe team played well overall but were caught on the break three times. The game ended with a 4-1 defeat despite scoring first through Bo's goal. The seven available players in the TJFA squad were unable to play their scheduled game with Seaton Carew as neither side could locate a suitable playing surface.

A group of players from the under 10's sides including Aaron, Charlie, Harry, Jake, Ollie, Sam, Thomas and Zack were joined by under 9 Jake Blythe for a memorable trip to Barcelona over the weekend. After taking in a Messi hat trick at the Nou Camp during the Barcelona game against Grenada on Saturday the players got to enjoy their own game against the UE Cornella youth side the following morning. It was an early start after a long day and night before for the team, and their dads, in order to travel to Espanyol for the fixture. The boys faced a physically strong team who had some exciting talents and fatigue was a contributing factor when Aycliffe conceded late in the first half after an even opening to the game. Inspiring words from the ever youthful Aycliffe manager, Adrian, spurred the boys on for a difficult second half. Despite conceding again Ollie pulled back the crucial away goal to put the team in a good position for the second leg. With the Barcelona based team unlikely to travel for a repeat fixture to complete the tie, the contest will be classed as a great success and an overall win for Aycliffe in the memories of those involved.

Each of the planned games for the older sides were postponed due to pitches being waterlogged across the local area, any sightings of the big yellow thing in the sky would be greatly welcomed by all at the Juniors!

## THIRD ROUND FA VASE WIN FOR AYCLIFFE FC

Tuesday 12 January 2016

FA Vase Third Round (at Durham)

Newton Aycliffe 1 v Atherton Collieries 0

Exactly a month after it was supposed to take place Newton Aycliffe FC finally lined up against Atherton Collieries in the Third Round of the FA Vase. The result was well worth the wait with Aycliffe taking the win with the game's solitary goal. They now meet fellow Northern League side Marske United at home on Saturday 16th January with the winners travelling to Camberley Town in Surrey as the competition reaches its last 16.

The recent appalling wet weather has prevented progress being made in the competition. With Moore Lane Park remaining waterlogged this week the Club took the bold decision to play a home match away from Aycliffe. With most pitches in the area being in a similar condition it is not easy to find an alternative which will satisfy the FA's requirements for Vase matches. However, the artificial surface of New Ferens Park in Durham City fitted the bill & Tuesday's game was moved at very short notice.

Aycliffe had not played since the week before Christmas but started positively against a strong Atherton side. During the first twenty minutes both sides had chances but the shooting lacked accuracy with several shots blasted over the bar. On the half hour Atherton came close to taking the lead but were denied by an offside flag from the Assistant Referee. The objections from the small but vociferous away supporters suggested they were not impressed with the decision. In the following minutes Aycliffe began to show more promise & their attacking play to caused problems for the Atherton defence but they went into the break with nothing to show for their efforts.

The "home" side began the second half well & came close to scoring just a minute after the restart. Brian Close's shot may have been heading goalwards but a deflection off the Referee's head denied the former Middlesbrough midfielder his second goal of the season. The only goal of the game came after 55 minutes. Matty Moffat received the ball near the half way line & played an excellent pass through to Stuart Banks who drove forward & placed a low shot into the far corner beyond the Atherton keeper's reach.

For the last half hour Aycliffe had to withstand a determined effort from their opponents to draw level. They were not helped when central defender Alex Kitchen was shown a straight red card with 16 minutes remaining. Peter Dixon shuffled his pack with forward Dennis Knight taken off for Grant Hickman who took Kitchen's place in the centre of the Aycliffe defence. With a numerical advantage Atherton pressed forward but were unable to break through. Their last attempt being the best, after 5 minutes of injury time, Aycliffe keeper James Winter was called on to make an excellent high save, preserving the lead.

The final whistle brought relief & joy to those Aycliffe fans who had made a 15 mile journey to watch a home match. The side worked hard for the win &

repeat result would bring a 540 mile round trip to Camberley Town at the end of January.

Aycliffe are enjoying their most successful season ever & if you are a lapsed supporter or a newcomer to non-league football why not get yourself along to Moore Lane to lend your support.

## Situations VACANT



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**Key Skills:** CIPD Level 3 or above qualification. Comprehensive and sound knowledge of employment law and its application for organisational policy development.

Ability to exercise discretion, high levels of initiative and independent decision making.

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## VIEWS ON POLICE FUNDING WANTED

RESIDENTS have the opportunity to give their views on the police budget for 2016-17, thanks to a public consultation launched this week.

Between 11th and 27th January, members of the public can have their say in the annual consultation, either online or at a number of public events across County Durham and Darlington.

The Police and Crime Commissioner for County Durham and Darlington, Ron Hogg, proposes an increase of 1.98% to the amount of Council Tax which goes to the police service. This increase equates to just £3.22 over

the year, or 6p a week for the average house in Band D.

