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Residents Oppose Livin's Regeneration Scheme Plans for West Ward Area Flawed

The Great Aycliffe Residents Association (GARA) has taken the lead in a fight to protect residents in the Western Area Regeneration Scheme proposed by Livin.

We will look to the Town Council and our MP Phil Wilson for support as well as the home owners and all tenants adversely affected by Livin's Option No 3.

Livin put a bid in to the Government for Funds for a regeneration scheme and were awarded £284,000 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (HCLG). The aim was to finalise the exercise by April this year and present a Master-plan to the government to bid for funds for the Regeneration Scheme in the six streets in West Ward.

In the consultation exercise, three options were given to residents and attempts were made to get responses from all on the estate.

The estate comprises six streets, part of the West Ward, in Newton Aycliffe, and according to Livin has 571 Houses of which at least 50% are Home Owners, some private landlords and

the rest Livin tenants. Livin concluded it had 3 options:

Option 1 - Improvement to existing homes;
Option 2 - Property improvements and new build infill;
Option 3 includes: Complete Demolition of existing estate and a new estate layout and design.

For full details of these options go to: <https://western.livin.co.uk/> Or to: greataycliffe.com then GARA notice board page.

Cllr Arun Chandran Secretary of GARA said "During my conversations with the Livin/PCP team it became apparent that under Option 3 Livin are planning to reduce the number of Livin Tenancies by 100 on the estate." Unbelievable when the country faces a housing

"Right from the outset of my involvement, I consistently pointed out that Livin needed to make clear exactly how Home Owners stand and Private Landlords with regard to their Freehold Properties and the financial implications".

"Last week I resigned as a Champion because Livin had failed to provide any information on this matter. Meanwhile I was receiving e-mails and being stopped in the street by residents.

In my email: I said: "It is a fact that cannot be disputed, that Option 3 cannot be supported nor chosen by people as an option, who

own their own home, until and unless Livin are able to say what precisely it will do for them.

1. Provide like for like replacement
2. Provide a package which a) protects the value of the Home Owners share of the property and Livin's share b) protects the Home Owner from any costs whatsoever ie no re- mortgage, no rent
3. Many people bought their homes on the basis having no more rent or mortgage to pay and took retirement etc on that basis, and some improved their houses. They could not now be in a position to be moved out, be provided with a like for like replacement, and then afford to pay rent or a mortgage where there plans never envisaged it for the rest of their lives.
4. If Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) further down the line were used it would not enable people to buy like for like replacement where they live or in most other parts of the Town. It would rob people of what they worked and paid for most of their lives, and in many cases cause homelessness and destitution.
5. If livin were to say provide like for like replacement, but only put a charge on the property to recover their value on resale that would be a significant progressive move, but it could mean Livin not getting their share of the value of the property for up to 30 years or more. So any government money would need to cover that funding gap on Livin's accounts, and not burden existing Home Owners with the cost and debt.
6. Option 3 could be dropped by Livin but that is down to them, and what Agenda they have. I am neither naive nor stupid not to believe that Livin have their own objectives in mind, and I have no issue with that, but failure to provide any clarity to Home Owners on
7. Option 3 leaves people to draw their own conclusions. Saying it might not happen till 10 or 15 years down the line is not a good enough excuse for Home Owners and the potential for Blight because of the threat underlining CPO, on house sales or home improvements.
8. I will await further information from yourself

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Exciting new partnership between Jacksons Coffeehouse on Aycliffe Business Park and Janie's Pantry based in Bishop Auckland will bring freshly sourced homemade sandwiches and light lunch options to the popular coffeehouse.

Both Jacksons and Janie's pantry are delighted to be able to support one another's business and believe this new collaboration will attract more customers and opportunities to branch out and bring great locally produced food to Aycliffe residents. Janie's Pantry supply sandwiches which are made from only the finest locally sourced ingredients and hold a 5* rating.

Jacksons is open from 8am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, 8am to 3pm on Friday and 12pm to 4:30pm on Sundays. Based within the Xcel Centre site it's close to town and

has fantastic promotions running throughout the week, including 'Morning brew' (bagel or teacake with an Illy filter coffee) for just £1.99 or 'Noon Special' (soup and a roll) for only £2.99 as well as the new range of sandwiches from Janie's Pantry.

NEWTON NEWS

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 Big Club Disco Night

Regeneration Scheme Opposed

Continued from Front Page

(Livin) on the issue re Home Owners on Option 3. I think 14 days is sufficient, after that time, as Secretary of the Great Aycliffe Residents Association, having already discussed this with the Management Committee we will convene a Special Public Meeting and invite Home Owners, Tenants and Livin. Losing 100 Livin Tenants from the estate will also cause interest and consternation considering this country faces a housing shortage! Arun on behalf of GARA has made extensive enquiries regarding regeneration schemes around the country. In every case he found the Social Landlord or Council starts off with a scheme, consults and promises complete like for like replacement to get consents, then submits the scheme to HCLG Dept for Funds and Compulsory Purchase powers, then reneges on the promises and uses CPO

powers to force out Home Owners and basically appropriate their Freehold. Arun said "I have to draw the conclusion that Livin clearly want Option 3. That being aware themselves, of the consequences for Home Owners (at least 285 by my count) of Compulsory Purchase re Option 3. Since its inception. That they appear to have withheld the details of that from residents whilst conducting this exercise of consultation so that they could get to the stage where Option 3 was then finalised in a Master Plan." Then, if no major objections were received from the residents, to put the Masterplan Bid in the HCLG Dept/ Secretary of State, and bid for regeneration funds for that Option, and that a Compulsory Purchase Order would be sought if the funds were granted." "There is nothing unsound regarding the properties on the Estate that would warrant or justify complete demolition of the whole estate in the public Interest, nothing to justify sequestration of Home Owners of their properties. Effectively robbing them blind. No justification for reducing Livin Tenancies by 100."

When people are crying out for Social Housing the sums just don't add up for Option 3: Demolishing the estate, rebuild infrastructure, roads services etc, Build Executive Houses for sale on the Whinlatter area, build some bungalows, then build houses on a rent to buy, as well as build to sell. How do 285 Home Owners figure in this. And if 100 less Livin Tenants will be rehoused on the estate that a loss of rent income annually of approx. £500,000. If CPO is used Home Owners will not get like for like on the Estate or anywhere else on the Town without having to get a new

mortgage or to rent. A lot of home owners bought their houses (soundly built) to not rent or mortgage and would be facing homelessness or destitution for the rest of their lives.

CPO compensation does not allow for like-for-like replacement. Is it Livin's idea that Home Owners use the CPO compensation to buy part of a new house on the rebuilt estate then force them to pay mortgage or rent for the balance of the value?

This goes against Natural Justice, Human Rights re ECHR and the Public Interest. GARA will support resident rights every step of the way. Livin have known about the consequence on Home Owners on Option 3 and never said a word as to how they proposed to deal with it. Livin use York Hill Estate, Spennymoor as an example of a successful scheme, but do not mention how they dealt with Home Owners there.

OPTION 2 SEEMS THE ONLY VIABLE OPTION.

Cllr Arun M Chandran Secretary, GARA. arunmchandran@aol.com
 Syd Howarth MBE Chairman syd@newtonpress.net
 Cllr Ken Robson, Vice Chairman
 Cllr Bob Fleming, Cllr Derek Atkinson
 Eddy Wood, Barry Hutchinson Treasurer
 Bill Curtis, Horndale RA, Williamfield RA, Wasps (simpasture) RA, ACORN RA, Neville RA
 GARA will keep people informed and may be calling a public meeting soon. Watch for details.

Our MP Phil Wilson said: "I'm aware of the regeneration options for West Ward and I am seeking a meeting with Livin to see how they intend taking any proposals forward and the impact on the local community."

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March Entertainment Guide

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Friday 16th "The Hudson Sisters", Tickets £5
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Saturday 17th Aycliffe Soul Club, £4 entry
 Tuesday 20th Kids Disco, 5pm-8pm, £1 entry
 Friday 23rd Rotary Club Big Gig with "Groovy Street"
 and a Guest Appearance by Shanaya
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Saturday 24th Disco Night, Tickets £2.50 or £3 otd
 Friday 30th John Melvin Karaoke & Disco, 7pm, £2 entry
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Saturday 31st "Little Fix" - Clear & Care for the Community

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Scanner Appeal's Big Boost



NHS Trust Fundraiser Pat Chambers shows her delight in receiving a £3,000 cheque from Honest John for the MRI Scanner Appeal. This is John's second

contribution to the cause emphasising how vital this equipment is for the health and welfare of people in this area. Modern day scanners are more accurate and can

diagnose health problems quickly in a more comfortable environment with the machinery being less noisy and claustrophobic." I urge everyone to support the appeal" said John.

Impossible Magician Visits Greenfield



Students at Greenfield Community College, Sunnydale Campus were highly entertained recently by full-time professional magician Steve Price. Steve is one of the UK's busiest and most established magicians and he used his astonishing magical skills to amaze and amuse students from Year 7 and Year 8. He has over 15 years of performing experience and has worked at thousands of venues around the world. Steve will soon be performing in Madeira, Peru, Tahiti, Iceland, the Azores and the Indian Ocean! Greenfield students really enjoyed the performance, his unique blend of laughs, mystery and stunning sleight of hand captivated his audience and left them feeling that Steve really could do the IMPOSSIBLE. All of the students who were lucky enough to see the show were amazed by his talents, Harley, Year 8 said "Steve's performance was mind boggling and thoroughly entertaining" and Gracie, Year 7 thought that it was "unbelievable and so funny". Thank you to the Reverend David Tomlinson for arranging the event on behalf of Greenfield Community College, the event was a real success and one the students will remember.

Former Teacher's Talk on Aycliffe History

On Tuesday 27th March at 7:30pm in Bishop Auckland Town Hall, John Clare, local councillor and former teacher at Greenfield is speaking at the Bishop Auckland Civic Society on the History of Newton Aycliffe - 'The Last 12,000 Years'. You can get tickets (which cost £2) online here: bit.ly/HOABACS or by phoning 03000 269524. The history of Newton Aycliffe is amazing - with new things being discovered all the time - and John promises to be interesting! So he hopes people will be able to attend to hear about our town's inspiring story. "Some people have asked me why I am giving this talk in Bishop Auckland, not Newton Aycliffe. The answer is that they asked me. If you run a group and want me to tell you about the wonderful history of Aycliffe, just ask - and I'll do it for free! The more people who know and appreciate what a thrilling heritage we have, the happier I'll be." said John.

