

Newton News

Incorporating The Newtonian - Newton Aycliffe's Free Community Magazine

Editorial and Advertising contact: paul@newtonnews.co.uk - Telephone: 01325 300212 - www.newtonnews.co.uk



Parish Youth "Share the Love"

See page 2 for more



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PAUL HOWELL
MP for Sedgefield



Update on Elmfield Site

Dear Sir,
 At a meeting of the Recreation Committee of Great Aycliffe Town Council on 22nd February 2017, Cllr. Ken Robson proposed and Cllr. Arun Chandran seconded that, "the Council writes to Durham County Council to explore the possibility that DCC lease the former Elmfield School site to the Town Council at a peppercorn rent, with a view to the Town Council maintaining it as a natural extension to West Park, until such time as it is needed for development".

It was agreed that, it be recommended that Officers contact Durham County Council to ascertain if they would be prepared to release the land to Great Aycliffe Town Council. Following a freedom of information request by Ken and Arun.

DCC replied that four bids have been received to redevelop the site for residential use. The bids are currently being evaluated on the basis of obtaining best consideration. This is a statutory requirement and is a confidential process.

The proposals put forward by Great Aycliffe Town Council to retain a green corridor for the land adjacent to Woodham Burn and open space to the northern part of the site, were incorporated into the marketing details. These will form part of any proposed development. Cllr Ken Robson and Cllr Arun M Chandran

Soul Creativity



Greenfield Arts are delighted to be working alongside partners to bring about creative opportunities for children, young people and families. It has been wonderful to find ways to reach groups in a meaningful way and support creativity and family fun.

The project, led by Greenfield Arts supported by Bishop Auckland and Shildon Area Action Partnership and Shildon Alive, is bringing 'creativity for the soul' to children, young people and families in the area, providing the opportunity to nurture their own well-being and take part in creative challenges that promote a feel-good factor along with strategies to improve health and have some creative fun!

The creative packs have been created by Greenfield Arts in partnership with Shildon Alive who will distribute these free resources during February half term. They have been putting together a selection of inspiring items including materials to take part in the creative challenges, a manifesto of kindness and mood boosting snacks.

Greenfield Arts have produced a booklet that promotes creativity and offers children, young people and families the chance to pick up the challenges and tips in their own time and space.

"We want to inspire people to be curious, creative and explore ideas. These creative challenges can help us see things in new ways and encourage us to consider ideas that help us to explore how we see things and express ourselves

Parish Youth "Share The Love"

Dear Sir,
 I am a member of Great Aycliffe Parish Youth Group who normally meet monthly at St. Clare's. This February we have decided to take part in a "Share the Love" mission project.

The project is centred around the bible passage, John 3, which shows the strength of love when it is shared with others and given freely. We began with launching a "Windows of Love" project, a short video explaining this can be found on our Facebook page: Youth/childrenstclares

I made a garland of coloured hearts and have placed it in my bedroom window, where it is visible for people to see. A visible sign of love from my house to yours. We shared this idea with our neighbours and they too have started to create window displays to share the love around our community.

We would like to invite the people of the Parish to join in and to send the photographs of their windows to our Facebook page. Since launching the appeal we have shared songs too. As a group we have much more planned for the month of February - so please do keep a watch out for us, join in and help "Share the Love".

Parish Youth Worker, Helen McCormick, added "Set against the tragic backdrop of reaching the 100,000 milestone of deaths from Covid-19 and the millions of families affected with the sheer sadness of it all, Parish Youth have launched a 'Share the Love' project. It is important to feel loved, to know you are loved and ultimately to 'Share the Love'!

This has huge implications for the mental health of not only our young people, but for everyone. That's why we are encouraging our communities to join in. We have a number of ideas, including the Windows of Love, which we are beginning to see appear across our town. Sharing inspirational music, caring for our neighbours and the creation are just a few - but we would encourage people to keep watching Facebook: Youth/childrenstclares and also the Parish of Great Aycliffe Facebook page, there may be a few more surprises as we continue through February and hopefully enter a spring time with lots to look forward to!

#sharethe...love
 #theworldneeds...love
 #youare...loved

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As the first signs of Spring appear, we usually look forward to the annual Snowdrop Walk in aid of Child Bereavement UK at Hardwick Park. This popular event is a lovely opportunity for families to enjoy a walk in beautiful surroundings and plant snowdrops in memory of someone important to them.

Due to Covid restrictions, we are unable to host the in-person event this year. However, to replace the Snowdrop Walk, we are pleased to offer a downloadable Snowdrop Walk Remembrance Pack.
<https://www.childbereavementuk.org/Appeal/snowdrop>

The pack features expert advice from Child Bereavement UK's Patron Alan Titchmarsh on planting your own snowdrops at home, together with ideas on other ways in which to remember someone special to you.

We hope to see you on the last Sunday in February 2022. Best wishes David and Julie Kilpatrick

#theworldneeds...love

#Sharethe...love

A Brighter Future for Local Company, LED Supply & Fit



Founded in 2014, Aycliffe Business Park's LED Supply & Fit has seen huge growth in the last 24 months and shows no sign of slowing down! While it has undoubtedly been a turbulent year for many businesses, LED Supply & Fit has seen web sales increase 84 per cent year on year from 2018 to 2019 and a further

43 percent from 2019 to 2020 – despite the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. This growth prompted a move to larger premises in September 2020 and recruitment, too – adding two new members of staff to manage the growing workload. Dave Thompson joins to take responsibility for processing orders as growth has made this a full-time role, and Amy Lowes has been taken on in the role of marketing apprentice, tasked with growing the digital presence and growth of the business. Gary Rudd, director at LED Supply & Fit, said: "It's been an amazing couple of years. We have been lucky to see our business thrive, and this is thanks to the incredible support of Durham Business Opportunities Programme (DBOP) which enabled us to exhibit in the incubator zone at 2019's EMCON.

"We are in a unique position, able to provide high quality at fair prices due to selling direct, which has stood us in good stead with our customers and gained us a reputation of reliability and service." LED Supply & Fit has no intention of resting easy, instead focusing on continued growth with the ambition of growing sales by a further 100 per cent and becoming the supplier of choice for LED lighting across the UK and Europe.

