

# Newton News

Incorporating The Newtonian - Newton Aycliffe's Free Community Newspaper

Editorial & Advertising contact: Telephone: 01325 300212 - Email: paul@newtonnews.co.uk - Website: www.newtonnews.co.uk

## Campaign to Save the World's Oldest Railway Station

The campaign to save the world's oldest railway station, at Heighington in County Durham, has received a major £90,000 boost, but there are fears the surprise general election may have derailed its chances of being ready for the bicentenary next year.

The Railway Heritage Trust<sup>1</sup> is climbing aboard the campaign of the Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway to buy and restore Heighington Station on the outskirts of Newton Aycliffe in County Durham by making an 'exceptional' donation which means a substantial part of the £500,000 target has already been raised.

Niall Hammond, Chair of the Friends, "We really welcome this significant help from the trust which is a clear signal to the national, if not international, significance of Heighington as the world's first railway station."

The Grade II\* listed station building, which doubled as a pub, was built in 1826, less than a year after the opening of the S&DR, when the concept of passenger waiting rooms was completely new. It therefore plays an important part in the development of the modern railway, which is why the trust has gone out of its way to help.

It is, though, currently derelict, and the Friends fear, if left to rot further, it will be an embarrassing eyesore when the railway celebrates its 200th anniversary next summer. It therefore launched its Save Our Station campaign in February, which has so far raised an amazing £15,000 from public donations.

The Railway Heritage Trust's £90,000 goes with a £10,000 donation from the Headley Trust<sup>2</sup> to assist with the project's development costs including the appointment of Purcell Architects. Support has come from local councils, including Durham County Council, and even from local masons' lodges, as John Carter, who built the station in 1826, was a mason.

However, the Friends were hoping that they could successfully bid for money allocated by the last Conservative government for 'levelling up', but Rishi Sunak's snap summer election, and subsequent defeat, has thrown that into doubt.

"The Railway Heritage Trust's grant comes at an important time for our campaign as our application to the Community Ownership Fund, which was a major part of our plan, now sits in limbo following the General Election," said Mr Hammond. "We have no idea if the fund is continuing or not."

"Time is now running short to bring Heighington back into use again in time for the bicentenary in 2025 – we need another £250,000 to Save Our Station and complete the purchase, and £150,000 to restore it and bring it back to life and reopen to the public. Every little helps and we are so grateful for donations big and small, and to all those volunteers who have already helped begin taking care of the site."

A further community tidy up of the site is planned for Saturday 27th July.

<sup>1</sup> <http://railwayheritagetrust.co.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sfct.org.uk/the-headley-trust/>

For further information and to contribute go to:

<https://www.sdr1825.org.uk/save-heighington-station/information/enquiries>

Photo copyright Northern Echo.



## Five Acres Summer Party



Claire Wilmers 'Voices of Darlington' blessed us with some beautiful, soulful, uplifting songs and Miss Whippys Ice Cream Van came specially too. We also enjoyed hot dogs and burgers then a colour run, which was fabulous.

To everyone who came on the day . . . Champions, family and friends, supporters and volunteers, the students from the UTC and Unicorn, thank you. Also, lovely to see Carrie and Amy, from Sisters of Support and Newton Press.

Happy holidays from Five Acres.

## Ayclife Shuttle Service

If you live in Newton Aycliffe, there will be a FREE shuttle bus service running from 11.00am on Saturday 27th July thanks to J&C Coaches.

**Times and pick up points are as follows:**

Bus stop at the entrance of The Chase Estate: On the hour  
 Bus stop opposite the Cemetery/Navy Club: 3 minutes past the hour  
 Huntsman bus stop: 8 minutes past the hour  
 Bus stop opposite the Jet Garage: 12 minutes past the hour  
 Bus stop on Burn Lane / Crawley Place: 15 minutes past the hour  
 St. Clare's Church bus stop: 18 minutes past the hour  
 Blue Bridge bus stop: 20 minutes past the hour  
 Railway Station Car Park: Drop off

This will also be available as return journeys. Please be aware that a 24 seat mini bus will be used for this service, so seats are limited.