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Film Show

"THE SHACK"

The "FEEL GOOD FILM SHOW" at St Clare's Church on TUESDAY 27th MARCH features the 2017 drama "THE SHACK" based on the 2007 book of the same name. Starring Sam Worthington and Octavia Spencer.

After suffering a tragedy which shatters his life and causes him to doubt his faith, Mack Phillips receives a mysterious note inviting him to meet at a cabin. To find out what happens there you must come to see the film; it is well worth seeing.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME Tea and coffee are served at 1pm, included in the £2, and the film starts at 1.15pm.

A variety of chairs are provided for your comfort, and tables so that you can bring a spot of lunch to eat while you enjoy a great film in friendly company. For further details ring Ric Hargreaves 01325 316755.

Opportunities for Local Businesses at DL Expo

Following the huge success of last year's event, which delivered the biggest and busiest show yet, DL Business Expo returns on 17th May 2018.

DL Business Expo provides a unique opportunity for local businesses to showcase their products and services and is a great networking opportunity for the local business community. Last year's DL Business Expo attracted over 60 exhibitors and over 400 attendees.

This year's event will once again be hosted and sponsored by the Mowden Park Rugby Club in Darlington, a great local venue, based close to good commuter routes.

The event kicks off with The Big Breakfast, a networking event, 8.00am until 10.00am which is sponsored by Resilience Business Systems and The Shred Centre. The exhibition then opens and will run through to 2.00pm.

If you are looking to get a new business idea up and running, or you are looking to expand your existing business, DL Business Expo is a must.

This year's event is going to have more exhibition space available to businesses and is a networking opportunity you do not want to miss.

Get valuable advice, support and solutions from a range of businesses including solicitors, manufacturers, training suppliers, accountants, IT providers, marketing service providers, funding specialists and many more.

Sharon Hutchinson, Managing Director and Chair of Darlington Business Club said: "This year we are stripping the event right back to its core purpose of creating opportunities for local businesses to network and showcase their products and services. The Darlington Business Club team are committed to delivering real value to the local business community and the DL Business Expo is a key part of that plan. We'll be announcing further plans for DL Business Expo 2018 over the coming months."

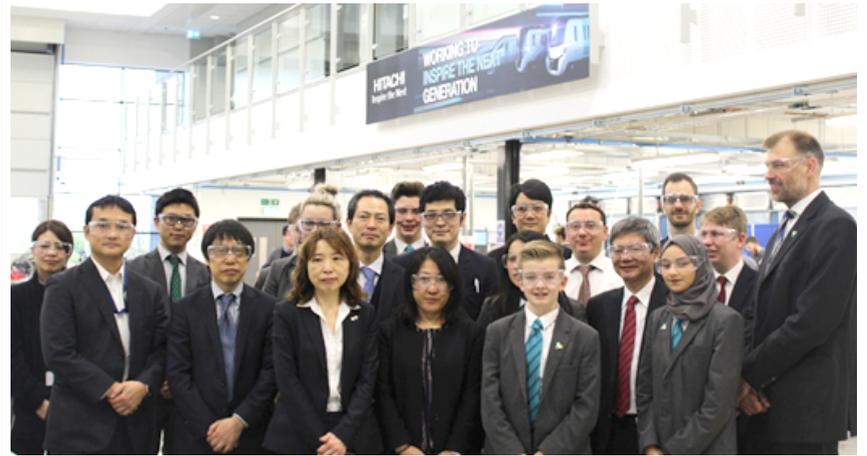
DL Business Expo 2018 is your opportunity to expand

your business, identify opportunities, generate leads, gain inspiration, and get deals done! With up to 65 exhibitors and a sizeable number of key business connections to be made throughout the day, this is the event for your business.

If you are a member of Darlington Business Club or a local business based in a DL postcode and are interested in exhibiting at DL Business Expo 2018, please visit www.dlexpo.co.uk or contact Darlington Business Club, info@darlingtonbusinessclub.co.uk. Individuals interested in registering as a visitor for the event can do so at www.dlexpo.co.uk. Admission is free to attend the event.

For more information on how to join Darlington Business Club, visit www.darlingtonbusinessclub.co.uk. Key Sponsors include: Mowden Park Rugby Club, Resilience Business Systems, The Shred Centre, Business Central and Endeavour Partnership. Interested in sponsoring DL Business Expo 2018? Please contact Darlington Business Club.

Aycliffe UTC Receive Visit from Japanese Embassy



Recently colleagues from the Japanese Embassy visited the UTC South Durham with sponsor partner Hitachi Rail Europe. The college has a specialism of engineering and advanced manufacturing, raising the aspirations of students in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) vital to the UK economy.

Staff and students were thrilled to welcome their visitors, and colleagues from the embassy toured the UTC, meeting staff and students, trying out some of the engineering equipment. The visitors met some of the next generation of engineers with Year 10 and Year 12 students showing visitors around the building and encouraging them to try virtual welding! UTC South Durham is a state funded Technical School and College with a specialism in Engineering and Advanced Manufacture on Aycliffe Business Park.



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ORGANISATIONS - You are invited to come along and record a 5 minute info slot about your club.

ADVERTISE - Could your business benefit from advertising on Aycliffe Radio?

LOCAL BAND/CHOIR - Send us a pre-recorded session of your set or invite us along to record for you.

SCHOOLS - We can attend and record your Concerts, Performances, Presentations to be played on air.

PUBS/CLUBS - Send us your upcoming events and our presenters will promote them during their shows.

EVENTS - If you are organising an event, why not let us help you promote it?

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Fast Track into MRI Appeal Campaign



Teesside Company Fast Track and the occupants of Fast Track House in Stockton on Tees have raised a massive £2410 towards our MRI Scanner Appeal for Darlington Memorial and Bishop Auckland Hospitals. Company Directors Colin Harkness (pictured left) and Duncan Crocker (pictured right) were inspired to get busy fundraising when Colin's dad Robert Harkness was part of a fundraising team at Barnard Castle Rotary. Colin said "I couldn't just leave it to my dad who set up his very first justgiving page to do the fundraising, we've a lot of our staff live over in County Durham and Duncan lives in Croft, so it was important to us that we became involved."

Duncan Crocker continued saying "Our PA Nicola Mealing (pictured centre) is passionate about fundraising so she became inspirational in organising a raffle, selling tickets to our staff and pulling in some fantastic prizes including spa breaks! Nicola and the staff in Fast Track House raised £1205.00 through the raffle and as a business, we decided to match fund that amount." Pat Chambers Charity

Manager for CDDFT said, "The fundraising all started through Robert really, I met him at a French themed evening through Barnard Castle Rotary, he was totally passionate about being able to help us, even setting up his first ever justgiving page - he then mentioned to Colin what he was doing and everything snowballed from there. We're totally delighted with the amount that has been raised, well above expectation and are grateful for the support of all the staff at Fast Track House." If you can organise a fundraiser for our MRI Campaign please email pat.chambers1@nhs.net or call Pat on 07770455651 to discuss your ideas.

3 Vacancies at Toddler Group

St. Elizabeth's Mother and Toddlers Group will be on holiday 27th March and 3rd April, re opening 10th April.

We have 3 places left and would love to welcome you. Further information from Norma on 01325 312930.

WILL NEWTON AYCLIFFE BENEFIT FROM HOUSING GRANT? Time Out at Planet Leisure

Dear Sir
I read the article in Newton News on housing grant in Newton Aycliffe where the emphasis seemed to be on the A167 plus installing water, sewerage and power supplies "overcoming significant development costs that had been affecting the viability of housing sites within the town". Other print media, stated, "The Government has awarded £6.8 million to Durham County Council through its Housing Infrastructure Fund to improve infrastructure in Newton Aycliffe". It would seem that it is Durham County Council (DCC) who have decided how this grant would be spent.

Is it just coincidence that DCC owns a huge area of land to the east of the town at Copelaw (formerly Aycliffe Centre for Children and farm land) which is earmarked for housing? Would having improved access to this site and roads/utilities in place on the site make it easier for DCC to sell, and probably at an improved sale price? If the Council sell this land for housing, land I believe to have been gifted to them by the Trustees, would Newton Aycliffe benefit in any way from the profits from the sale? Remember the Avenue School site in a prime position on Central Avenue. How did Newton Aycliffe benefit from

the money accrued from the sale of the site of the school buildings where Tesco now stands? If DCC genuinely want to quote, "overcome significant development costs that had been affecting the viability of housing sites" there are at least two other sites with planning permission that would certainly benefit from a share of this grant and improve the town's infrastructure; both sites are on the C35 Middridge Road. Not only would these two sites benefit from the very long awaited upgrading of the C35 but also the new housing development in Shildon next to Middridge as motorists from there use the C35 to access the A1M and other major roads.

There is planning permission for executive housing on Woodham Golf Course which I am given to believe will involve work on the C35 and an improved roundabout to facilitate improved and safer access to Middridge Lane and Burnhill Way. The upgrading of the C35 would also improve the infrastructure for the existing estates on the western side of town giving them better access to the A167, the A1M and the A689 which is the nearest route for the east coast for Newtonians and road users from the industrial estate. This could also help relieve the congestion on the A167 and help traffic capacity issues both of which are stated outcomes by the DCC. Anyone who frequently uses the C35 will be very aware of the volume of traffic using the road to access or leave the industrial estate. This road was built for tractors and other farm vehicles not for large lorries etc. Upgrading this road would make it safer for all users and again help

further alleviate congestion on the A167. The golf course proposed housing would bring no benefit, other than Council Tax, to the DCC as DCC do not own the golf course. The sale of Eldon Whinns will benefit the DCC as it is their land gifted to them when the Aycliffe Development Corporation came to an end but I doubt if the sale of this land would result in sufficient funds to upgrade the C35 but it may go some way to paying for the new roundabout included in the plan. If this Government grant is for Newton Aycliffe then Newton Aycliffe should benefit from the sale of the Copelaw site and any money made from the sale should be put back into Newton Aycliffe which would have a significant impact on the economic growth of the town especially as the site will be enhanced by the grant. To the best of my recollection this did not happen with the Avenue School buildings site. Yes, we did get a land to develop a lovely park but that was previously playing fields for the school before it was closed down. This being the case it cost DCC nothing and our Town Council is responsible for the upkeep paid for by our Town's precept. Could I ask if our County Councillors are going to fight to keep the monetary benefits, direct or indirect, from this multimillion pound grant actually in Newton Aycliffe or are they going to allow the profits from the sale of land to disappear up to Durham as they seemed to do with the Avenue School site? Could they also keep us updated on progress and if the money from Copelaw is not ploughed back into Newton Aycliffe we need them to tell us exactly where it is being spent. A.Bergg (Mrs)



Visit of "Time Out for Men" to Planet Leisure in Newton Aycliffe 9th March 2018, a group of men from the Methodist Church in and around the town. They meet four times a year with an activity or visit arranged, to share in mutual support and friendship. One of the members of the group is Michael Thompson, a supporter and fund raiser for the charity CALM: Campaigns Against Living Miserably. The organisation provides a free helpline to men who don't know where else to turn; it aims to keep men alive by talking. The T.O.M. group fully support Michael, recognising the importance of this kind of help and awareness raising. He raises funds through sponsorship of his cross-country running. "T.O.M. is unusual", said Michael "It is a men's group

primarily for socialising". Another member of the group said; "The work of CALM and Michael's fundraising efforts, reminded us of the number of men, particularly in the 25-45 age group, who are at greatest risk from suicide". "And what we do at T.O.M.

is an example of the kind of social interaction that helps men talk". If you want to support Michael you can find him on: Justgiving/CALM-michael For more details contact Rev. Andy Bryer 01388 778207 andrew.bryer@methodist.org.uk

MP Phil Wilson to Attend GACAP A.G.M.