LED Supply & Fit works across the UK and can help customers save up to 90 per cent on their electricity bills via innovative LED products. Director and owner, Gary Rudd, has over 20 years' experience as an electrician and in the last 12 months, the company has replaced over 900,000 standard lights with energy saving LED Lights, resulting in millions of pounds saved by customers and the reduction of over 3000 tonnes of carbon emissions.

One of the organisations LED Supply & Fit recently worked with is the world-renowned engineering and fabrication company Cleveland Bridge, helping it reduce its lighting costs and carbon footprint with the installation 266 x 200w high bays and 60 x 240w high bays in its Darlington factory. Sustainability is a major issue for the construction industry, and Cleveland Bridge is leading the way by building sustainable thinking into the way it manages and operates its business.

Keith Shimmin, Head of Operations at Cleveland Bridge, said: "The new LED lighting is one of the many initiatives we implemented as part of the sustainability charter and we are absolutely delighted with the results as it provides both business and environmental savings."

For more information, see: <https://www.ledsupplyandfit.co.uk>

Vaccine Roll Out is First Class

Dear Sir,
In a recent letter John Armstrong berates me for saying that UK vaccine supplies would suffer because we had left the EU, but I can find no record that I have ever said this. What I have said is that we are paying more for our vaccines than the EU countries are, which is a fact.

I have no hesitation whatsoever in condemning the EU's recent threat to our vaccine supplies, which was fortunately quickly withdrawn. However, I would point out that the Government started this 'vaccine war' by stating that EU vaccine supplies from UK factories would be withheld until UK orders were completed, so both sides are at fault.

The Government's response to Covid-19 has generally been woeful, with the UK being amongst the 10 worst countries in the world using any possible measure. However, credit where credit is due, our vaccine roll-out programme is first class, and certainly better than the EU has managed. I've just had my first vaccination at the PCP, which was very quick and efficient, almost certainly due to the fact that this was organised by the NHS. This contrasts starkly with our experiences of the Government's preferred private enterprise solutions, which have been characterised by ineffectiveness and high cost to the taxpayer.

At least John Armstrong and I can agree that we all need to help by keeping to the lockdown rules.

Alan Jordan



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Tree Planting Scheme Nears Completion



Work to plant thousands of new trees across green spaces in County Durham is set to be completed in the next few weeks. Durham County Council will finish a significant tree planting programme as part of the Forestry Commission's Urban Tree Challenge Fund.

Almost £500,000 was awarded to the council last year after the authority successfully applied for the grant. Money from the fund goes towards planting trees in towns and cities to help improve wellbeing, connect people with the outdoors, absorb noise and play a crucial role in the fight against climate change.

Areas where tree cover is currently low have been identified for the planting of the trees. Once the programme of work is finished over 1,000 large trees and almost 20,000 smaller trees will have been planted across 70 locations.

Since the year 2000, Durham County Council has planted nearly one million trees on over 500 hectares of land, as well as planting or restoring nearly 200 miles of hedgerow. There are also plans to establish 60 hectares of woodland in partnership with the Durham Woodland Revival programme and the Woodland Trust over the next couple of years.

Cllr Brian Stephens, Durham County Council's Cabinet member for neighbourhoods and local partnerships, said: "This is a wonderful opportunity to plant areas where tree cover is low and when complete, it will see 1,200 large trees and almost 20,000 smaller trees at 70 different locations throughout the county.

"The funding will be vital in improving the appearance of green spaces across County Durham, especially important at a time when people are depending on having these areas to get outdoors and exercise in during the current coronavirus pandemic."

The planting builds on work the council has already carried out as part of its climate emergency.

The council has pledged to:

- Reduce carbon emissions from Durham County Council's operations by 80 per cent from 2008/09 levels by 2030, making significant progress towards making Durham County Council and County Durham as a whole carbon neutral
 - Investigate what further actions are necessary to make County Durham Carbon Neutral by 2050 and pledge to achieve this.
- Steve Bhowmick, Durham County Council's strategic manager, environment and design, said: "Our staff are excited to be able to complete the delivery of this programme and I'm sure that once completed all areas involved will look even better.
- "As a council we are committed to improving nature in County Durham while also playing our part in the fight against climate change and the planting of these trees demonstrates that."

Six Reasons to Stay

Dear Sir,
 Since 2012, I have kept my election pledge to keep residents informed. So I was disappointed to see that promise interpreted in last week's Newton News as 'boosting my own ego' and 'preaching'. It is not so intended.

One thing that letter said about me, however, *is* true, that I would wish to keep my place on the Council. Not just because it is the highest honour when residents choose you to look after their ward as their councillor, but also because there are some things I have started which I want to continue - including:

(1) FORREST PARK

- Can you remember me in St. Mary's Church in 2011 initiating our campaign to put an extra 50ha. of employment land into the County Durham Plan? That idea turned into the multi-million international development you can see happening now at Forrest Park. I have had no direct involvement in that development, of course, but as Cabinet Support for Economic Regeneration at Durham County Council I keep an active check on progress, and I was lobbying our MP only the other day about the proposed rail-freight interchange.

(2) COBBLERS HALL

- In 2017-18, Cllrs Dixon, Gray and I were able to secure a £150,000 play area at Cobblers Hall. However, I want it to be an *environmental* play park, and further work is needed to achieve that.

(3) CLIMATE CHANGE

- I was made DCC Climate Champion in 2019, and last year DCC won the APSE national award for Best Climate Initiative. But we are only halfway there on emissions, we need to finish embedding climate action into the Council's structures and systems, and there is a huge task to be done engaging with communities.

- DCC is one of few authorities which has economic regeneration as a strategic aim of its climate response; as Cabinet Support for Economic Regeneration, I am anxious to continue our exploration of how to bring a 'Green New Deal' to County Durham.

(4) SHRUB BEDS

- After years of my complaining, livin have recently kindly agreed to refresh their shrub beds. We are starting with the Kings Drive estate, but I want to see the project carried through onto the Well House and Horndale areas of my ward.

(5) STOCKTON & DARLINGTON RAILWAY

- In my role at DCC I have political responsibility for bringing about an S&DR Bicentenary, remarkable, not only for its celebrations, but for its economic and social legacy. Plus it is this former History teacher's dream to rescue the Locomotion Pub, one of the first three railway stations in the world.

(6) WOODHAM BURN

- Woodham Burn is a biodiversity corridor vital for the ecological, physical and mental wellbeing of the town. Rich at its eastern end, it needs bolstering in its western sections, and the West Ward councillors have graciously allowed me to get involved in organising the transfer of Elmfield Playing Fields from DCC to the Town Council, to create a community nature area.