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## Two Hundred New Actions To Tackle Climate Change

A North East council is committing to over 200 further actions as part of its ambitions to tackle climate change. Durham County Council's Cabinet has agreed the council's third Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP3) covering the period 2024 to 2027. It builds on the first two plans, CERP1 and CERP2, the first of which was established in 2020. CERP3 will set out 232 actions to carry out over the next three years to help achieve its targets of reducing council emissions by 80% and achieving net zero emissions for County Durham by 2045.

Through the actions in CERP1 and CERP2, the council has achieved a 61% reduction in its carbon emissions, which have fallen from 105,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide in 2008 to 41,733 tonnes (2022/2023). Cabinet heard that more than 80% of actions in CERP2 (2022 to 2024) are progressing, with 124 of the 150 actions complete or on track.

This includes the decarbonisation of street lights and of heating in council buildings, nature restoration and tree planting programmes and the transformation of Morrison Busty into a low carbon depot.

It also heard how projects are making significant monetary savings through more efficient lighting and the production of the council's own renewable energy. The

Street Light LED Replacement Programme has already saved over £5.5m in unused energy costs and will continue to create savings.

Countywide, actions include the completion of walking and cycling infrastructure for nine of the county's towns; energy efficiency grants awarded to over 500 businesses; over 1000 hectares of blanket bog restoration; expansion of the county's electric vehicle charging infrastructure with 250 new charge points; and progress with the Seaham Garden Village mine water heat programme.

Actions within CERP3 include the continued decarbonisation of council buildings, the roll out of electric vehicles within the council's fleet and continued expansion of charging infrastructure.

It also outlines ambitions to increase biodiversity in council open spaces and to introduce wind turbines at the authority's Hackworth Road depot.

Countywide, actions include public transport improvements, greater low carbon controls within planning applications, and the expansion of renewable energy schemes from the council's partners. CERP3 also lists a wide range of supporting carbon reduction measures from the Local Nature Recovery Strategy currently in development.

## Animal Artist & Digital Creator



Our guest on Sunday's show was local animal artist and digital creator Alexandria Jade Pickersgill. Successfully trading as Alexandria Jade Art, she has established herself internationally with a number of commissions going to overseas collectors.

Alex, originally from Northallerton and studied at Darlington college, now lives and works in Newton Aycliffe. She is, by her own admission, animal crazy and a committed advocate of animal welfare working with Explorers Against Extinction, using art as a way of supporting frontline conservation. Alex is booked up until the end of September with various commissions for her work, and yet still has the time and energy for her family, describing herself as a full time Autism mama.

Anyone wishing further details on Alex, and her work, can contact her through her Facebook page, Alexandria Jade Art, Animal Artist.

On the 18th June we recorded the first of our three pre-recorded interviews with some of our Police Community Support Officers. PCSO Steven Kipling was the first and it was our intention to play that interview as part of our live show at a later date, unfortunately technical problems meant we had to push it back to be able to fit it in with our existing schedule. We received a number of requests to play the interview again, so we used the second half of the show to include PCSO Kipling's interview. The second of the three PCSO interviews, with PCSOP Fotheringham, will go out as part of our live show on Sunday 4th August.

Phill & Andy  
Around Town, Aycliffe Radio.



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# The Big Debate



Ben, Robin, Abrielle and Charlie-May from Year 5 at St. Francis' Junior School, visited Durham County Hall with Mrs Hilder to participate in 'The Big Debate!'. The children started the day by enjoying a delicious breakfast of pastries and a fresh fruit platter kindly provided by the Youth Parliament. The children then ventured inside the debating chambers to argue their point of view on the following topics:



1. Year 6 SATS results should be the only thing used to assess children's progress
2. Every child should be entitled to free school meals
3. Public transport should be free to access for under 16's
4. There should be children and teenagers in government
5. The voting age should be lowered to 16
6. All 10-year olds should have access to social media
7. Should children be able to buy vapes over the counter in shops from the age of 14

The children spent time arguing their points for and against the topics. The children demonstrated bravery and resilience, by overcoming their nerves and standing up and sharing their voice! We are so proud of them as they have worked very hard over the last few weeks preparing for this event.