Great Aycliffe Community Aid Partnership. (GACAP) will be holding their AGM at a new venue as a one off at The Big Club at 4pm on 20th April. All Officers and Committee Members will be standing for re election. The chairman Ron Mitchie said "GACAP has moved forward over the past year and during the year to come it is hoped that premises can be found to develop the original hopes of the founder and lifetime president of the organisation Syd Howarth MBE" GUEST speakers at the AGM are Sid Rooke NE FIRST credit union and our MP Phil Wilson. Ron Mitchie chairman who is standing for re election continued by saying " I invite those who are interested in the ethos of GACAP to come along to the meeting and talk to one of the officers or look at our website www.gacap.org.uk over the past year we have developed by establishing a management committee and more recently encourage those organisation we have an empathy for those in need in our community to join GACAP by becoming Associate Members, plus individual people who also follow the ethos of GACAP to become Friends of GACAP".

AYCLIFFE RADIO

Programme Schedule

"GOOD MORNING AYCLIFFE"
with Aidan Thompson
Starts Tuesday 3rd April
broadcasting live Monday to Friday from 8.30am - 12 noon
plus more new presenters - watch this space.

Time	Session	Presenter
MONDAY		
6pm-7pm	70s Show	Peter Rush
7pm-8pm	80s Reminiscing	Paul Gittins
8pm-10pm	UK Number Ones	
TUESDAY		
6pm-8pm	Sports Round UP 27th Mar - Chloe Ryan (Girls Football)	Darren & Lee
WEDNESDAY		
10am-11am	Kent Collective	Daz Kent
11am-12pm	Wellersday	
8pm-10pm	Alternative Aycliffe	Gary & Alby
THURSDAY		
8pm-10pm	"Beat"Roote	Graeme Roote
FRIDAY		
6pm-8pm	House Mix	PVR Studios
8pm-10pm	Guest Presenter Session 23rd Mar - Pauly Mac (Australia) 30th Mar - Owen's Request Show	
Joined by Mr Pavey, Vane Road Headteacher Send your requests via the App, text 07512 253333 or email: info@ayclifferradio.co.uk before 9am on Friday 30th. 6th Apr - Owen's Local Politics with guest Lisa Turnbull		
SATURDAY		
8am-11am	Kitchen Floor Fillers	
11am-12pm	Kent Collective (R)	Daz Kent
12pm-1pm	With the Beatles Pt 5	Honest John
4pm-6pm	School Disco	
6pm-8pm	"Beat"Roote	Graeme Roote
8pm-10pm	Dance Mix	OZ DJ
10pm-12am	Garage/Indie	MC Supa
12am-2am	Alternative Aycliffe	Gary & Alby
SUNDAY		
12pm-2pm	Sports Round Up	Darren & Lee
6pm-7pm	Church Service	Xcel Centre

Check our website for full schedule.

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Gordon Fletcher & Sons is one of the oldest established family businesses in Spennymoor, County Durham.

The business has grown over the years and is now entering its fourth generation, expanding with the building of additional premises at nearby Ferryhill, Co. Durham in 1997 and more recently at Newton Aycliffe, Co. Durham in November 2011.

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Layla Belle Comes 2nd



Layla Belle Thompson competed in another Junior Pageant last weekend wearing a dress made from copies of Newton News and came second overall which was amazing as the standard was so high. She won best opening round where they introduced themselves and won Junior Charity, raising £200 for the Christie Cancer Charity. She raised this by raffling one of her crowns at a dance competition. Next she is entering "Belle Pageants" raising money for Ronald McDonald House charity which she already has made £100. This is the link for her 'go fund me' for that charity. www.gofundme.com/missbellepageantcharity



COUNTY NEWSBITS

Compiled by
County Councillor John Clare

Updates on Council meetings, ASB, a housing appeal, a breakfast club and Forrest Park. Plus a debate on Council Tax, a scam to avoid, some interesting things to do ... AND a chance to be on reality TV!

You can find out more about all the following on my blog at: bit.ly/CNB223

COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY

- DCC Cabinet Meeting report, Wednesday 14 March.
- Great Aycliffe Town Council Meeting report, Wednesday 14 March.
- Aycliffe Anti-Social Behaviour Group meeting report, Thursday 15 March.
- The Woodham Bridge Housing Appeal is to be held 17-20 April.
- A lively debate on Council Tax.
- Good news about the Forrest Business Park development.
- Last week, livin and Greggs launched a breakfast club at Woodham Burn School.
- Beware this Telephone Preference Service scam.
- A company named True North wants shoppers for a reality TV programme (but be careful!).
- Latest local roadworks information.

THINGS TO DO

- Easter Bunny in Hardwick Park, 10am-3:30pm, Saturday 31 March, £8.50 (also a Carrot Hunt, 1-15 April, £1).
- Messiah, Gala Theatre, 7:30pm, Wednesday 28 March, £15.
- April Fool's Day Fun (5-11s), Palace Green Library, drop-in 1-3pm, 31 March-1 April.
- 'Fabulous Phoenix' (5-11s), Durham Oriental Museum, drop-in 1-3pm, Saturday 31 March.
- 'Meccano Magic', Locomotion Museum Shildon, 10am-4pm, 27-28 May.

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

Crafters Partnership with Imagination Crafts

A North East craft giant has announced a strategic partnership with another UK-based art and craft company to cater for growing customer demands.

Newton Aycliffe craft retailer Crafter's Companion and Sherborne-based art and craft company Imagination Crafts will join forces to provide an expanded product offering alongside the introduction of exciting new product ranges.

Bringing together two of the UK's leading craft brands, the exclusive partnership combines the retail success of Crafter's Companion with the experience of respected industry professionals and Imagination Crafts owners, Sue and Harvey Baker. Crafter's Companion founder Sara Davies, MBE, said:



Sue Baker

"Sue and Harvey have been in the industry for more than 25 years, having previously worked with shopping channels QVC and Create & Craft, and are well respected by both industry professionals and consumers.

"The unique range of mixed-media products offered by Imagination Crafts, which is currently among Hochanda's top 10 biggest suppliers, can be used for home décor and creative textiles as well as cardmaking and papercraft, so it's a versatile range that I'm sure our customers will love. I'm thrilled to be working with them."

Sue Baker, originally from Hexham, started her design career in the theatre before

studying interior design. She then moved onto working for a TV production company with husband Harvey on TV shows like Changing Rooms, Home Front, This Morning and Lorraine.

Sue and Harvey then set up their own specialist shops in London and became the biggest producers of MDF, stencils and paint products at that time, working with high-profile clients and celebrities as well as the forerunners of creative crafting and paint experts like Annie Sloan and Jocasta Innes.

After being approached by a number of craft companies, Sue and Harvey began to design and produce craft products for the UK and European craft markets, and when they moved back to the North East of England 16 years ago, they opened their own stores and continued to produce innovative craft products available in shops, online and on TV shopping channels.

"We've grown to be a really popular and well-respected brand" said Sue, "and have always prided ourselves on keeping a personal touch. We've now reached a point where we want to expand our product range even further and make it more widely available.

"Teaming up with a company as successful and innovative as Crafter's Companion is the perfect way to do that. The partnership means that I can focus on my passion for product design to offer crafters a great combination of top-quality products across a wide variety of applications and techniques, whilst benefitting from the business acumen and loyal retail following that Crafter's has built up.

"I'm really excited to be working with Sara and her talented team to bring you some amazing new products and of course it's great to bring the brand back with me to the North East."

Crafter's Companion is a global craft supplies company which sells its products globally online, on TV shopping channels, via independent retailers and in its own UK retail stores in Newton Aycliffe, Chesterfield and Evesham.

www.crafterscompanion.co.uk

Large Bird Problem

Dear Sir,

I totally agree with the letter about bird pests as I have the same problem. Apart from all the mess gulls make there is the threat of rats from only yards away from where I live.

People putting an absolute mountain of food out on to the park and about 200 gulls descend on it and cause filth and utter mayhem.

If I was to throw litter about I would be fined! If it is not my washing being ruined its my garden patio, paint work, shed, front door and windows. People wanting to feed gulls should go

down to the lakeside.

A lady walked passed by my house with her dog and turned back as she was afraid of being attacked by the horde of birds.

It is bad enough having dog foulers, but feeding such a large amount of gulls should be stopped before someone gets hurt.

There is a big difference between feeding small garden birds on a feeder and throwing masses of waste food out.

I have contacted the Council and hope it can be dealt with quickly.

Very Irate Residents
Name & Address supplied

EGGSCELENT

Thank you to everyone who donated Easter Eggs in Newton Aycliffe Tesco for Butterwick Hospice for Adults and Children. All together we have collected 285 eggs and it has gone a long way to help with fundraising initiatives.

Easter Services in your local churches

Churches Together in Great Aycliffe would like to extend an invitation to all in our town to join us at any of our Easter services next weekend – a warm welcome awaits you at all our churches!