So, yes, I *DO* want to keep my position as your councillor (and I will not stop keeping you informed.)

Cllr John D Clare

Laptop and Tablet Appeal a Huge Success

Dear Sir,
 I put pen to paper to offer my heartfelt thanks to the many people who so generously responded and helped-out when my recent laptop and tablet appeal was launched, in support of our local schools. When I wrote the article for the Newton News three weeks ago, I had no idea how the appeal would fair. I can confirm that the response was quite unbelievable. During the first 48 hours I was inundated with telephone calls and emails, with over twenty people contacting me. Thereafter, there's been a steady stream of other people coming forward. I cannot speak highly enough of those who stepped forward to support the appeal. Their generosity has been fantastic.

My wife, Cllr. Wendy Hillary, and I, collected the laptops and tablets and together, we systematically worked through them, checking they worked and restoring them to their factory settings. We were most fortunate to have been offered additional support services, by Alan Jordan, Middridge Parish Clerk, who undertook work on some of the devices that had more complex technical issues, or were running older Windows operating systems.

I am pleased to advise that we've been able to donate 49 working laptops and tablets to our local primary schools. In doing so, we've been able to meet their immediate shortfall requirements, in support of their most at need children and families.

On 23rd January 2021, I wrote to our local MP, Mr Paul Howell, highlighting this important issue and asking him to pass on my concerns to the Minister for Education. My letter also asked that more devices be made available for our schools to support home learning. On 5th February 2021, I heard that the Department for Education has contacted our local schools, asking them to bid for additional devices and have since confirmed that these will be provided. This is great news, but means I am left with a number of surplus devices that been donated. In light of meeting the immediate needs of the schools and further devices being provided directly from central Government to our local schools, I have decided to close down my appeal.

I am aware that Rotary Newton Aycliffe recently made a similar appeal in parallel to my own, seeking laptops and tablets for schools, but covering a wider geographical area. I will ensure that the surplus devices do not go to waste and are donated to Rotary for their ongoing charitable efforts.

Thanks again to everyone who has helped this important appeal and to the Newton News for launching and supporting the appeal.

Yours most sincerely,
 Cllr. Jed Hillary

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Thoughts on Council Tax

Dear Sir,
Election time is here, I hope people will make their decisions on facts not empty promises . . .

Some facts:

(1) According to the Town Council's report, next year, a Band D property will pay £250 of its Council Tax to the town council. This will raise £1.7 million, which the Town Council will spend on its services and facilities. Each £1 of town Council Tax produces about £7,000 to the Town Council. To achieve a reduction of £1 a week in our town Council Tax, Cllr Michael Stead needs to tell us how he plans to save £350,000 from the Town Council budget.

(2) The County Council Budget Meeting minutes show that last year a Band D property paid £2,225 Council Tax overall, of which £1,654 was specifically for our County Council services and facilities. (The remainder consisted of the Town Council precept, plus money for Adult Social Care, Fire Service, and Police). Each £1 of Council Tax yielded about £142,000 to the County Council.

What reduction in the County Council Tax would you need to make a noticeable difference to your pocket - £3 a week? To achieve such a reduction, Cllr Michael Stead will have to tell us how he plans to cut £22 million from the County Council's budget (on top of the £286 million per year the government will have cut from its funding by 2025).

Yours thoughtfully,
Mike Dixon

Local Author's Comedy Novel About Grief

Dear Sir,
I am getting in touch because in 2012, 2018 and 2019 I lost good friends to suicide, and have written a comedy novel about the way we deal (or struggle to deal) with loss. The book is set in Aycliffe and all of the characters are based on people who lived there. My intention is to donate money from every sale to suicide prevention/mental health charities and currently that will be ManHealth who are based in Shildon and helped both my friends' families. Nine Doors is a tribute to lost friends, a very silly, black comedy caught somewhere between Inbetweeners, Trainspotting

and Bottom, and a message that we need to reach out to each other. It is not like any other story, and that's because it's a topic rarely approached with humour.

Amazon Description:

£1 from every sale will go to charities helping fight against suicide and depression. Male suicide and mental health issues are still treated as taboo to an extent; humour is one of the ways we deal with them, and therefore should be one of the ways we combat them as well.

Nine Doors opens with the funeral of a character (Foz), and the arrival at the crematorium of his nine closest friends from his youth. Having missed the service, and other commitments preventing them from 'having a proper send-off' in the pub, being banned from the wake, they decide to have a get-together on their old stomping ground from when they were teenagers.

From the ridiculous decision to dress as they had in the nineties, and to drink the same cheap products they used to ask adults to buy for them, to the constant jibes and cutting comments, things start off as intended. However, an altercation with the current teenage generation, too much alcohol and a desire to say goodbye 'properly' instigates a childish series of pranks that have wild and often dramatic outcomes.

All of the characters' names and appearances are based on real people, because over the last two years we have lost two of our real life group of childhood friends. The novel deals with loss in a real, sarcastic, profane and often moving way - as men we tend to try and make light of the most serious situations, and sometimes struggle to just say we are upset.

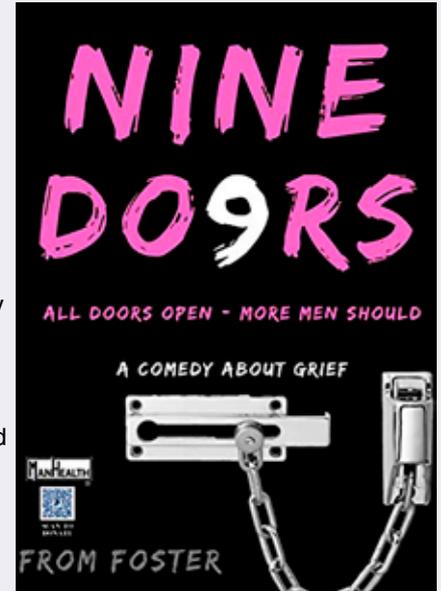
Nine Doors will make you laugh, feel nostalgic, and hopefully make even just one person think 'I'll arrange a catch-up with the lads/lasses'. How important people are to each other, even when they don't keep in touch enough, can make a difference.