Ron said: "As PCC I am responsible for setting the police budget. In the recent Comprehensive Spending Review, the Government indicated that it expects PCCs to increase the precept by up to 2 per cent when setting their budget for 2016-17.

"They also stated, as a result, the overall national policing budget will be protected in line with inflation. However the amount of funding coming to local policing from Government is still reducing year on year.

"The total provisional grant received by Durham in 2016-17 will be £457,127 less than in 2015-16. The small increase I am proposing will raise approximately £520,000 and help to keep the equivalent of eleven Police Officers on the street. "I am committed to ensuring that the police have the resources they need to continue to provide an excellent service to the public. The survey is short and will only take a minute or two to complete. I encourage residents to get involved and let me know their views."

The survey and details of the public events are available on Ron's website, at: www.durham-pcc.gov.uk, and are available on Facebook or Twitter (search for Durham PCC). You can also give your views by telephone, at: 03000 264631.

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## New Artwork for Surgery

Greenfield Arts are excited to be working with Bewick Crescent Doctors Surgery in Newton Aycliffe to create a new artwork which will be displayed in their waiting room, to improve the surgery environment and promote positive well-being. This is a great opportunity for the students of Greenfield Community College to explore their own creativity to aid health and well-being. So far students have been working with artist Vicky Holbrough to explore smart materials, which have ever changing properties. They are also investigating how light can affect them and how their ideas can be displayed successfully. They are particularly interested in how materials can change their state whilst on display, therefore interacting with the patients and changing people's perceptions.

This is really exciting for the students who are keen to investigate, play with materials and experiment, developing their discussion and team work skills. The art work will go on display early this year, after discussions with their patient group who will give the patients perspective. A project where arts and science really come together to make people feel good. Be sure to keep an eye out for its launch!

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## County Face Hard Decisions Following Government Cuts

Detailed analysis of both the Government's grant allocation for Durham County Council and the impact of the Chancellor's Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) will be considered by the authority's Cabinet on January 13th. A report will ask members to note that, based on the provisional financial settlement from Government received by the council on December 17th, the savings target looking ahead as far as 2019/20 can be revised to £123.7m. This includes £40m of savings required next year in 2016/17. Early indications were that the impact of the CSR would result in savings of £135m, an additional £11m. However, Cabinet will hear that extremely difficult decisions will still need to be made and that there will be a definite impact on frontline services. DCC still await more information from Government on the final grant settlement however the current financial analysis reveals the total council savings 2011 - 2020 are now forecast to be £276.7m, £153m of which will have been made by the end of this financial year (2015/16). The report also recommends, a decision by the Full Council in February, that the

## "THE BEST POLICE FORCE IN THE COUNTRY"

Dear Editor,  
 I am writing in response to issues raised by Mr Ken Robson in a recent letter to the Newton News. He is correct to say that the number of Police Officers in County Durham and Darlington has reduced over the past few years. The Government has reduced my budget by £20.4m and I cannot fund more officers than I can afford. I have, however, worked closely with the Chief Constable to ensure that our police force is as effective and efficient as possible, and I am pleased to note that crime in the force area has fallen over the past few years. Anti-social behaviour has also fallen, with Newton Aycliffe seeing

a reduction of 9% since December 2014. As Mr Robson points out, cannabis remains an illegal drug. Durham Constabulary will continue to treat it as such. I remain of the view that for some small-scale users of Class B drugs such as cannabis, the Police should use their discretion to decide whether or not to prosecute individuals or to refer them to appropriate support services to help them stop using drugs. When this happens successfully, drug users are less likely to get involved in other crimes. Your readers may have seen that, according to the results of recent assessments by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, Durham is

currently the best Police Force in the country. This reflects the dedication and high standards of our local police force. Yours sincerely,  
**Ron Hogg**  
 Police and Crime Commissioner

## CHARITY THANKS LOCAL BUSINESS FOR HELP WITH "CHRISTMAS IN A BOX"

National charity Samaritan's Purse has extended its thanks to the local Regus centre at Durham Way in Newton Aycliffe, for its efforts towards collecting thousands of gift-filled shoeboxes which have since been distributed to needy and vulnerable children across the world. The shoeboxes, put together by members of the public, local businesses, schools and churches, contained everything from sweets and toys to toothbrushes, colouring books and stickers. They were distributed in time for Christmas to underprivileged children in orphanages, hospitals and refugee camps in some of the world's poorest countries. This is the third year that Regus, the flexible workplace provider, has been involved in the shoebox appeal with over 300 UK centres collecting over 15,000 shoeboxes between them. Simon Barrington, Executive Director of Samaritan's Purse, the charity which organises the Operation Christmas Child shoebox appeal, said: "The Regus network of local workplace centres was ideally positioned to support the appeal and we would like to thank the company for its continued support. We would also like to extend our thanks to all the members of the public who wrapped, packed and brought in their shoeboxes. Because of them, many thousands of children who otherwise wouldn't have received any presents this Christmas knew they weren't forgotten." Richard Morris, CEO of Regus in the UK, said: "We're always delighted to support the appeal and the response this year has been overwhelming. Our centre teams thoroughly enjoyed their participation and were very happy to get involved and do their bit to help this very worthwhile cause." Regus operates a global network of flexible, modern work spaces including business lounges, meeting rooms, day offices and co-working space. See [www.regus.co.uk](http://www.regus.co.uk) or [www.operationchristmaschild.org.uk](http://www.operationchristmaschild.org.uk)