Parish of Great Aycliffe – 01325 324622

Good Friday	2pm	St Clare's	Solemn service
	3pm	St Elizabeth's	Stations of the Cross
Easter Sunday	5am	St Elizabeth's	Sunrise Vigil
	6am	St Elizabeth's	Easter Ceremonies followed by breakfast
	9.30am	St Elizabeth's	Morning worship
	10am	St Clare's	Morning worship
	11am	St Andrew's	Morning worship

St Mary's – 01325 313611

Good Friday	10am	Stations of the Cross
	3pm	Commemoration service
Saturday	5.30pm	Easter Vigil Mass
Easter Sunday	10am	Easter Mass

Newton Aycliffe Methodist Church – 01388 778207

Easter Sunday	8.30am	Holy Communion followed by breakfast
	10.30am	Celebration service of Holy Communion

Harvest Christian Centre – 01325 308284

Easter Sunday	10.30am	Easter Celebration
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Xcel Church – 01325 329500

Good Friday	11am	Family communion service
Easter Sunday	10.30am	Family Celebration service
	5pm	Easter concert (free and open to all)

YOU ARE WARMLY INVITED

(No Collections)

Public Discourse

Celebrating the

Who Really is
Jesus Christ?

Anniversary
of the death of
Jesus Christ

10:00am
Sunday March 25th

7:30pm
Saturday March 31st

Venue

Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses
Rear Alington Road
Newton Aycliffe DL5 4LS

Newton News Easter Deadline

Thursday 29th March - Easter Edition

Deadline: 5pm Tuesday 27th March

Friday 6th April - Back to Normal

Deadline: 5pm Wednesday 4th April

Please be aware of the opening times below and deadline times above to ensure your advert is placed on time and in the correct edition

Advertisements can be placed at our agents:
WALKERS at Simpasture,
YOUNGS NEWSAGENTS in the Town Centre
or online at www.newtonnewsads.co.uk

Office Opening Times

Open until Thursday 29th March at 5.30pm
Reopening on Tuesday 3rd April at 8.30am

21 JOIN NEW AYCLIFFE UKULELE GROUP

Thanks to the appeal in Newton News 18 people have responded to an invitation to form a Ukulele Group in Newton Aycliffe.

The first meeting is on April 11th at Neville Community Centre 1pm to 3pm. A tutor from Darlington has agreed to come and teach the new group.

The next thing is the need to borrow or buy some Ukuleles, so if any reader has one they don't use please contact Newton Press on 01325 300212 or email: syd@newtonnews.co.uk

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Sunday 10am to 4pm



WE VOTED TO TAKE BACK CONTROL NETPark's New Sculpture

Dear Sir,
It is time we reckoned with the historic magnitude of what is happening in Britain right now. Democracy is being euthanised. This fact, is too often obscured by the euphemism and cynicism of the anti-Brexit lobby, which is virtually the entire political class. It doesn't speak in the language of dictatorship.

It speaks in the pseudo-neutral language of 'soft' Brexit, of concession and compromise. And yet behind this seeming disinterest there lurks a serious effort to weaken the largest democratic mandate in British history, and by extension democracy itself. A clear, chilling message is being sent to the public: you don't count; your beliefs do not matter; you aren't good enough for politics.

The crisis of Brexit, the possibility that this mass vote will be betrayed, is more acute now than it has been at any time in the 18 months since 17.4million Britons voted to leave the EU it should be clear from the comments of former Lib Dem leader Nick Clegg. One of the key elitists against the folly of the Brexit plebs, Clegg's response to last week's agreement between Britain and Brussels was to say 'game, set & match for the EU'. Usurping of the 17.4million of us who voted for: 'taking back control'; the importance of British voters and our representatives having democratic authority over the nation and its borders and laws. We voted to 'take back control' and they the political elite have said 'No'. The largest voting bloc in British history said

'We want to leave the European Union', and the response of the elites in Brussels and London has been: 'Well, you can't.

Labour's new change that it is a 'soft Brexit' party, and the chattering classes' incessant ridicule of the 'low-information' masses who voted for Brexit all act as a green light to Brussels to push harder and harder against British democracy.

The slow-motion slaying of any democratic vote would be bad. But to do that to Brexit is particularly awful. For the EU referendum was one of the largest, most engaged acts of democracy in British history, and one in which our choice had a real, historic impact. For the first time in decades, we were entrusted not simply with choosing a party to govern, but with shaking up how we are governed, with making a political decision that would change Britain forever. It was democracy in its truest meaning. And the response to it from our political rulers has been hysteria, fury, denial, and the declaring of a ceaseless war not only against this specific vote, but against the very wisdom of having the little people vote.

To save the EU, they are trying to kill democracy. To maintain the influence of technocrats, they are demeaning and insulting ordinary people. To preserve their own managerial, bureaucratic authority, they are trouncing the key principle upon which the modern idea of Britain has been built and which we fought a civil war over, marched for, and won through decades of struggle: the right of a people to determine the destiny of their nation. As everyone obsesses over the open and not-so-open messages Britain and Brussels are sending each other, they overlook the message both of these parties are sending to us

If the Eu Referendum in 2016 has no validity in the eyes of our political elite, then the Referendum to join the EEC in 1975 also had no validity, nor the referendums on Scottish and Welsh devolution.

It never ceases to amaze me how at every turn Labour and some Remain Tories demand to know, in public, what we will be negotiating at every, stage line by line, then try to destroy our negotiating hand at every turn. They even went to Brussels to try to suck up to the EU against our own government, stabbing in the back, front and sides.

Even Great Aycliffe Town Council excludes the press and public if it is discussing contracts, so why on earth the government should reveal every detail of negotiation beforehand publicly, would any of you negotiate that way? It shows the dirty and desperate duplicity of our MPs.

Come March 2019 we will be out of the EU, come what may, that is fact. I think Theresa May is trusting to that fact and knows that in April 2019 the EU will be knocking on our door to work with us. She may even be playing for time till March 2019.

Even Jeremy Corbyn was specific in his wording of "a "customs union, not "the" customs union, he still has to appease the 172 Labour MPs who twice tried to remove him and none of whom have changed since the 2017 Election. So if an early general election was called, and just say Labour won, Corbyn will be surrounded by a Parliamentary Labour Party that wants him out so they can carry on with 'Blairism'.

Not many here, want the Tories in power, but 17.4 million Brexit Voters and millions of remain voters who believe in democracy will see the next election as one issue. That of Brexit and respecting the mandate the largest referendum and voter turnout in history. Labour's backstabbing and undermining of the governments negotiations, the fact that New Labour Blairites still dominate it, will I suspect lead many not to vote Labour. Sorry Corbynistas but if labour got elected the Blairite Parliamentary Party would ditch Jeremy just like that. If 17.4 million voters for Brexit did not know what they were voting for, how can anyone say that the 16.1 million remain voters knew any better?

Most Remain voters accept democracy and they will abandon Labour if Labour abandons Brexit, those who voted labour on the basis of its manifesto commitment to respect the referendum vote will vote accordingly. The Remain Blairite MPs and Tory Remoaner MPs have miscalculated very badly. Corbyn cannot do his public investment and provide State Aid to Industry or Nationalise if still in the Single Market and Customs Union. He knows that hence his specific words used, unless he can re-select hundreds of his candidates he knows the next election if Labour wins, means he and his policies will be ditched. Remember our own MP sent a letter to every household disowning Jeremy Corbyn and saying he won't support him for PM.

Funny isn't it, Nissan, Hitachi and Toyota all increase investment despite the Brexit vote - seems they have more faith than some MPs.

ARUN CHANDRAN



A BOLD sculpture specially designed to be visible on satellite imagery has been installed at the new gateway to one of the country's leading science parks.

The entire structure, created by inflating and stretching stainless steel, has been designed and made by Newcastle-based Full Blown to provide a "dynamic eye-line view" as you enter the North East Technology Park (NETPark) in Sedgefield, County Durham, which is home to an array of innovative, fast-growing companies working in high-tech, global markets.

When photographed from space, the five inflated metal spheres that make up the impressive Synergy sculpture emulate the logo of the technology park.

The work was commissioned by NETPark to showcase the new entrance to the 26-acre Phase 3 development to the north of the park, which opens up development land for science, engineering and technology companies looking to locate on the park as part of the 10-year development strategy, creating 3,000 jobs and adding another £400m to the region's GVA.

Brian Archer, managing director of Business Durham, which manages NETPark on behalf of Durham County Council, said: "NETPark is a global hub for dynamic, cutting-edge companies making innovative products that transform our lives.

"This impressive new sculpture beautifully reflects NETPark's vision and cleverly depicts the NETPark logo on satellite imagery to represent the global impact made by

many of the extraordinary companies working here in these world-class facilities." The Synergy sculpture features four small 300kg spheres and one larger, 700kg central sphere all made from stainless steel, with a blue mirror finish and colour changing LED lighting to provide a more dramatic effect at night.

Full Blown director Kate McDonnell said: "Each sphere is positioned at different heights to provide a dynamic eye line view, so as you enter the site you get different views as you move round the sculpture.

"Full Blown is excited to be part of NETPark's continued expansion; its world class research and ambitious vision to be a global hub for materials integration inspired the new gateway sculpture, Synergy."

Full Blown, which also crafted NETPark's six-metre Plexus sculpture ten years ago, created Synergy's spheres using its patented and unique inflated stainless steel.

Photo: The Synergy sculpture at NETPark, in Sedgefield, County Durham has been designed to be viewed from space.

Situations VACANT

The Pioneering Care Partnership (PCP) is an award-winning North East charity whose mission is 'Health, Well-being and Learning for All'.



Together 21 is a project supporting the development of children with Down Syndrome aiming to help children to reach their full potential. Together 21 provides weekly support for families. We are currently seeking a motivated and focused self-starter to join our successful team and work as part of the team to positively promote Together 21, encourage participation and take a pro-active role in its development. In addition you will work with children, parents and carers providing support to allow children to develop educationally and socially to reach their full potential.

"Together 21" Development Worker / Group Leader

Based at Pioneering Care Centre, Newton Aycliffe, with some outreach
Band/Salary: Band 6. £20,829 per annum pro rata - Hours: 18 hours per week
Fixed Term until 31st March 2019.

Job Purpose:

- To support the development of a fund raising strategy for Together 21.
- To coordinate events and campaigns to promote the project and support fund raising and awareness activities delivered in community settings.
- To work with PCP's Business Development Team to support the development of successful funding applications and tenders.
- To work as part of a team to positively promote Together 21, to encourage participation and take a pro-active role in its development.
- To support the Project Lead formulating a development plan for Together 21 to raise capacity and support the sustainability of the project.

For an application pack which includes a job description and further information please contact the HR department on (01325) 313133, Fax (01325) 301129, email: hr@pcp.uk.net www.pcp.uk.net

Closing Date for applications:
12 noon, Tuesday 3rd April 2018
Interview date : to be advised

We are an equal and diverse employer and particularly welcome applicants from groups who are currently underrepresented at PCP, such as males, people with sensory impairments and carers.
Registered Office: Pioneering Care Partnership, Carers Way, Newton Aycliffe, Co. Durham, DL5 4SF. Registered Charity No. 1067888. Company Limited by Guarantee. Company Registered in England No: 3491237.