Amazon Link:

https://www.amazon.co.uk/Nine-Doors-should-dealing-friends-ebook/dp/B08SWPP3H4/ref=sr_1_7?dchild=1&keywords=nine+doors&qid=1610721354&quartzVehicle=93-1829&replacementKeyword=s=doors&sr=8-7

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Pavement Parking and Fly Tipping

Dear Sir,
Following on from the recent articles concerning pavement parking:
I have lived in Oakfield for over 30 years now and it is soul destroying to see the area going downhill and becoming downright scruffy at a great rate due to inconsiderate and sometimes just lazy parking and fly tipping. The grass is absolutely disgraceful & ruined due to people parking their vehicles on it regularly even though it is saturated due to all the rainfall and snow melt we have had recently. It is becoming nothing but a quagmire.

People say they get on the grass as there is nowhere else to park, due to taxis parking all over the place (which they do), taking up designated parking spaces and also up on the pavements making it difficult and sometimes impossible for disabled scooters to get past safely.

Even when there are spaces available, some people automatically park on the grass as if it is their right to do so and usually it is the same offenders.

Two different individuals even regularly park their work vans - Bedford size vans, on the grass or on the pavement right on the bend causing it to be a blind bend for drivers and an accident waiting to happen.

Apart from the parking issues, the fly tipping is ridiculous with the same offenders dumping their rubbish under a tree and expecting somebody to take it away, even though they have cars and could take it to the tip.

The fly tipping is a regular occurrence and we've had everything from tables, lumps of wood, TV's and cabinets dumped.

A set of drawers were dumped recently and lay there for almost a month before they were moved. At the time of writing this, there are two single mattresses under the tree. What used to be a lovely area is quickly becoming downright scruffy.

Yours faithfully
Name & address provided.

Flytipping in Oakfield Area

Dear Sir,
I have lived in Oakfield for 19 years and it has always been a lovely street to live in, recently someone has been continually dumping rubbish by the trees. I don't understand the need to do this, it stays there for days, even weeks sometimes, and just makes the place look untidy.

There have been many different items including what looks like a full bucket of cigarette ends - which is very unpleasant. I am normally not one to complain, but this is starting to become more often and is unnecessary, as most people have space in the garden or on the front/back where it could be left until collected, or till they can move it themselves.

Name and address supplied
Thank you to Newton News for the opportunity to respond to the above letter. As with all fly tipping it is unnecessary, unacceptable and a blight on the



environment, culminating in resident complaints and Council tax payers picking up the extra cost.

After earlier discussions with some Oakfield residents Cllr. Martin Ashcroft and I have already narrowed down the culprits to a single property, but are frustrated in that local residents are not prepared to come forward to formally identify the person. However, we would like to reassure residents that the waste will be removed before the end of the week, and the Council Wardens will endeavour to take the necessary action against the person responsible.

To get fly tipping removed quickly use DCC on line service:

<https://doitonline.durham.gov.uk>

or contact:

Cllr Martin Ashcroft; martyc18@mail.com

Cllr Kate.Hopper@durham.gov.uk

Cllr Eddy.Adam@durham.gov.uk

Your Aycliffe West Labour team

Don't Bring Politics into the Project

Dear Sir,
Ref the letter in last weeks Newton News regarding the laptop appeal. It is with satisfaction, on my part, that this is being orchestrated by one of the elected councillors. However, I feel that it is not necessary for an ex-councillor to bring politics into the situation. Could he not keep out of the work being achieved by a dedicated member of the public and not try to gratify his own overblown ego?

Name and address supplied

Salt Bins for all

As we've had several days of snow already this year, with more to come, I wondered if it would be possible to remind residents who have Council owned salt bins located in their road/street/cul de sac that these are available for all local residents to use and not just for those that live in said location. After going to obtain salt from one of the roadside salt bins, so we could grit the road outside our home, a resident informed us that the salt was for residents of that street only. Because of this I did contact the highways section of Durham County Council and was advised that salt bins are for use of the general public and not specific individuals - all that is asked, that you should only take what is needed and inform the council when the level is low so arrangements can be made to refill it.

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Weekly Programme Schedule

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Updates from MP Paul Howell at 12noon weekdays

SATURDAY

9-10am	Eurovision Show	Simon Harding
10-12am	Moderation	Jack & Garvey
"Kitchen Floorfillers" Sponsored by The Cleaning Group		
12-2pm	Kitchen Floorfillers	Caz Bojangles
2-4pm	Weekly Edition	Paul Baker
4-6pm	Northern & Classic Soul (R)	Kevin Sowerby
"The Saturday Night Experience" Sponsored by Bengal Lounge Indian Restaurant & Takeaway		
6-8pm	Evening Session	JimJams
8-9pm	Rock the House	Carl Booth
9-10pm	Retro Trance Mix	OZ-DJ
10-12am	Street 'n' Drum 'n' Bass	MC Supa
12-1am	Night Club Session	A DJ

SUNDAY

9-10am	Church Service	Xcel Centre
10-11am	Yesterdays Music Today	Alan Brown
11-12pm	Random Reiki Master	Phil Hawkins
12-2pm	Country & Americana Show	David Ringer
Blues Show Sponsored by Whitehouse Funeral Service		
2-4pm	Bear Blues Show	Colin & Monica
4-6pm	Folk/Celtic/Rock Show	Steve & Col
6:30-8pm	Jazz Time	Mike Dixon
8-10pm	Paul's Down Time	Paul Kjenstad
10-12am	Sean's Sunday Set List	Sean Lawless

MONDAY to FRIDAY DAILY

10-12am	Golden Years	Paul Baker
12-1pm	A to Z of Pop (Mon, Tues & Wed)	Richard Smith
12-1pm	Call Me No 1 (Tues & Thurs)	Richard Smith
1-2pm	Memory Lane	Colin McNeillie
2-4pm	Afternoon Aycliffe	Paul Baker

MONDAY

5-6pm	Euro Chart Show	Dave Graham
6-7pm	60s Show	Karl Simons
7-8pm	70s Show	Peter Rush
8-9pm	80s Show	Gary Avery
9-10pm	90s Show	Paul Baker
10-11pm	00s Show	Producer Dan
11-12am	Teens Show	Andy Fittes