# Bargain Buys to Close

The branch of Euronics in Shafto Way, Newton Aycliffe has closed this week, but their branch in Bishop Auckland is to remain open. David Rowland, director, took over the running of the store from his father, Brian Rowland, in 1999 when he was only 18 years old. Brian passed a few years later. David says "I have been proud to take over my dad's business and proud to have run it successfully for all this time. The business was originally opened in 1987 on Neville Parade at first." David would like to thank everyone for their custom over the years and welcomes anyone, who still wants to shop local, to contact him at the Bishop Auckland branch, which trades as Switch On in Newgate Street - Tel: 01388 607216. Mr Rowland would like to add that Bargain Buys telephone number is still operational and they will continue to rent out and service their rental appliances.



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## Fun in the Parks

Due to unforeseen circumstances the Fun in the Parks due to be held on Wednesday 7th August has been moved to the Town Park.

Great Aycliffe Town Council would like to apologise for any inconvenience this may cause.

## Garden Competition

We all know that summer days have been few and far between this year, which makes it even more important to appreciate those residents of the town who have battled the elements to tend their garden to produce a floral display to be proud of.

The Town Council are again requesting nominations from neighbours or family members for the best gardens within the parish of Aycliffe.

### Categories to be considered are:

1. Best front (or publicly visible garden);
2. Best hang basket / tub display;
3. Best community display.

Nominations can be emailed to: [info@great-aycliffe.gov.uk](mailto:info@great-aycliffe.gov.uk)

by telephoning 01325 300700 or via post to Great Aycliffe Town Council, School Aycliffe Lane, Newton Aycliffe DL5 6QF.

Please include the address being nominated, which category it is to be considered for and potentially any additional information which should be considered when the gardens are judged.

## HALL FOR HIRE

### School Aycliffe Community Centre

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## RMS Recruiting Celebrate a Milestone



In the dynamic and often changing landscape of recruitment, RMS has always distinguished itself by its unwavering support for veterans transitioning into civilian life. So, we are thrilled to announce a significant milestone in our journey: we have been awarded the prestigious Armed Forces Covenant Silver Employer Recognition Award. This accolade is a testament to our sustained commitment to veterans, reinforcing our role as a key advocate and supporter within the community.

### A Higher Standard of Commitment

The Armed Forces Covenant Silver Employer Recognition award recognises employers who actively demonstrate their support for the Armed Forces, going above and beyond basic requirements. It highlights RMS's ongoing efforts to integrate veterans into the workforce, acknowledging the value and unique skills they bring to civilian employment.

### Building on a Strong Foundation

Our journey began with a personal story that continues to inspire our mission. Managing Director, Carole, was profoundly impacted by her son's experience as a Royal Marine Commando, who tragically passed away in 2016 after battling post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). In his memory, RMS Recruitment chose PTSD Resolution as its charity of choice. This charity specialises in providing crucial counselling and therapy for veterans and their families, aiming to alleviate the mental health challenges that often accompany military service.

### Elevating Our Pledge: From Bronze to Silver

In 2021, RMS Recruitment took a significant step by signing the Armed Forces Covenant, achieving Bronze Status. This initial recognition marked our formal commitment to supporting the armed forces community. The Silver Award elevates this pledge, showcasing our enhanced initiatives and deeper integration of these principles into our daily operations. The Silver status is a reflection of RMS's proactive measures to recruit and retain veterans, ensuring they are given the support and opportunities they deserve.

### A Testament to Our Mission

Receiving the Armed Forces Covenant Silver Employer Recognition Award is a proud moment for RMS Recruitment. It validates our efforts and motivates us to continue our mission with even greater vigour.

### Looking Ahead: Continuing the Journey

As we celebrate this achievement, we are mindful that our work is far from complete. The Silver Award is a significant milestone, but it also sets the stage for future initiatives. RMS Recruitment remains dedicated to advocating for veterans, proving that, with the right support, the journey from service to success is not just a possibility, but a reality.