AYCLIFFE ASB GROUP

A meeting was led by Newton Aycliffe Police Inspector Sarah Honeyman the aim being to co-ordinate the different agencies (police, fire, DCC ASB, Neighbourhood Wardens, Town Centre Management, livin, GATC etc.) to combat Anti-Social Behaviour on the town.

Sharing information and expertise has resulted in a spectacular reduction in ASB. There were 60 incidents of ASB last month, 10% down on January. 'Nuisanc'e and 'personal' ASB are both down, though 'environmental' ASB is slightly up. In the year February 17 to February 18 there were 708 incidents,

28% Figures for the different areas of the town for the year February 17 to 18:

West: 197 incidents (17% down on the previous year)
Shafto: 183 (12% down)
Horndale: 139 (48% down)
Neville: 115 (37% down)
Woodham: 74 (17% down)

It was decided that the next MULTI-AGENCY WALKABOUT should be in Shafto ward, on THURSDAY 29 MARCH - meeting at 2pm (provisionally) at St Mary's Church.

A number of individual, specific cases were discussed and the sharing of information was very helpful to the different agencies, who are often

working with the same people/incidents.

The group then planned ahead for the Easter holidays (fire crews have been visiting schools, extra CCTV cameras have been put up, and patrols will be increased)

In discussion was Quad bikes, especially on Horndale, Youths throwing stones around Hawkshead and Fly-tipping
Crime is rising and there has been a recent spate of shed/garages burglaries, so keep your property locked. Also, there seems to be a gang targeting Fiestas, so be warned.

Reported by Councillor John D. Clare

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Bishop Auckland College Student Dancers Showcase Talent

Helps County's Skill Gap

Small businesses across County Durham are to receive free training to help address skills gaps as part of a £6m Government initiative. The two year programme aims to future proof supply chain companies by providing consultancy support to identify key needs including strategic planning and upskilling, then delivering mentoring and flexible training.

The £345,000 project follows a successful bid by a consortium led by Bishop Auckland College to the Higher Education Funding Council for England's (HEFCE) Catalyst fund.

The college highlighted historic issues holding back the SMEs and micro businesses which dominate the county's industrial base, including extensive technical skills gaps and low productivity. Many smaller manufacturing firms have still not embraced the principles of lean manufacturing, whilst larger competitors are now moving towards the next phase of digitisation of manufacturing.

But the bid also recognised the issues of cost and time that are often quoted by SMEs as perceived barriers to training employees, with inflexible providers not prepared to work around business demands and shift patterns.

The new programme

will therefore offer firms flexible, tailored, bite-sized provision that addresses immediate higher level skills gaps identified during organisational and training needs assessments.

The units will be at Level 3, 4 and 5 and include leadership and management, business improvement techniques, engineering and manufacturing engineering. Experienced managers and technical specialists from large companies will help college staff deliver training sessions, mentoring and support to the participating SMEs, transferring knowledge and building expertise throughout supply chains.

Natalie Davison-Terranova, Principal and Chief Executive of Bishop Auckland College, said: "We have many skilled and entrepreneurial small businesses in County Durham. However some SMEs can be at a disadvantage compared to larger businesses when it comes to staff development because of the cost involved and inflexibility of colleges and training providers to work around their business demands and shift patterns.

"This programme aims to address the higher level skills needs of these small businesses across the county to ensure they can compete against larger competitors and grow their businesses by

offering them free training needs assessments and flexible, tailored, bite-sized provision."

Targets for the programme include conducting 100 needs analyses by the end of July this year, with 50 employees enrolled on HNC and HND short courses in September, and the development of strategic plans for 75 firms looking at succession planning and upskilling.

Longer term aims include building a culture of engagement in higher level skills training among SMEs, who will have seen the immediate business benefits of the scheme. Ultimately it is hoped to generate higher skill levels, improved productivity and business growth, meaning more employment opportunities, better paid jobs and improved standards of living.

The college was one of 34 to secure funding, receiving £200,000 from HEFCE. Match funding came from the college and its subsidiary South West Durham Training, and bid partners County Durham Engineering and Manufacturing Network, South Durham Enterprise Agency and Aycliffe Business Park Community Ltd.

Free training is open to SMEs in all sectors. Contact Senior Business Advisor Julie Cook at julie.cook@bacoll.ac.uk or on (01388) 825837.

Fresh from wowing audiences at Durham's Gala Theatre, Woodham Academy's dance students will showcase their talents in school this month.

Woodham Dance Academy students will be performing in school on Tuesday, March 27 at 7pm. The Dance Showcase will feature a full programme of 23 pieces, ranging from solos to group performances by all Dance Academy students.

The event follows the students' recent success performing at the Feet First Showcase at the Gala Theatre in Durham. Woodham Academy students performed two pieces at the theatre, the first an explosion of colour and creativity and featuring all dance students.

This was followed by a second piece inspired by a speech made by singer Pink, and choreographed by Kay Clarey of Joanne Banks Dancers.

Teacher Hannah Kent, who leads Woodham Dance Academy, said: "The performances at the Gala Theatre were empowering, and truly out of this world. Our students are performing complex pieces in a range of styles and they are doing so brilliantly. The hard work of our students and staff is really paying off, and we are all looking forward to the Dance Showcase.

"We thank everyone for their



Woodham Dance Academy students at the Gala Theatre, Durham

ongoing support for dance at Woodham Academy, and we hope to see as many of you as possible on March 27 - we are sure you'll all be impressed with what our talented, dedicated, students have in store."

The Dance Showcase will also include a special performance from former student and phenomenal dancer Lisa Robinson. Lisa will join students Georgia Thelwell and Sydney Etherington, who are raising

funds to enable them to travel to Disneyland Paris after they were selected to perform there on the main stage.

The Dance Academy's busy month will also include a visit to Halifax to compete in the prestigious Great Big Dance Off, at the Victoria Theatre on March 19th.

Tickets for the Dance Showcase, priced £3 & £2 concessions, are available via Parent Pay and the school office on 01325 300328.

Mysterious Booming!

Dear Sir,
Has anyone else reported the constant boom/banging noise coming from north of Aycliffe somewhere?

We live in the Woodham area and are used to occasional clay pigeon shooting etc, but this booming has been going on for weeks now.

It generally starts around 6:30 in the morning and then randomly occurs well into the early evening.

There is no pattern to it at all, sometimes just once, sometimes 3 or 4 in a row. It sounds exactly like a shotgun but maybe its a quarry or something.

It would be nice to know what it is and to find out why it needs to be 7 days a week at unsociable hours. Thought it could be farmers scaring birds but in 6 inches of snow?

Steve Heads

NEWTON NEWS

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Old Soldier's Operational Service Finally Recognised

SSAFA Sedgefield Division were delighted to play host to the family of Mr Desmond Smith at their Divisional Meeting in Woodham Community Centre on Monday 12th March. There, under the proud gaze of his wife, Mavis, his sister Olivia, son David and other family members, Desmond was presented with his General Service Medal and clasp Northern Ireland after a wait of almost 45 years! During a home visit by Newton Aycliffe based caseworker, Brian Wilson in August 2017, Brian observed that Mr Smith had served in Northern Ireland during his service but had no medals recorded. It transpired that Mr Smith had left the Army (Royal Artillery) in 1974 with more than 12 years Army Service without having receiving the medal even though he had completed several tours of Northern Ireland at the start of the troubles. Desmond followed the advice he was given by Brian and finally received his medal via the Army Medals Office in January. SSAFA then arranged for the medal to be mounted by the military tailor and invited Mr Smith and his family to receive them at a small reception held in his honor last week. The medal was presented



Flight Lieutenant Rick Fiskel presents NI Medal to Desmond Smith

by Flight Lieutenant Rick Fiskel, who is also a SSAFA volunteer within the Division. Rick delivered an informative potted history of the Northern Ireland campaign acknowledging the high cost paid by servicemen and women throughout the 30 year troubles which added relevance to the presentation. Desmond's son, David told us. "This is a wonderful moment for dad. He has been looking forward to receiving the medal and can't wait to wear it at the Remembrance Service this year. We are grateful to SSAFA for their

help in finally having dad's service recognised." We are pleased to be able to share Desmond's story and a few photographs from the occasion. SSAFA - The Armed Forces Charity provides practical help to servicemen and women, veterans and their immediate families in time of need. SSAFA Sedgefield Division supports around 50 families from Newton Aycliffe and surrounds every year. They can be contacted through the SSAFA website: www.ssafa.org.uk or by telephone: 01388 827346.

Have Your Say on local Issues

Residents in Great Aycliffe & Middridge can find out how local issues are being tackled when the local area action partnership holds their next board meeting later this month. The Great Aycliffe & Middridge Partnership board will be meeting on Tuesday 27 March 2018, between 6pm and 8pm at Greenfield Arts Centre, and members of the public are invited to go along to observe proceedings. Local people can also raise any local neighbourhood or policing issues that they would like the board to address. These ideally need to be put in writing and sent in advance of the meeting. There will be one project proposal being put to the board for approval from Councillors' Neighbourhood Budgets. Anyone who would like to attend the meeting should register in advance by ringing 01325 327441, or by emailing gampaap@durham.gov.uk Great Aycliffe & Middridge Partnership is one of 14 Area Action Partnerships set up by Durham County Council in 2009.

Maths Students Excel



Woodham Academy students Angel Woods, Charlie Pemberton, Ava Thomas, and Ryan Griffiths, at the UKMT Maths Challenge Final.