TUESDAY

6-7pm	Mystery Year	Paul Baker
7:30-11pm	Northern & Classic Soul	Kevin Sowerby

WEDNESDAY

5-6:30pm	Joey's Jukebox	Joey Collins
8-10pm	Alternative Aycliffe	Gaz n Alby

THURSDAY

6-8pm	The List	Colin McNeillie
8-10pm	BeatRoote	Graeme Roote

FRIDAY

6-8pm	Techno Trance Mix	PVR Studios
8-10pm	19th Feb - Nathan Abbott Dance Classix	
10-12am	Alternative Aycliffe (R)	Gaz n Alby
12-1am	Night Club Session	A DJ

Check our website for full schedule
www.ayclifferadio.co.uk

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ISOLATION

My angel never came this year.
I don't know where she's gone.
Isolation has left us feeling scared and so alone.
They said we would have to lockdown.
Just for a week or two?
Because there's a deadly virus.
But it's nothing like the flu.
We have to stay indoors, to keep each other safe.
World is now so strange hands ... face ... space.
No more hugging or holding hands.
No dancing in the street.
Pubs, shops and the cinema, no places we can meet.
So many sadly lost their life, and had to die alone.
While so many broke the rules,
The heartbreak and the suffering, due to many selfish fools.
You can go out for your essentials, medicine and food.
Not for raves or parties or trips down to the coast.
This virus simply cannot spread, if it does not have a host.
Towns and streets are empty now, schools are shut as well.
No sound of children's laughter, just empty playgrounds.
The awakening sound that once was life, now not a sound.
We stopped clapping on our doorstep, stopped hearing natures call.
On the frontline and key workers, the virus has now took its toll.
Masks now cover faces, inbetween are spaces.
The sorrow left in peoples eyes.
Expression gone, pain is hard to hide.
The isolation of a nation, is a pandemic on its own.
Keeping safe behind closed doors, yet feeling so alone.
Our mental health is suffering, doing so much on our own.
Home schooling is a challenge, our children miss their friends.
If it weren't for gin and tonic, we'd be driven round the bend.
So for now let's stick together, vaccine's rolling out.
Staying in and staying safe, to see our friends and family.
To save the human race.

Poem by Melanie Palliser

COVID-19 UPDATE

Newton Aycliffe Covid-19 Statistics & Advice

Area	7 day Cases	7 day rate per 100k	Weekly % Change	Change Direction
NA North	14	161.5	7.7	Up
NA West	5	86.7	-58.3	Down
NA East	18	327	125	Up
NA South	5	70.1	-58.3	Down

Correct at 9th February 2021

If you don't have anyone to pick up medication, please contact your community pharmacy. If you are unable to access support for help with essentials such as food supplies, or someone who can listen and support you, please contact Durham County Council:

Email: communityhub@durham.gov.uk

fill in the Covid-19 Help form at www.durham.gov.uk/covid19help or call 03000 260 260 and they will connect you to the help you need.

Want to join Durham County Councils' community hub?

If you are a local voluntary group, local business or other agency offering help in the community, why not join their community hub to help people find support in this time of crisis.

It's free, just fill in the form at www.durham.gov.uk/covid19volunteer or call 03000 260 260. You will receive a call to verify your details and your service added to Locate.

- 03000 260 260 is the number if you are struggling financially.
- PCP Befriending number 01325 329934 if you are feeling lonely.
- 03000 261 111 is One Point (for advice and practical support).
- 0800 3047039 (Freephone) HealthWatch County Durham
- In danger of losing your home? DCC Housing Solutions: 03000 268 000

If you require a test for Covid-19 ring 119
Durham County Council Coronavirus Helpline: 03000 260 260
HealthWatch County Durham: 0800 304 7039

Source: <http://www.durham.gov.uk/coronavirus>

'Inside Out - If You Care, Share Day' at Sugar Hill

As part of Children's Mental Health Week, on Friday 5th February, children and staff working both at school and at home, dressed inside out to support 'Inside Out - If You Care Share Charity Day'. 'Inside Out Day' is becoming an annual event at Sugar Hill during Children's Mental Health Week. It is specifically aimed at pupils, encouraging them to talk about their mental health. How someone looks on the outside doesn't necessarily reflect how they are truly feeling on the inside, so the children are taught that it is important to always be kind and think of others. Children as young as three have been involved in activities to help them learn that it is so important to share how they are feeling with a trusted adult. Sugar Hill Primary School are working towards accreditation with the 'Emotional Wellbeing Award for School'.

Mrs Legge, Deputy Head Teacher, is leading this initiative. A recent questionnaire, completed by parents and carers, has highlighted a keen interest in this award and for adults in school and at home to work together to support the emotional wellbeing of not only the children but their families and all the staff working in school. Mrs Atkinson Jones works full-time at the school as Social Learning Mentor and works tirelessly to support children and families. The children in school are keen that the message to 'always be kind and think of others' extends beyond the school gates to our wider community. This is a testing time for everyone's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing, and it is vital we support others. Many people are feeling isolated and the Covid19 pandemic has impacted on families in many different ways.

If you are reading this and your child attends Sugar Hill Nursery or Primary School and you feel you need some support, please contact the school office. Despite school closure to the majority of pupils during this National Lockdown we are still very much here to support you and your family. Stay safe and we hope to see you all again very soon.

Mrs Legge

Deputy Head Teacher and Emotional Wellbeing Lead



HAVE YOU GOT NEWS FOR US?

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

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Do you want to support them and enable them to remain safely in their own homes?

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sophie.bullough@dalecare.co.uk
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Employment Team Secures More than £1m in Funding

A scheme which helps County Durham residents get into work has been given additional funding of more than £1million. The Employability Durham team has been successful in securing £1.1million from the European Social Fund (ESF) following a competitive bidding process lasting over a year. The new funding will allow the Durham Advance project to support a further 1,000-plus residents who are aged 25 and over with a special emphasis on people aged over 50 and those with health conditions. The money will combine with £733,333 of match funding giving a total of £1,833,333 to extend the programme to December 2023. This not only cements the council's commitment to tackling unemployment in the area, but also safeguards the jobs of a number of the delivery team as Employability Durham is almost wholly externally funded. Since March 2020, the team has adapted its delivery to work with clients remotely, utilising phone, social media, text, email and video calling. Although this has been a steep learning curve for all, it has strengthened the skills of advisers and clients alike as the team tackle the changing labour market landscape. The programme now includes one-to-one advice and guidance striving for more effective and realistic job searches, making use of time to upskill, plan and equip participants with the skills and resilience to overcome barriers to employment now, as well as in the future. Cllr Carl Marshall, Durham County Council Cabinet member for economic regeneration, said: "This funding will play a huge role in helping many County Durham residents into employment. "In difficult times such as those we currently find ourselves in, we're delighted to be able to offer this type of support in what is a competitive and ever-changing jobs market. "In the near future, we would also like clarity on what funding will be available from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which will replace ESF funding, towards this vital programme." Employability Durham has also recently received funding which has enabled it to launch a new 'filling the gaps' provision in the form of Flex, which aims to support those who might not have been eligible for employment help previously. Two other projects that help County Durham residents with their search for a job – North Durham Assist and Employability Mentoring