## Kidz Flicks

Kung Fu Panda 4 - a super movie for all to enjoy, only £1 with sweet shop and ice creams too. Come along, bring a friend or two and enjoy a treat.

Time: 2.00pm

Place: St. Clare's Movie Hall

When: Saturday 3rd August

Who: EVERYONE

## NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

By PCSO Steven Kipling



Hi everyone, here's a brief update of what has been happening over the past week:

On Sunday night a male was arrested on suspicion of affray and was transported to custody.

Operation Trailblazer patrols have been carried out in parts of town which have been identified as hotspots for Anti-Social Behaviour. A number of youths have been engaged with during these patrols.

On Tuesday, PCSO Fotheringham attended Aycliffe Radio to speak about local policing.

On Wednesday, PCSO's attended the Community Action Team's walkabout in the Western area, engaging with our local partner agencies in the process.

On Friday, a male was arrested on suspicion of assault & assaulting a police constable, following an incident in Kirkstone Place. The male was later charged with five offences.

Also on Friday, a female was arrested for failing to stop after a road accident and for driving whilst intoxicated. She was later charged for these offences and will appear at court.

A prolific shoplifter was arrested on Saturday for a number of offences.

On Sunday morning, a male was arrested for causing criminal damage to a number of buildings in the town, including the Fire Station and the Magistrates Court, and for assaulting a police constable.

Also on Sunday, a male was issued with a Child Abduction Warning Notice.

Thanks for the support, have a good week.  
PCSO Steven Kipling.

## WE ARE RECRUITING SUPPORT WORKER REQUIRED

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# PCC Backs Calls to Cut Drink-Driving Limit

Police and Crime Commissioner, Joy Allen, has addressed medical experts at a national conference calling on the Government to cut the drink-driving limit.

As the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners' (APCC) lead on drink and drug driving, the PCC was a keynote speaker at the British Medical Association's (BMA) alcohol, drugs and driving consensus statement launch event in London.

The consensus calls for the drink-driving limit in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to be cut from 80mg per 100 millilitres of blood (0.08%), or 35 micrograms per 100 millilitres of breath, to lower levels as seen in other countries. It sets out detailed evidence showing that lowering the legal blood alcohol content (BAC) limit for driving saves lives.

Commissioner Allen said the current threshold in England, Wales and Northern Ireland was one of the highest in the world. Quoting new research highlighted by the BMA, she said drivers drinking up to this limit are six times more likely to be killed in a crash.

She said: "Let's be clear - there is no safe limit. Drinking alcohol impairs driving function at miniscule levels - the evidence is undisputable. It's time to take the data seriously and use the experiences of other nations who have successfully driven down collision rates by lowering the limit. Reducing deaths and injuries on our roads by drink or drug drivers is not only a professional mission but a personal one. Until we make it perfectly clear in law that alcohol and driving don't mix, then more needless lives will be lost on our roads. I fully support the BMA's consensus statement and will continue to lobby for a zero-tolerance approach that will ensure England and Wales can finally address the rate of drink-drive fatalities that have shown no improvement in more than 30 years."

The BMA's consensus highlights laboratory studies that show impairment in critical driving functions begins at low levels, with most subjects significantly impaired at just



0.05% BAC.

Studies from the UK have shown that reducing the BAC limit from 0.08% to 0.05% is effective in preventing collisions while 2010 National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) estimates suggest more than 150 lives a year could be saved by lowering the BAC limit to this level.

The BMA says a reduction in the BAC limit must be accompanied by other measures to successfully reduce drink-driving. This includes strong enforcement and public awareness campaigns which can successfully contribute to changes in driver behaviour.

Furthermore, the BMA calls for sustained investment in alcohol and drug treatment services and says this is a key component of addressing drink and drug driving harm and the wider harm of alcohol and drugs in society.

Commissioner Allen, who is also the APCC's Joint Lead on Addiction and Substance Misuse, added: "I have been fighting hard to ensure the criminal justice system offers the professional support to help individuals address their dependencies and stop offending. The earlier we identify the signs of problem-drinking, the more we can do to prevent further tragedies and save lives."