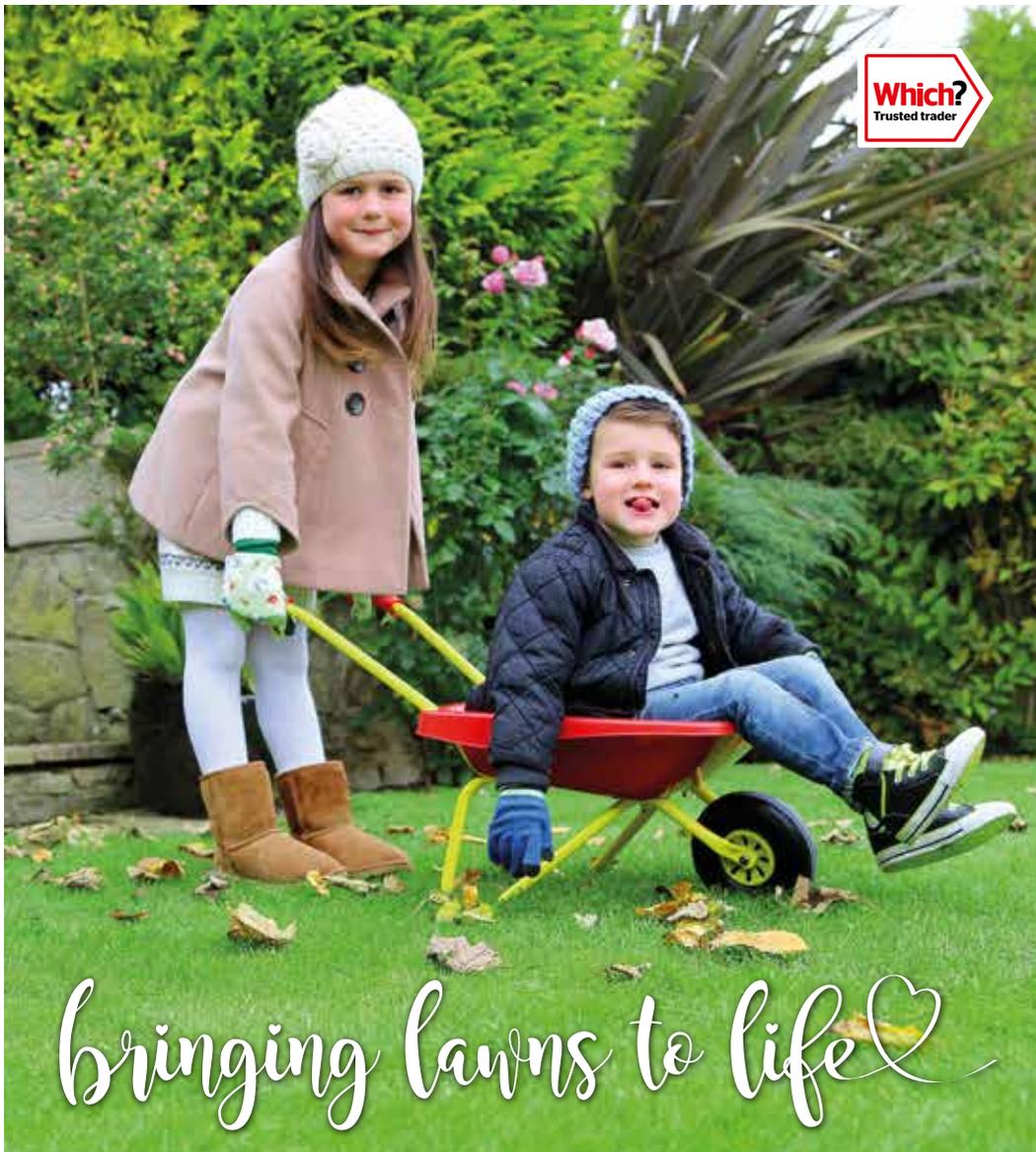
A team of Woodham Academy's talented students have taken part in the final of a regional mathematics competition. The four students travelled to Durham to take part in the regional final of the United Kingdom Mathematics Trust (UKMT) Team Challenge. Angel Woods, Charlie Pemberton, Ava Thomas, and Ryan Griffiths completed four rounds of challenges, testing their mathematical dexterity, teamwork and communication skills. Woodham Academy mathematics teacher Sophie Elliott said: "This was a truly challenging competition, featuring some of the best young mathematicians

from across the North East. Congratulations to Angel, Ava, Charlie, and Ryan, who did themselves, and their school, proud." Woodham Academy's team

finished the final in the top half of all the schools competing, and each team member received a UKMT certificate in recognition of their achievement.

Stop Pigeon Feeding

Sir With regard to last week's letter, I agree entirely with the writer and ask anyone who is feeding these birds to stop. Recently I was walking past the very spot where a feeding frenzy was taking place narrowly escaping being hit full in the face by a swooping pigeon. Will it take a child to be injured or an older person to stumble and break a hip before action will be taken to stop this unnecessary practice? John Humble Langley Road



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Aycliffe Craft Company Rises in SME Export List

North-East-based craft retailer, Crafter's Companion, has ranked at number 31 in this year's Sunday Times Lloyds SME Export Track 100 list, after experiencing 72% year-on-year growth in export sales. One of just four North-East companies to make the list, the Durham-based business has grown significantly from a small start-up into a global enterprise, now exporting to 32 countries worldwide across Europe, Africa, Australia and North and South America.

Having been listed at number 52 last year, the company jumped to spot 31 in the 2018 list, and expects export growth to continue, particularly in the US and Germany, over the coming years.

Company founder Sara Davies MBE said: "We're absolutely delighted to be listed once again for Sunday Times Lloyds SME Export Track 100. To move up by such a substantial jump is a real achievement for us and is tribute to the hard work of our teams across the UK, Europe and US.

"We expect to see continued export growth driven



by product innovation, greater brand visibility and increasing consumer demand. Hopefully we can act as a catalyst, along with the other companies listed, for greater export from the North East to the rest of the world."

The annual Sunday Times Lloyds SME Export Track 100 league recognises the 100 small and medium-sized (SME) companies in Britain with the fastest-growing international sales over the previous three years.

Founded in 2005 by award-winning entrepreneur Sara, Crafter's Companion has enjoyed continued growth with the company's export sales increasing by an

average of 94% each year, rising to £10.3 million in 2017.

Crafter's Companion currently employs more than 100 staff across the UK, selling products online, through its own outlets and independent retailers, and regularly presenting workshops and demonstrations in store and on TV shopping channels in the UK, US and Germany. For further information about

Crafter's Companion, visit www.crafterscompanion.co.uk. The full Sunday Times Lloyds SME Export track 100 list is due to be published on 25th February 2018 and can be found at www.fasttrack.co.uk

3 Rings Reassurance to Relatives

A new service has been launched to offer a little extra peace of mind to the relatives of older and vulnerable people in County Durham.

3 Rings is a mobile phone and PC app which lets people know when their relative is using an electrical appliance such as a kettle, television or washing machine.

The idea is to reassure people that their relative is up and well. The app is being offered by Durham County Council through its Care Connect service.

Linda Ogilvie, Care Connect manager, said: "The app is a really simple, affordable way of offering people that little extra reassurance if their relative is older or vulnerable. "It will send live updates to your phone or PC to let you know when your relative is settling down to watch the TV, putting the kettle on for a cuppa or heating something in the microwave.

"So if your dad usually uses the kettle between 7am and 9am, the app will send an alert letting you know whether or not this has happened, meaning you can rest assured that your loved one is up, active and well."

In order to use the service, people need to purchase a plug, which is inserted between an appliance and the socket. The plug then connects to the app and sends information to family

members or friends.

The plug is purchased with a one or two-year subscription and no internet connection is needed as the plug contains the same type of sim card as used in a mobile phone.

And as many as 10 people at a time can receive alerts and the system is quick and easy to set up.

Care Connect offers a range of products designed to help people remain independent in their own home and also offer reassurance to their friends and family.

The range includes devices which raise an alarm when a fall occurs, remind people to take their medication or create an alert when a telephone rings.

For more information about the 3 Rings service visit www.durham.gov.uk/careconnect, call 03000 262 195 or email care.connect@durham.gov.uk

Crime Rises, ASB Falls Police Numbers Drop

REPORTED CRIMES in County Durham and Darlington increased over the past year, according to the latest Performance Report from Police, Crime & Victims' Commissioner, Ron Hogg.

The report indicates that the number of reported victim-based crimes rose by 35%, whilst levels of anti-social behaviour reduced by 14% over the twelve months to December 2017.

At the same time, residents of Durham and Darlington have greater confidence in the Police than almost anywhere else in the country. 85% of people agree that 'taking everything into account I have confidence in the police' - the third highest level for any force in the country.

Commenting on the report, Police, Crime and Victims' Commissioner Ron Hogg said "There have been real increases in crimes such as

theft, robbery and arson, but the increase is also due to changes to the national requirements for crime recording: more incidents such as harassment are now recorded as crimes, for example.

He added "The high level of confidence in policing means that local people are reporting more crimes and incidents. It is reassuring that victims appear to be increasingly confident to come forward and report their experiences, especially victims of sexual offences and hate crime".

"Our police officers do an excellent job of keeping the public safe, and Durham Constabulary is still the most effective and efficient police force in the country. We also have some evidence that suggests that the rise in recorded crime figures will level off in the coming months."

The number of Police Officers in County Durham and Darlington has dropped by 400 Officers since 2010, following reductions in Government funding. Ron continues to call on the Government to ensure that Police have the resources they need to protect the public. Ron's Public Performance Report is available on his website at: www.durham-pcc.gov.uk - Further crime prevention advice is available on the Durham Constabulary website at www.durham.police.uk

Free Easter Lunch

You are invited to a Easter lunch.

Following on from our community Christmas Dinner we are pleased to announce we will be celebrating Easter with another free, three course Community Dinner on Sunday 1st April at 1pm in Burnhill Way Community Centre.

All welcome, including families. Come and enjoy home cooked food, make new friends and have fun.

Any donations will be greatly welcomed as these community events are organised by volunteers and self funded.

Please contact Jane 0780 445447 or Dorothy 07967 901477 to book a place.

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New GAMP Business Representative

Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership Board are delighted to welcome their newest member. Stephen Gosnay from Newton Press, will be joining the board as their new business representative from March 2018.

Stephen replaces the former business rep, Steve Robson (from South Durham Enterprise Agency), who has been a board member since its formation in 2009.

Brian Riley, GAMP Coordinator, said "Steve was a very proactive board member and also a member of the Employment task group, leading on the successful 'Step Into Business' project which received funding from GAMP in 2012.

He was also chair of the board twice during his time as business representative. He's decided to step down to focus his energies on new projects, and we wish him every success for the future.

We're looking forward to welcoming Stephen when he joins us at the end of March.

Stephen will be bringing a wealth of experience, more recently working for the well-established Newton Press, and will be a valuable asset to the partnership."

Partner representative (business) should:

- Be an advocate for the AAP and for businesses in the AAP area
- Have knowledge of local business issues
- Be in a position to talk to and share AAP information with other businesses in the area and be part of a wider network of business interests
- Be proactive in bringing any appropriate business related



Stephen (left) with Brian Riley

issues and opportunities to the attention of the AAP

- Be committed to improving their local area
- Be willing to give some time to AAP issues
- Be committed to the values of equality and diversity
- Be able to communicate effectively

- Partner representative (business) is valuable to the AAP, bringing their individual experience and knowledge of local business and the issues that they face. The representative should be willing to share their knowledge and experience at the AAP Board.