– have also been granted extensions to continue delivery to December 2021. This strengthened package of support, in place for the next three years, cements the council's commitment to supporting local residents through the economic recovery phase and beyond. Those looking for additional information on Employability Durham should email employability@durham.gov.uk or call 03000 262009 or go to <https://www.durham.gov.uk/article/24689/Support-to-find-a-job> for further support.

An Opportunity to Get Involved Locally!

Dear Sir,
In May, Newton Aycliffe residents will get an opportunity to stand as a candidate for our Town Council. Many will be put off by the thought of financial obligations or the complexities of the procedure involved in standing for public office, so I am going to explain . . .

THERE AREN'T ANY.
Qualifications required to stand: **THERE AREN'T ANY.**
All we ask is that you are 18+ and care passionately about our beautiful town . . . OK SO FAR, READ ON:
Independents believe we have no need for political parties on our council, indeed some of us are appalled and alarmed by the apparent rise in left wing sympathies inspired by Corbyn and the rise of Liberal one policy, 'cut the council tax for the rich candidates'. Consequently, we require new blood with sensible views on how to enhance life in our fantastic town, we have wonderful opportunities to partner with owners and operators working on the most successful Business Park in the region.
If we are successful in being the largest group on the council, we can begin to look at reinstating Aycliffe Show, cleaning out the boating lakes and ask for the Burn to be cleared of rubbish. The possibilities are limited only by your imagination.
I do not wish to denigrate the existing Labour controlled Council, which has proven to be fiscally stable.
Our County Councillors seem to be happy to follow the cabinet line and go along with any dictates which come down from County Hall, so much so that in a recent debate on double taxation they turned their backs on the people who voted for them and refused to join the debate, claiming that as they get an allowance from the County they consider themselves as paid employees of the County Council forgetting those who elected them as County Councillors to represent them at County level.
Could I say that I believe in democracy and those elected are selected to represent those people who elected us, and I also believe we have a duty to vote.
We have already increased the number of candidates wishing to stand following an earlier appeal by my colleague, Arun Chandran, but we would like to contest every one of the thirty seats on Great Aycliffe Parish Council and particularly the seven seats on Durham County Council, which will be available in May.
I attach contact details for myself and Arun Chandran, but feel free to contact any Independent councillor for advice on this.
Looking forward in anticipation of hearing from you soon.
Cllr Ken Robson
Tel 01325 321471
kenrobson71@gmail.com
Cllr Arun Chandran
Tel 01325 313224
arunmchandran@aol.com





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Greenfield Students Stay Active



Students at Greenfield Community College are continuing to achieve whilst studying at home, taking advantage of the many learning resources that are being made available to them. Not only are they going the extra mile in their academic learning but they are also being inspired to keep fit and healthy.

Students and their families have been sharing some inspiring images of their time outdoors walking and staying active. The benefits of exercise are well documented and getting active can have benefits on physical and mental health. Extra tips and advice have been shared during Children's Mental Health Week and staff have been showing how exercise can build confidence and reduce stress levels; sharing valuable support and advice for wellbeing throughout the year.

Staff are also busy launching the '100' club which will put together some tips and challenges on how to stay active, allowing students to share images and form an active community. A great way to be healthy and keep in touch with others. The initiative is inspired by and commemorates Captain Sir Tom Moore, recognising the way he brought people together in his support for the NHS. Greenfield Community College are committed to supporting students to reach their full potential. The school promotes an inclusive curriculum encouraging students to work together to realise an outstanding learning experience. If you would like further information visit www.greenfieldschool.net or contact the school by emailing contact@greenfieldschool.net or by calling 01325 300378.



I must start by reminding anyone that has not seen it yet, of the message for those aged over 70, that has not been invited to have their vaccine yet. If you have not had an invite please contact the NHS either online or by calling 119, between 07.00 and 23.00. This could also be appropriate if you didn't take up the offer and have changed your mind.

Please call and you can still be vaccinated.

My thanks again to all the teams doing the vaccinations, we continue to get loads of praise for all you are doing.

There has been some press this week raising concerns about how effective the Oxford vaccine is against the milder impacts of the South African variant of Covid-19. Two points to consider here, firstly, that the South African variant is not at any significant level nationally or locally. Secondly, it was pointed out to me that even in this case you could say the vaccine would act like a crash helmet in an accident, it might not stop you getting a bruise but it could save your life!

In the BEIS select committee, we have just started a particularly interesting series of discussions on Heat and in particular, the need to address carbon emissions caused by domestic heating. We all think of paying for gas and electric but by purchasing these we are actually buying heat for our homes.

There are a number of ways that we can decarbonise heat, ranging from changing gas into hydrogen or using heat pumps or creating district networks. The scale of the work required is enormous and initiatives need to be coordinated and promoted. Before being elected as MP, I was being briefed as a Durham County Councillor and as MP on the possibilities of geothermal heat from old mine workings and I know DCC are working on this, whilst I am also supporting significant initiatives being promoted on Teesside to promote hydrogen and carbon capture opportunities.

Other areas of interest this week included discussions with Tom Dower and the team at our fabulous UTC, I will continue to push for support in education and skills. I also engaged with the 'Restoring Your Railways' team on both the Ferryhill Station initiative and the Leamside line, as well as joining the students at Durham University for an online political debate with the MP for the City of Durham. You may have seen the clips from Handforth Parish Council that went viral this week, I have to say that the local parish councils I engage with are normally much more civilised. Coincidentally, earlier this week along with the MP's for Bishop Auckland and North West Durham, I met virtually with the Association of Parish and Town Councils. These are important levels in our democracy and reach right into the grass roots of our communities. It has been confirmed that elections should take place in May for both

these and our County Council, so whatever your political allegiance please get involved. If you have an interest in standing for election, you can decide whether to do so as an Independent or with a party. If you do not want to actually stand, please do commit to vote, if you do not want to attend a polling station now is the time to think about registering for a postal vote and if you need help on this contact us and we will help you. I have two Parish Council meetings scheduled this week, both virtual of course, hopefully, we will not make the national news! Whilst we see the data improving and the vaccine roll out progressing well, it remains crucially important we all do our bit. Whether you are vaccinated yet or not, please continue to follow the rules.