# Let's Talk Menopause

The next face to face peer support group is on Thursday 1st August 2024 at 6.30pm in the Youth Centre, Newton Aycliffe. Come along for a cuppa to chat about peri-menopause, menopause or post-menopause. Very informal, small group, open to everyone (not just the ladies!). For more information contact Jules Howe, Wellbeing for Life Team on 07809 342192 or email: [jules.howe@nhs.net](mailto:jules.howe@nhs.net)

## The Voice of Conscience

*You can do anything if you have enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is the yeast that makes your hopes rise to the stars. Enthusiasm is the spark in your eye, the swing in your golf, the grip of your hand, the surge of your will and energy to execute your ideas . . . Enthusiasm is at the bottom of all progress!*

Henry Ford, 1863-1947  
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Available plots and prices correct at the time of going to print July 2024.



# Newton Aycliffe FC Junior Section Presentation Night

It was a full house at Woodham Academy on Saturday 6th July as Newton Aycliffe FC Junior Section hosted their 25th Annual Presentation Day. The event was a great celebration of a successful season for the twenty-one teams at the club, with players, their families and coaches all coming together to recognise the players' achievements. Players, as young as 4 years old up to our U16's and Wildcat girls, gathered to celebrate. To seat such large numbers, with almost 300 players in attendance, there were three sessions over the course of the day, kicking off at 9am and ending just in time for the players to watch the England quarter final Euro game together at 5pm.

Each age group took centre stage, proudly receiving their participation trophies and awards. A special mention to Aidan Warburton, Phill Brumwell and their U13 squad who were awarded 'Team of the Season' by chairman Adam Cayless, for their fantastic team ethic, inclusion of players, great form over the season and back-to-back promotions. Simon Aspinall was awarded the prestigious 'Chairman's Award' for his efforts in developing new teams at younger age groups.

There were some farewells also, as managers Andy Lee, Scott Hayward, Iain Jackson, George Slatcher, Peter Strevens, Michael Labron and David Teder move on to pastures new. There were also several new managers presenting awards on stage for the first time with their new teams formed this season, a fantastic effort and no stage fright!

Nominated Awards were awarded to each team; Golden Boot, Players Player, Player of The Season, Managers Player and the 'wildcard' award that each team could pick for themselves. These ranged from 'Most Improved' to 'Most Assists' with one team also opting for 'Parents Player of Season'.

"It's fantastic to see so many happy faces here today," said Adam Cayless, Club Chairman. "This club is all about fostering a love for the game and providing a positive and safe environment for our young players to develop their skills. Days like this are a real highlight, they show what an amazing club we have and I am so proud. It makes all the hard work so worthwhile."

The event wasn't just about celebrating individual achievements; it was also a chance to acknowledge the tireless efforts of the coaches and volunteers who dedicate their time to nurturing the next generation of football players. A special recognition was given to Club Secretary Vicki Aspinall, Club Welfare Officer and Pitch Coordinator Neil Churcher and Club Treasurer Joanne Collett for their efforts over a season which was made very problematic due to such bad weather.

A huge thanks is given from the club to the parents who get behind the teams every week, whatever the weather and whose support helps make presentation days so special. Also, thank you to the staff at Woodham Academy for their hospitality and providing the venue for such a big event.

In the week leading up to presentation day, the Junior Section made the announcement that they will be ending their partnership with Newton Aycliffe FC and concentrating on junior football. Presentation day was the perfect opportunity to showcase the new, rejuvenated 'Newton Aycliffe Juniors FC' club crest, which was unveiled for the first time on stage, as was the new strip for next season. This was met with much excitement by the junior players. The new strip, which received great feedback, has kindly been sponsored across the age groups by the Securicorp Group. As the final whistle blew on Presentation Day, it was clear that the future of football at Newton Aycliffe Juniors FC is bright. The young players left the event with smiles on their faces, trophies in hand and a renewed anticipation for the new season ahead. Grassroots football at its finest.