MRI SCANNER APPEAL

If you would like to make a donation to our MRI appeal or get involved:

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- Pick up a donation envelope

with more information, from one of our waiting areas or wards.

- Text SCAN02 £10 to 70070 to donate £10 to CDDFT.
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LOCAL ACCOUNTANT'S LATEST RECRUITMENT DRIVE



A Bishop Auckland based accountancy firm has once again announced continued growth and is embarking upon a recruitment drive to expand the team further.

Stuart Hall & Co recorded record growth, increasing year on year turnover by 30%

in each of the past six years. As a result, the firm is seeking to strengthen their team of financial professionals by recruiting an experienced accountant.

The firm provides accounting, bookkeeping, payroll, VAT return services and funding

assistance to businesses throughout the North East and Scotland. The company recently opened additional branch locations in Stockton on Tees and Scotland.

The Bishop Auckland branch contains one of Newton Aycliffe's own, Kate Hewitson. Kate has completed a 3 year apprenticeship and has now registered as a student of the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants to continue her studies and become a Chartered Certified Accountant.

Owner Stuart Hall, who founded the business in 2009, has seen the client base grow to in excess of 500 customers and the team grow to fifteen members. Stuart said: "The growth of our business has been due to our ability to

provide a personal financial service to our clients. We pride ourselves on the long-term relationships we have with our clients, which enables us to offer them a bespoke financial service."

Stuart adds "Another factor of our success is the opportunities we provide for our employees; over the years not only have we welcomed apprentices and guided them through their education to become full time employees, but we have also developed the newest members in our team with professional accounting qualifications"

Stuart Hall and Co is going from strength to strength with this latest recruitment drive. For more information visit their website: www.stuarthall.co.uk

New General Manager at Hardwick Hall Hotel

A new general manager has been appointed to lead the team at a popular North East hotel. Rob Warren will bring more than 25 years' experience of the industry to his new role at County Durham's Hardwick Hall Hotel.

The former general manager at Harrogate's The Yorkshire Hotel joins the venue following a major refurbishment.

The four-star hotel, set in County Durham's Hardwick Country Park, is also home to the acclaimed Rib Room Steakhouse and Grill and is renowned for holding large scale balls and events, including the annual Lobster Ball, which will be held on 27 April.

"In fact, it's the scale and diversity of the offering at Hardwick Hall Hotel that really attracted me," said Rob, from Knaresborough.

"There is always something going on and what makes the hotel really challenging is that it achieves high standards across the board; in catering in service and in terms of its facilities.

"It will be my job to ensure we continue to meet those standards and that we make every effort to exceed them."

John Adamson, owner of Ramside Estates, said Rob's experience at hotels across the country would be an invaluable asset to the Hardwick Hall Hotel as it moves forward.



"We are keen to build on our reputation as a first class wedding, conference and leisure venue," he said, "and I have every confidence that Rob is the right person to help us achieve that."

For further information, visit www.hardwickhallhotel.co.uk

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NEW FITNESS CLASS FOR NEWTON AYCLIFFE

Would you like to get fit, tone up, lose weight and feel motivated? Come and join our very friendly fitness classes. Jenny Pears has over 12 years experience of working within the fitness industry, teaching a variety of classes, working in gymnasiums and health clubs. She relocated to County Durham and wants to establish fitness classes in the local community. She wanted to create very friendly fitness classes where everyone feels welcome, have fun, work hard and enjoy exercise. She has 2 classes at School Aycliffe Community

Hall on a Monday Evening: 6.15pm - 7.00pm Bums, Legs and Tums and 7.00pm - 7.45pm Body Blitz £3.00 per class or both classes for £5.00. It would be great to see you there. Please contact me if you have any questions or visit my Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/JennyPearsFitness/> Classes are hard work, fun but not too serious, suitable for all abilities and ages. I have 2 children and know how challenging it is to find the time to lose weight and tone up. The classes have been devised to give a full body workout in 45 minutes. Giving your body maximum workout in minimal amount of time.

I set these classes up as I thought it would be a great way to meet people, have fun, be sociable while exercising. I would like to encourage people to exercise as there are so many benefits physically and mentally. We have established a small class with friendly people and great atmosphere. It would be great if we could create a social group outside of the classes too. Jenny's son was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder not long after she moved to Heighington. I made the decision to give up work and support and care for my son. This made it more challenging to meet people and highlighted the importance of seeing people

and doing something for myself. "Exercise became very important to me as it got me out of the house and gave me the space I needed. Now 2 years later I know the value of exercising and seeing people. I wanted to create classes that are not just about exercise but also have a huge positive impact socially and create something great in the local community". said Jenny.



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TIME TO CHECK MOLES ON YOUR SKIN

The British Skin Foundation is urging the public to check their loved ones moles! Whether it's your boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse, friend or family - take the time to check for changes in moles. **Things to look for include:**

- Moles that are growing or changing shape
- Moles that are developing

new colours

- Moles that are inflamed, bleeding, or red around the edges
- Moles that are particularly itchy or behaving unusually.

Dr Bav Shergill, Consultant Dermatologist and British Skin Foundation trustee explains "Most skin cancers



can be cured if detected early. The best way to detect skin cancer is to check your skin regularly, about once a month. You should examine the skin all over your body from top to toe. Ask a friend or member of your family to look at areas you can't see such as your scalp, ears and back."

The most recent Office for

National Statistics report on melanoma skin cancer in England found:

- There has been an increase in melanoma skin cancer diagnosis from 1995-2014
- Over half of newly diagnosed skin cancer cases are in people aged 60 and over.
- But it also affects younger people - in 2014, skin cancer was the second most common type of cancer diagnosed for 15 to 49 year olds.
- Men are more likely to get skin cancer.
- Early diagnosis of skin cancer results in higher survival.

Remember, if in doubt, get

it checked out straight away. Tell your doctor about any changes to a mole or patch of skin. Show someone you really love them by checking their skin health. A Newton Aycliffe lady contacted Newton News to say how lucky she was to recognise she had a problem starting as a mole that changed colour, and shape followed by itching. On investigation she was diagnosed as having Melanoma and undertook surgery to have it removed.



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Presentation at REME Annual Dinner



Philip Rolfe (Right) with Chris Prince

The **REME Branch Annual Dinner** took place on **Saturday 17th February 2018** at the **Phoenix Club, Newton Aycliffe.**

Major (Retired) **Chris Prince BEMER, 4th Infantry Brigade & 102 Bn REME**, presented the **Branch President, Capt (Retired) Philip Rolfe TD** with a **REME 75 plaque and flag** to be displayed at **Branch meetings, which was gratefully accepted and will be treasured for years to come.**

The next **monthly Branch Meeting** will be held on **Wednesday 28th March 2018 at 8pm** in the **Scout Centre, Bluebell Way, Newton Aycliffe. All serving and ex serving REME personnel welcome. "Arte et Marte"**

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Aycliffe Finance Company 10 years in Business

Gears up for growth plan in Leeds

Commercial Expert, based on Newton Aycliffe, celebrated a decade in business in February. Managing Director Mike Coates has now laid out an ambitious plan which would see its turnover surpass £1m by the end of the 2018-19 financial year. Commercial Expert has grown considerably after expanding to bespoke offices in Aycliffe two years ago, after it was first formed by Mike in 2008, with sales climbing 25% in the last 12 months.

The firm now handles more than £170m-worth of deals across 560 cases a year, for clients predominantly in the North East region, with a range of services including business loans, property investment finance, development finance, bridging finance and crowdfunding loans. Commercial Expert has already appointed new representative James Gwynne to develop opportunities in Leeds, while Coates has also earmarked Sheffield, Hull, Newcastle and Scotland as targeted areas for further growth.

"We've grown steadily and gradually since forming 10 years ago," says Coates. "We've assembled a good solid team at our head office in Newton Aycliffe. Now I really want to make a big impact going forward."

"We've already appointed a foot soldier in Leeds and we're looking at Sheffield, Hull and Newcastle, and possibly up to Scotland, as potential areas for growth."

"We're also aiming to take on more staff at our Aycliffe head office this year - at least one more business manager to help accommodate a continued rise in work-load - so rather than celebrating what has already been achieved, we're excited and positive about the months and years ahead."

Commercial Expert was founded by Coates in 2008 when he diversified from the residential mortgage and insurance advice career he began in 2001.

Originally based in Darlington, the firm relocated to Aycliffe in 2012 to facilitate the growth of his expanding business before expanding to new offices in 2016.

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(left to right) Susan Driver, Daniel Brown, Colin Coates, Mark Whitaker, Mike Coates, James Gwynne, David Hodgson, Rod Dales and Tracey Barnes.

And in the last year, Commercial Expert has added to its team with new office manager Susan Driver and business managers Rod Dales and Tracey Barnes.

Reflecting on the firm's 10 years in business, Coates said: "We've seen a tremendous amount of changes in our industry over the last 10 years, when you consider Commercial Expert was formed in February 2008, right in the middle of the world's biggest credit crunch. "Lenders have gone, others have come and gone, regulations have come in, we're seeing Brexit and fluctuating share prices. As a result there's a constant flow of new lenders coming to the market place."

"The world of commercial finance has certainly cleaned

its act up. But it had to. There are still some unscrupulous people out there, but you can't survive in the world of commercial finance any more if you're being dishonest with people. It has to be driven by a process and it has to be transparent.

"But I'm relatively happy with the way the company has developed. I can be impatient - it's my baby and it came from zero - but I've learned to be more patient over the years. I love what I do and the people who work here love what they do."

"It's hard work, but we've built up a good strong network of accountants, valuers and solicitors across the North East, as well as direct clients, and we're buoyant as we look to grow and expand the business."

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Students Learn Consequences of Crime



Students at Greenfield College have been learning valuable lessons as part of Rights Respecting Day. Year 8 students across both the Aycliffe site and the Sunnydale campus came together to learn more about choices and consequences in society and what it means to have your rights and freedom taken away from you in relation to crime and punishment. Students took part in a number of activities which brought home the effect of crime on both the victim and the criminals involved. 'Street Scene' gave an excellent demonstration of how petty crime such as 'breach of the peace' and 'drunk and disorderly' can impact upon society. Students were given the chance to participate in role play acting out scenarios in a light-hearted setting that achieved valuable results as students appreciated the effect on the victims, police time and ultimately the perpetrators. Visitors from 'Prison Me No Way' made a real impression on students as they were

able to access their mobile prison cell and learn about the conditions and consequence of criminal activities. Inhabiting the small space and sparse interior was particularly enlightening and volunteers from 'Prison Me No Way' were on hand to explain the daily routines of prisoners and answer the many questions raised by students. Students were also able to hear about the experience of prisoners first-hand as individuals spoke sincerely about the poor choices they had made in the past and the consequence of their actions. Students engaged well and were able to ask appropriate questions. There were also sessions on hate crime and harassment and courtroom drama as students played out scenarios in a magistrates court. The day was a great success with students gaining a broad base of knowledge about the consequence of crime. A big thank you to all of our visitors who led the sessions throughout the day.