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## Accommodation

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## N.A.Y.F.C. FOOTBALL ROUND-UP



The weather was a little kinder last weekend with a bit more action to report on!

**The Under 11 Girls** welcomed Deerness and Hartlepool Pools Youth to the Greenfield 3G pitch.

First up v Deerness, Aycliffe quickly got into their stride, plenty of movement and blistering pace prevented Deerness getting out of their own half, Kate opened the scoring followed by a brace from Hattie and a cracker from Alex HT 4-0. Second half similar with no change

as the game remained in the opposition half, the goals continued to flow freely as the girls passed around the opposition defenders, 2 further goals each from Hattie and Kate to give a final score 8-0.

Next up, Hartlepool Pools Youth, a strong start from Pools and the girls knew this would be a tougher game, a couple of early breakaways kept Faith on her toes. However eventually the break came as Kate slid the ball into the net, this was

now a different game as Hattie smashed in 2 and Kate neatly finished a great move and HT arrived 4-0. Changes to positions were being made to allow Macy, Grace, and Olivia to have some time up front and they all got involved with the goals as Hattie and Kate completed hat-tricks. Laila on her debut was growing in confidence and assisted Kate to tuck her 4th goal away. After a break on the side-lines Hattie rejoined the game scoring a further 2 goals. The final

score went to Alex - reward for her willingness to play in every position FT 10-0.

**The Under 10 Girls'** played Washington Athletic at Durham FCs pitch - a tricky game against a determined and sometimes physical opposition. The better chances were falling to Aycliffe but their keeper stood firm. The girls carried on playing passing football and worked hard to find the openings but it remained goalless at half time. Much the same in the second half and the girls eventually get our reward. Brooke playing down the left raced passed 3 defenders and coolly slotted passed the keeper. A couple of chances slid by the post, before Brooke secured the points as her determination again got her 1v1 with the keeper with the same result. FT2-0. Goals take the headlines but on a cold wet day Alisha, Keira, Phoebe, Niamh, Georgie, Chloe, Ebony, Heidi all played their part in this excellent team performance.

**Under 7 Eagles** were at home against Houghton Albion, in the RF Winter League. An extremely tough game, due to the inclement weather, pouring down non-stop throughout. However the Eagles did themselves proud, with a great team spirit and attitude. All the Eagles involved played skilfully and the majority of the time, having to battle hard defensively. However, a 1-1 draw maintains our unbeaten run. The score-line reflected the hard game and conditions encountered.

**The Falcons Under 9s** unbeaten run came to an end against a much improved Billingham Synthonia side. It showed that we hadn't played together since middle of November. 0-0 at half time, they missed a lot of chances. Billingham took advantage of that and nicked the game with few minutes left. The game ended 1-0. MOTM Jordan McBride. Big well done to Billingham. The second game was a lot better. Louis Baxter laying the ball off for a wonder goal from Adam Shaw! Some really good performances in this game. The Falcons could have made it 3 or 4 but again Billingham nicked another late goal 1-1 MOTM Jacob Bailey-Thompson.

If your child is keen to play football then why not come all to one of our many friendly training sessions, please contact Berni Borsberry on 07939 045242 for more details. You can also keep up-to-date with all our football news by going to our Facebook page and visiting our website at www.naycafc.co.uk

## MOORE LANE PITCH STILL UNPLAYABLE



Newton Aycliffe FC found themselves in the Fifth Round Draw of the FA Vase this week even though they haven't yet completed their Third Round tie.

Aycliffe have been trying to play Atherton Collieries since 12th December. However, the atrocious weather conditions we have experienced has prevented

the game going ahead.

With the Moore Lane pitch still unplayable Aycliffe now face the prospect of playing a home match on a neutral ground this week. Aycliffe are by no means alone with their pitch troubles. Fellow Northern League teams South Shields & Morpeth also find themselves stranded in the Third Round.

It's not just the North East that has suffered with two ties in the southern section also outstanding.

If Aycliffe were to overcome Atherton they will play Northern League champions Marske United.

The winner gets a trip to Surrey side Camberley Town in the last 16 of the competition.

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