#juniorsmarchon



# New College Apprentice Awards

New College Durham is proud to announce that last week they won a further regional accolade in this year's North East Apprenticeship awards. This is in addition to the recent award by the North East Chamber of Commerce for Larger Business of the Year. Apprentices, businesses and educational facilities from County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland were nominated across a range of categories. New College Durham won the award for Training Provider/Programme of the Year. Andy Broadbent, Principal and Chief Executive of New College Durham, said: "This fantastic award reflects the dedication of colleagues who continually identify, incorporate and deliver course updates and delivery methods. This ongoing desire to deliver improvement has now been recognised as second to none across the North East. We are delighted to have won this prestigious accolade and offer our congratulations to everyone else who were nominated in our category." Andy added, "For the last fifty years New College Durham has worked hard to support and promote apprenticeship opportunities across the region. This year we also took the further step of sponsoring a category award for Intermediate Apprentice of the Year to help promote the fantastic opportunities that an apprenticeship provides." The ceremony was held at Newcastle United's St James' Park, with the awards being presented by previous contestant

on BBC's The Apprentice, fitness entrepreneur and presenter, Katie Bulmer Cooke. New College Durham is 1st in the North-East Region for apprenticeship provision across all ages and all levels. At the award ceremony last night there were no less than five current students and three business partners nominated for a range prizes. NCD's celebrations at the North East Apprenticeship Awards were not only limited to their own win, we also celebrated two apprentice winners! **Benjamin Urwin** / Durham County Council (AAT) was awarded Professional Services Apprentice of the Year **Kieron Harden** / NG Bailey was recognised as Intermediate Apprentice of the Year Other nominees from and working with NCD included: **Amy Mackay** / Fresh Digital, Technology and Digital Apprentice of the Year **Arran Whittaker** / Bellway Homes, Construction Apprentice of the Year **Jenna Worthington** / Durham County Council, Higher Apprentice of the Year Mentor of the Year (Business links) **Geoff Scott** / Keepmoat **Michael Johnson** / Persimmon Homes **Ashley Henderson** / Fresh Digital.



Firstly, I have been getting reports that people are reluctant, for one reason or another, to pick up baby or adult hedgehogs when they are seen out during the day. This is totally wrong, I have been running this rescue for quite a long time and I have never had a problem with picking these poor downtrodden creatures up and bringing them into my home, they share our house with us.



They don't have fleas which jump into your carpets or onto domestic pets. They don't carry germs.

When they are out during the day it means they are sick and are asking for your help, let's work together to see that they get the help they need and deserve. I always try and accommodate as many as I can, it causes me great pain when I can't admit, for one reason or another.

I want to thank everyone who has donated, I have a lot here at the moment so I have to close for a week and a bit, I still need to feed and medicate hoglets and juveniles. I have also released a lot, firstly, Ace, Limpy, he has gone to a safer garden, Ollie and Lexi, Goldie, mum to three hoglets, the hoglets are going to join mum when they are much bigger!

Thank you Pat, Fred, Lesley and Steve for everything you do, also Elaine, June and Valerie for being there for me and my prickly babies. Please contact The British Hedgehog Preservation Society if you find a hedgehog out during the day on 01584 890801. My Facebook page is Prickly Haven Hedgehog Hotel. Email pricklyhaven@yahoo.com. (Not for hedgehog emergencies). *Pictured here is of the babies that was born here, she is very happy yeh!*



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E: [alan.strickland.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:alan.strickland.mp@parliament.uk)

As your new Member of Parliament for the Newton Aycliffe and Spennymoor constituency, I'll be writing a weekly update for the Newton News, as well as doing a 60 second round-up for Aycliffe Radio. I wanted to thank Newton Press for giving me this opportunity. Syd Howarth MBE, who founded Newton Press, was an amazing mentor to me when I was growing up in Aycliffe and he led the Rotary Club. I'm proud of the role Newton Press and the Newton News have played in our community over many years.

As a newly elected MP, I'm currently working hard to set up my constituency office, Westminster office and recruit staff. Thank you to residents who've already dropped me an email - once I have everything up and running I'll get back to you as I can. You can contact me on [Alan.Strickland.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:Alan.Strickland.mp@parliament.uk).