Corrie Star at Local Food Festival



David is part of a significant new storyline which calls for his father's support. He will be appearing in the Cookery Theatre in the Town Hall at 11am and 2pm on Sunday 22 April with demonstrations using his amazing produce. Tickets are just £5 each with limited seats available for each session. He will join the likes of TV favourite Phil Vickery, 2016 Great British Bake

Off winner Candice Brown and runner up Jane Beedle, London restaurateur Jack Stein and Dan Doherty, recently announced as a judge alongside Mary Berry and Chris Bavin on new BBC show Britain's Best Cook. For more information, timetables and to book tickets for the Cookery Theatre and workshops, visit www.bishopaucklandfoodfestival.co.uk

No sooner has he returned to the cobbles of Coronation Street, actor turned chef Sean Wilson – also known for his role as Martin Platt – makes his return to Bishop Auckland Food Festival. During his 13-year absence from our screens, Sean has followed his passion into the world of food, where he has created his own range of multi-award winning Lancashire cheeses and worked in Michelin star restaurants. Presenting the lauded 'Great Northern Cookbook' for Channel 5 brought Sean back into our living rooms, reaching 1.2 million viewers. He also penned the notable 92 recipe cookbook of the same name to accompany the series. Completely self-taught, Sean has been a serious cook for over 30 years. Over the past five years this natural

confidence in the kitchen has led Sean to the world of food festivals where he has delighted thousands with everything from fine dining and food trends through to more rustic, heritage and provincial style dishes. Sean's Saddleworth Cheese Company creates six artisanal cheeses, with provenance as their byword, celebrating Lancashire. All have been British Cheese Award favourites over the years with Gold medals both nationally and internationally and 36 international awards to date, where they are becoming known as territorial cheeses of fine quality. "I'm thrilled to be heading back to Bishop Auckland Food Festival," said Sean. "I have very fond memories of my last visit and look forward to making new ones this April. It will be great to see everyone there." Sean has just made his return to acting and Coronation Street, as his on-screen son

RAFA AGM

Royal Air Forces Association
Caopus Club
Barrington Road
Newton Aycliffe
AGM
will take place on
Wednesday 28th March
Doors will close
at 8pm prompt
All members are
invited to attend
A. Young, Hon. Sec.

Obituary

In Memoriam

Margaret Kelly

24th March 2009

Forever in my thoughts.
Love you always,
Paddy xxxxxx

Elizabeth Anne Colley



23rd March 2015

Three years have passed since angels took Anne away. Her smile and love will always be in my heart. She is sadly missed by all her family. Only when I turn out the light at night and dream off Anne, am I at peace. Forever in my thoughts. Bob xxxxxx

ALAN NORTON 22nd June 1939 to 31st March 2016. Husband, Father, Grandfather and Great Grandfather. In our hearts you will always stay, loved and remembered every day. Your loving family, Carol, Tony, Lydia and Stephen, Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren.

TINA-LOUISE ALLAN 21st March. Those special memories of you will always bring a smile. If only I could have you back for just a little while. Then we could sit and talk again, just like we used to do. You always meant too very much and always will do too. The fact you are no longer here will always cause me pain. But you are forever in my heart, until we meet again. My beautiful Sister. Loved and missed, Jacquie xxxx

MICK BONAS 21st March 1992. Remembering our wonderful Dad, always in our thoughts. Lee, Julie, Sarah and all your Grandchildren xxx

SHEILA ARMSTRONG 27th March 2017. Mum, your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure. You are loved beyond words and missed beyond measure. In our hearts the memory is kept of the one we loved and shall never forget. Joan and Colin xxxx

FRANK SWINBURNE 24th March 2013. Miss you more each year. Love always and never forgotten. Love from all the family.

Thank You

LIVERMORE Michael and Debbie would like to thank everyone involved on the safe return of "Wilson" on Sunday evening. Thank you

Birthday Remembrance

GRANT EDGAR 27th March. On your 50th birthday. We miss you so much, our hearts still ache with sadness and many tears still flow. What it meant to lose you no one will ever know. We hold you close within our hearts and there you will remain. To walk with us throughout our lives until we meet again. Mam, Paul, Lee, Andy and family xxx
PATRICIA FISK (Pat). 24th March 1936 to 7th July 2000. Birthday wishes to our very dear Pat on this your birthday. Forever in our hearts. Love always, Tony, Susan, Michael and family RIP xxx



New Sponsors for Heighington AFC Boys



Heighington AFC Boys under 8s have agreed to a sponsorship deal with MAF Plumbing, Heating & Gas Services from Darlington. The companies owner, Mark Fryer, has generously bought the team a new home kit. On behalf of the whole team, coaches and all the parents we would like to thank him for his generosity. Proudly wearing their new kits the boys played in the league against Byers Green Bees. The Under 8s won their 2nd game in a row this week. After going a goal down they battled hard and pulled 2 goals back. Finished 2-1 to the mighty

red and blacks. A brilliant debut and goal by Sam Innis and one by Joshua Hill. Man Of The Match went to Sam Innis on his debut. New kits looking smart on the boys. MAF Plumbing & Heating provide their customers with the highest level of workmanship and customer care. No job is too small and with an emergency call out available they are just one call away for all your needs. From a job as small as a tap replacement to full bathroom replacements to full heating installations. All their plumbing and heating engineers are fully Gas Safe registered with several years of experience.

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Tel: Syd
01325 300212
or syd@newtonnews.co.uk

Congratulations

Kiara Jade Thompson



Happy 18th Birthday to my amazing Daughter. So proud of the young lady you've turned into. Hope you love your surprises. Love you lots, Mam and Ali
Happy 18th Birthday to the best Sister anyone could wish for. Love you loads. Love, Imogen

ANNIE COWAN

13th March 2018
'Anna'

Passed away peacefully with dignity surrounded by her treasured family. Funeral Service to be held at Durham Crematorium, Monday 26th March at 2.30pm. Family flowers only please, donations may be given in Anna's memory to Bliss Charity for babies born premature or sick.

We are all so proud of you Mam. Good night, God bless. Love you always, Diane, Andrew, Emma, Holli, Jessica, John and special hugs and kisses from your little darlings, Sophie, Charlie, Teddi and Josie xxxx

MARGARET JANE TRON

(Meggie)

of Newton Aycliffe, peacefully in St. Clare's Court on 14th March, aged 98 years.

Dearly beloved Wife of the late Davey; a dearly loved Mam, Nana, Great Nana and Great Great Nana. Family and friends please meet for Service at Wear Valley Crematorium (Coundon) on Tuesday 3rd April for 1pm.

EVA McMAIN

Eva, of Newton Aycliffe, died peacefully on 14th March, aged 85 years.

Beloved Wife of the late Brian; much loved Mam of Hilary and Alison; Mother-in-Law; a loving Granny of Stephen, Chris and Sam; also a dear Aunty, and dearest Cousin of Maurice.

Would friends please meet for Service at Neville Parade Methodist Church, Newton Aycliffe on Thursday 29th March at 11.15am, followed by cremation at Wear Valley Crematorium.

Family flowers only please. Donations, if desired for Aycliffe Care Home Residents' Fund may be given as you leave the Service.

36 Medals for Town Swimmers



Sixteen Sedgefield 75 swimmers competed last weekend in the Richmondale 'Off the Blocks' Development Gala. For Ewan Johns, Charlotte Lee, Oliver Turnbull and Charlotte Healey it was the first time they had competed for Sedgefield 75. All 16 swimmers swam

exceptionally well and came away with a total of 36 medals - 14 Gold, 13 Silver and 9 Bronze! All 16 swimmers also came away, having achieved some fantastic personal best times, with personal bests in almost every race. Competing at this gala were Ewan John, Charles

McEwan, Oliver Turnbull, George Wilkinson, Ethan Craig, Robert Price, Matthew Wimbury, James Hodgson, Mateusz Wilczynski, Zoe Hodgson, Charlotte Lee, Charlotte Healey, Chloe Harding, Kathryn Lee, Katelyn Craig and Sophie Wilkinson. Niall Coulthard also competed in the Schools Biathlon in London and achieved a fantastic 2nd place and Silver medal. Well done to all our swimmers on another fantastic weekend.

Don't Feed Birds says Pest Control Professional

Dear Sir,
In response to Alan Elders article regarding people feeding the birds in the town centre, he is correct in saying its is classed as "littering". As such you can, if caught be fined for the offence and may get a criminal record/conviction. I often see people feeding the pigeons opposite Aldi on the waste ground, not with a mere few crumbs, but with carrier bags full of feed and bread! As Neighbourhood Wardens patrol these areas it's only a matter of time before more people will be caught, so please be WARNED! YOU WILL be prosecuted for littering.

Many people do not realise what sort of diseases these birds leave behind in their droppings; Histoplasmosis is a respiratory disease that can be fatal. Candidiasis is a yeast fungus spread by pigeons, then there is Ecoli infection which is one of the common infections caused by an enteric bacteria carried in fecal matter. This is just to mention a few that can be caught and transmitted from bird droppings, so with people feeding these birds in our town centres not only is it a offence to do so, but you are probably, without knowing, spreading diseases.

PLEASE STOP FEEDING THESE BIRDS NOW!

Brian Sowerby
PestGuard
Newton Aycliffe

Youthy Football Round Up



The weather again played a part in ensuring most of the youth football fixtures didn't go ahead this weekend. Thankfully due to some of our teams playing in the Russell Foster league on all-weather pitches, one game did go ahead.

Newton Aycliffe Youth U10's 6 - 0 Bishop Auckland Juniors

First game in the spring cup and a comfortable 6-0 win in very cold and wintry conditions. 3 Goals from Will Houlahan, 2 from Alex Lister and 1 from Jake Laheny Clark. Man of the match today Will Houlahan for excellent display. Well done all.

The Under 9's Eagles decided to hire the Oak Leaf Complex indoor 5 a side hall to get some extra footballing time in as their game had been cancelled. Everybody who managed to come along had a great time and enjoyed the session.

Some excellent football played and 100% effort by all the boys.

If you are interested in playing football and being part of our club, please visit our website where there are lots of information and also links to league tables for competitive football age groups www.nayfc.com.

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