Stay Home, Protect the NHS and Save Lives - Stay Safe.

Paul Howell
Member of Parliament for Sedgfield

Housebound Vaccinations

Thousands of people across County Durham who are unable to leave their homes, are receiving their Covid-19 vaccination thanks to the district nursing teams from County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust. Malcolm Walker, associate director operations for community services, said "Not everyone is able to attend one of the vaccination centres set up across the County. We've worked with GP practices - and Durham County Council as part of the County Durham Care Partnership - to ensure people in the top priority groups, as identified by the national Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), are able to have their vaccine as quickly as possible, in the safety and comfort of their own home."

"Our district nursing teams are based in local community hubs and, as such, already know and are involved in caring for many of the people now being vaccinated. Most are in high risk age categories and many have been limiting their contact with loved ones for almost a year. Having the vaccine will help protect them and is an emotional experience for many. Older patients remember a time before national vaccination programmes and are incredibly appreciative and grateful. It's humbling for our staff but rewarding to be involved in something so positive. So far, we've vaccinated over 3,500 people in their homes."



Paul Howell
Member of Parliament
for Sedgfield

paul.howell.mp@parliament.uk
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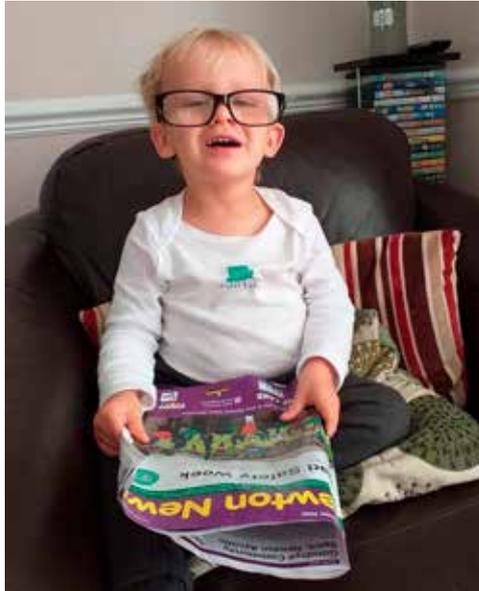
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*Humorous stories
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 newspapers from
 around the world*

When police told 20 year old Alex Pauleus of Hunt Street that a woman had identified him as one of the three men who burst into an apartment on Court Street, late Saturday night, and held the occupants at gun point, he said that was impossible. "How could anyone tell is was me, I had a mask on?", He reportedly told police.



Is this our youngest Newton News reader? My grandson, Rupert West, two years old, who lives in Darlington. I turned my back two minutes and found him sitting in Grandads chair with Grandads glasses on reading the Newton News! Ele West

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Valentine's Greetings



Laurie Winter
 Have a wonderful
 Valentines Day
 Love you loads, Rob xx



Beverley
 Happy 25th Wedding
 Anniversary to my Special
 Valentine. Love from Paul xx



Bev
 14th February 2021
 Happy Anniversary
 All my love, Rob xxx



Amy
 Look, we've finally made
 it. Happy Valentine's Day
 my angel. All my love, Leo



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

Joanne
 Have a wonderful day.
 My forever Valentine.
 Love always, Stu



Happy Valentine's Day
 to my one and only
 Chellbo, love ya always
 Your Diamond



Craig
 Happy Valentine's Day
 All my love,
 SJ xx



Martin
 Happy Valentine's Day
 Love from
 Maddi xx



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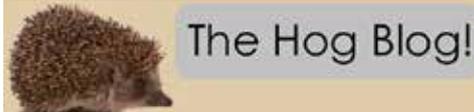
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It's the time of year when any hedgehogs that are of decent size and age should be hibernating now but we have received information from other rehabbers that there are little ones still being seen out and it's too cold so they have been retrieved and sent to the closest rescue centre till spring, despite their size if out in the day they need attention. Even if you have to stick them under your coat get them help quickly please. Rescue centres are fully equipped to handle emergencies and work very closely with our vet.

Prickly Haven also has a long list of people to thank, firstly Paul for taking the time and trouble to publish these articles which helps us help these beautiful mammals and get the message across to our readers about the many challenges they face in the wild. Tara and I have also met many people who have donated cash or items which benefit the rescue immensely, thank you must go to Roz for her monetary donation via Tara. Yet again June and Will for making beautiful treats with Rabbits, Chicks, Sheep and Hedgehog Pom Poms, selling them with all proceeds going to our Rescue Centre; Sonia for her regular donation of lovely food, a lady called Bethany for embroidering hedgehogs and finally Cynthia, who reads this article, took the time and trouble to get in touch and has not only provided us with lovely items but she has changed the way we house our hoggies, she has given us Vet Beds, hoggies love it, very calm, warm and gaining weight too. Finally a big thank you to Marian and Jane from Tesco for food and papers.

Tip of the week: Please make sure if you see a hedgehog, help is always available, our Facebook page Prickly Haven Hotel or email pricklyhaven@yahoo.com

Rotary Model Railway Exhibition to Remember an Old Friend

The Annual Model Railway exhibition held jointly by Rotary Newton Aycliffe and Shildon Model Railway Club will take on a new format in 2021. Instead of the usual busy event at the Newton Aycliffe Community Centre on Burn Lane, a virtual event is being staged online.

Around twenty layouts will be featured along with traders and preservation societies. The organisers are delighted to be able to show "Newton Burrows" a layout belonging to Johnny Jones who was one of the founders of the event. The large "00" layout, built in a former cricket pavilion, represented somewhere in the North East in the 1950's. Built by a group of Johnny's friends it could have eight trains working at once and featured a 'working' coal mine, reflecting Johnny's early life at Wheatley Hill. Johnny sadly passed away in 2014 and is sadly missed not only by Rotary members but by many people on the town.

The other layouts to be shown will be from a range of scales, periods and types, reflecting the best in quality from not only the North East but from across the country and possibly even further afield.