I'm really grateful to everyone who put their faith in me to represent our community. Having grown up in Newton Aycliffe, representing my home town is a huge honour and a privilege.

Whether you voted for me or not doesn't matter to the help I provide - as our Member of Parliament I'm here to serve everyone in our area. I'm a firm believer in public service and the new Labour Government has set out clear steps to return politics to the service of working people.

I've been proud to hit the ground running on a number of key issues. In my first few days I called the chief director of Hitachi UK to Parliament for an urgent meeting to discuss the situation at their Aycliffe train plant. I worked hard for 18 months as a candidate to stand up for the jobs at Hitachi in the face of dithering from the previous Tory government. Now, as our MP, I'm lobbying Labour ministers hard to do all they can to safeguard the plant. I'm determined to be an MP that gets things done.

To win wider support for the Hitachi plant, I led a delegation of newly elected Labour North East MPs to see for themselves the incredible engineering happening on our doorstep. They were impressed with the factory and met workers from each of their constituencies. This is all part of my campaign to fight hard for our area.

Last week I met with chief executive of the Eden Learning Trust, which covers Woodham Academy, to discuss the crumbling concrete situation at Ferryhill School. The staff continue to amaze me with the buoyant spirit and determination to deliver for the children despite their circumstances. I was proud, as a candidate, to campaign successfully to secure funding to repair the school and will continue to work with them on the next steps.

I also had the pleasure of speaking at the Annual General Meeting of the Ladder Centre, a brilliant organisation that provides everything from welfare support to youth clubs in Ferryhill.

I'm also proud of our mining heritage. My Granny was a proud pit lass from Gurney Valley! I spoke at the formal unveiling of the new Deaf Hill Banner, ready for the 138th Durham Miner's Gala. Despite the torrential downpour, I enjoyed my time at the Gala, celebrating our rich mining heritage and meeting residents from Aycliffe and across the area.

Time in Parliament has been incredibly busy with inductions, briefings and training for new MPs. But I've also got to see some of the incredible traditions at work. I was sworn in as a Member of Parliament by swearing an oath to the King on the Bible in front of the Speaker of the House of Commons. And I was privileged to see His Majesty The King set out the new government's agenda for the year in the King's Speech. I was really pleased to hear strong commitments on the economy, transport and the NHS. These issues came up time and time again on doorsteps in Aycliffe.

I was really pleased to speak at a meeting of the Newton Aycliffe Business Park Community and then spend time talking to individual businesses to understand the issues they're facing. We have lots of fantastic local business in our town and it was great to start supporting their work as our MP.

It's been great to hit the ground running and set the pace as a hard-working, pro-active MP. I'm really looking forward to being a powerful voice for our community and to meeting lots of Newtonians in the weeks and months ahead.

Alan Strickland, MP

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## New Developments Drive Growth in County

Latest tourism figures show a major boost for Durham's economy as the county builds on its bumper £1bn milestone achieved in 2022, with new attractions playing a key role in helping the county reach a new record.

Visit County Durham, the county's Destination Management Organisation and Durham County Council's tourism service, has welcomed the results which show visitor expenditure rose by 18.8% in 2023, with the value of the county's visitor economy hitting £1.23bn. Overall, 20.15 million people visited the county last year, an increase of 12.5%. The number of people employed in tourism has also grown, up by 12.4% to 13,178. It is welcome news as visitor numbers and employment have now exceeded pre-pandemic figures for the first time\*.

New attractions including the Spanish Gallery and Faith Museum, part of The Auckland Project, and further additions to the 1950s Town at Beamish Museum, have been instrumental in the county's success, and with even more significant developments opening this year, the future looks bright for the county's visitor economy.

In the last month alone, New Hall at Locomotion opened to create the largest under cover collection of historic rail vehicles in Europe, and in Durham City, The Story has brought the county's fascinating history to life at the new state-of-the-art history centre. The ambitious development at Raby Castle has also recently opened, with The Rising expanding its visitor offer with reimaged walled gardens, restored heritage buildings and new restaurant showcasing local produce. The county's tourism offer will be enhanced even further this summer, with Return of the Vikings, a new pre-show experience at Kynren, where visitors can experience the recreation of a 9th century village complete with cookhouse, cottages, and a working blacksmith's forge. The much-anticipated 1950s Cinema at Beamish Museum will open just days after visitors were given the chance to visit the new toy shop and electrical store. It doesn't stop there, as visitors will soon be able to stay overnight for the first time at the museum in Georgian-themed accommodation and experience the pottery and tavern.