Proceeds from the exhibition will be donated to 'Heel and Toe', a charity caring for disabled children across County Durham and Darlington.

To gain access to the exhibition from 20th March 2021 visitors should visit www.rnarailwayexhibition.com where access to the exhibitors page will be made available, after obtaining your password via the Just Giving link and hopefully donating. Further details are available from John Burrows 07870 210269.

Rotary Newton Aycliffe & SHILDON MODEL RAILWAY CLUB

Virtual Railway Exhibition

www.rnarailwayexhibition.com

Available online from **SATURDAY 20 MARCH 2021**

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Obituary

Elizabeth Ann Lee

31st January
 Elizabeth Ann, aged 83 years. Beloved Wife of the late Brian, loving Mother of Elizabeth (Lib), and David, Mother-in-Law of Frances, Grandma to Cymon and Isobelle and Great Grandma to Sophie and Oliver. Due to current restrictions a family funeral service will be held at Darlington Crematorium on Tuesday 16th February at 2.15pm. The family would like to express their sincere thanks to all of the staff at Lindisfarne Care Home, Newton Aycliffe for the loving care given to Elizabeth.

Marjorie Bradley

Beloved Wife of the late William (Billy), loving Mother to Lyn and Robert, Mother-in-Law to Dave and June, cherished Nanna to Norman, Gareth and Kellya. Asleep in the arms of her mother. Funeral Service will take place at Neville Parade Methodist Chapel on Monday 15th February at 12.30pm, to be followed by interment in Stephenson Way Cemetery.

Trevor Lovelady

Passed away peacefully on 2nd February 2021 with his family around him. Trevor, aged 84 years of Newton Aycliffe. A loving Husband, Dad, Grandad and Great Grandad. A small gathering will be held at Wear Valley Crematorium Chapel, Coundon on 19th February at 10.30am, no black to be worn please. Family flowers only please, by request, donations, in lieu, if so desired, to The British Heart Foundation. The family would like to thank all the staff on Ward 6 of Bishop Auckland Hospital and Dr Hunt, GP, and the District Nurses. Rest in peace Trevor, no more pain.

Peter Byrne

Peter passed away on 27th January at Darlington Memorial Hospital. Husband to Jan, dear Father to Gary and Diane, much loved Grandad of Natalie, Kevin, Andrew and Adam and Great Grandad of Casey, Sophie and Callum. Due to current restrictions a small gathering of family and friends will take place at Wear Valley Crematorium on Monday 15th February.

Congratulations

Zoe

14th February 2021
Happy Birthday
 Where have the last 30 years gone?
 Lots of love from Mam and Dad xxxx

Happy Birthday Mam
 Lots of love from Bobby xxxx

Birthday Remembrance

Kath Bennett

11th February 2021
Happy Birthday Kath
 On what would have been your 80th. Miss you so much. Love from Trish, Dave and all the family xxx

Audrey Whittleton

14th February
 Sadly missed, always in our thoughts. Ann, John and family

In Memoriam

Colin MacCormack (Mac)

In loving memory of my beloved Husband. Rest in peace Bonnie lad, till we meet again. My love always. June God Bless

Colin MacCormack (Mac)

In loving memory of our wonderful Dad and Grandad. Miss you every day Dad. From Ian, Heena, Andrew, Tina, Rachel and Philip. Loads of hugs and kisses from Rebecca, Cameron and Haley xxxxx

Colin MacCormack (Mac)

Just a prayer from those who love you. Just a memory ever true. In our hearts you will live forever. Because we thought the world of you. Rob and June

Keith Douglas Johnson

8th February 2020
 Quietly you slipped away. Still love and miss you every day. Your loving Wife Tricia xxx

Paul Stevens

17th February
 Like sand in an hour glass, we measure our lives with our memories of you. You will always be in our hearts and we will miss you forever. Love from Mam, Dad, Julie and all the family xx

Funeral Cards
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The Good Times Will Return

Another weekend of the same,
 Yes, lockdown rules are still the game,
 Of how life is for us all,
 But we can still stand tall,
 And keep cheerful as we look ahead,
 The vaccine rolls out and we begin to shed,
 Our feelings of fear and great worry,
 As to and from home we quickly scurry,
 Wearing our masks, disinfecting our hands,
 No point in burying our heads in the sand.
 But at last we're filled with hope,
 As the vaccine does now reach so many folk.
 Let's be patient while it does it work,
 And soon we'll be free to again network,
 Meet our friends face to face,
 Enjoy a meal, no track and trace.
 Let's turn our faces to the sun,
 It won't be long until we can again,
 Live life with laughter, love and fun!

MMK

History in the Making! - Sugar Hill Covid-19 Time Capsules



Last week was an exciting week at Sugar Hill Primary as children working in school and those working at home prepared their Covid19 time capsules and buried them. The project was planned so the children were involved in thinking about how the pandemic has impacted on family life and as a record of 'history in the making!' The capsules include items that we use to keep us safe - masks and hand sanitiser and the children's thoughts and feelings about Covid19.

Year 4 pupil, Ella Beadle, captured her thoughts in the following words - 'Since the 23rd of March 2020, when the first lockdown started, it has been very hard for all of us. Everyone has new rules to follow, you have to wear a mask when going out and into shops, we have to wash our hands regularly and sanitise them when we touch things. There is also a two-metre distance rule to follow to help us stay safe. We haven't been able to go out or see our family or friends. It has made me very sad, especially with my birthday being next month and I can't celebrate with anyone other than with people that live in my house or in my bubble. Sometimes I don't want to leave the house in case I catch Covid. It has made me feel scared and I would like to be able to go out and feel safe. Activities have helped us keep safe during this very difficult time. My favourite activity I did was a clay model handprint plaque so we can show my children when I have them. Everything has changed because of this virus but it has taught me to be thankful for everything and everyone in my life. I would love things to go back to normal, but I don't know when this will be. Stay safe everyone'. Ellas's mam has spoken to Mrs Legge, Deputy Head Teacher, saying how proud she is of Ella completing this work and how much fun they had doing it together. They are both looking forward to seeing her writing printed in the Newton News! Super work Ella!

Sugar Hill staff would like to thank parents and carers for all their support with this project. Time capsules all over Newton Aycliffe will be unearthed at some point in the future and this will be exciting for all the children and families who have been involved.

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