Cllr Elizabeth Scott, Durham County Council's Cabinet member for economy and partnerships, said: "We are thrilled with the latest economic assessment STEAM results, which are testament to the incredible partnerships across the county that are committed to working together to grow our visitor economy. The county has really shown its potential in the past three years and has greatly benefited from new attractions and developments over recent years and, with more to come, it puts us in a strong position for 2024 and beyond."

Duncan Peake, CEO of Raby Estates and Interim Chair of Visit County Durham added: "These results illustrate the resilience of the county's visitor economy and the investment that is now being made in our visitor offer.



They also show that we have not only survived the challenges of the last few years, but have emerged much stronger.

Right now, across the county you can see new projects coming on stream. Multi-million-pound developments are underway at our visitor accommodation, from hotels to glamping pods, and at attractions including, Locomotion's New Hall, The Rising at Raby Castle, The Auckland Project, and Beamish... and with many more projects in the pipeline, it really is an exciting time for Durham."

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**Obituary**

**Brian Temple**



Passed away suddenly on 15th July, aged 73 in Darlington Memorial Hospital surrounded by his family.

Loving Husband to Christine and Dad to Julie and her partner Neil; devoted Brother to Barry, David, and Stephen; beloved Brother-in-Law to Shirley, Brenda, Pauline & Brian and Alan & Christine; loving Uncle, Great Uncle, Nephew, Cousin and friend to many.

He will be missed by all.

Funeral will take place at Wear Valley Crematorium, Coundon on Tuesday 30th July at 2.30pm, with a celebration of his life to follow at Newton Aycliffe Working Men's Club, all welcome.

Family flowers only, with donations, in lieu, to British Heart Foundation.

**BARON**

Peter Joseph of Newton Aycliffe, formerly of Spennymoor and Lanchester. Beloved Husband and Soulmate of Margaret, a dear Brother-in-Law and Uncle. Funeral Service to take place at Durham Crematorium on Tuesday 6th August at 2.30pm. All are welcome. Family flowers only please. Donations to RNLI.

**Faith Rollo**

Died at home on 4th July, aged 86. Mother of Dane and Bruce; Mother-in-Law to Sue and Dawn; Gran to Adam and Hannah and Great Gran to Jacob - who she never met. *There are no words to say what we feel, but you are now at peace.*

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4	2		6		9	5	
7		9					3
	7	1	3			9	
3	4				7		5
	9		7	4	8		
5				3			2
	4	6		1		3	9
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**Aycliffe Cricket Club Scoreboard Report**



Newton Aycliffe's 1st team, sponsored by Franks the Flooring Store, were desperately unlucky to lose by just one wicket at home to Hartlepool 2nd XI in the NYSD second division. Aycliffe were asked to bat first and were bowled out for a disappointing total of 118 after 47 overs with only captain James Layfield-Carroll, who top scored with 41 off 42 balls and an unbeaten 10 off 42 balls by Leo Stout, reaching double figures. In reply, Aycliffe bowled and fielded superbly, making the visitors fight for every run. However, in a nail biting finale, Hartlepool's last wicket pair inched over the winning line after 38.1 overs despite some excellent bowling from both Luke Telford (sponsored by JR Smith Electricals) (4 for 47) and Tom Dearden (3 for 21).

The second team were well beaten by 77 runs away at Northallerton 2nd XI in the NYSD fourth division. The home side chose to bat first and scored an imposing 184 for 4 in their 40 overs with Aycliffe's Tom Norman (2 for 37), Leon Patel (sponsored by Leas Flowers) and Matty Greaves (both taking 1 for 24), taking the only wickets to fall. In reply, Aycliffe lost wickets at regular intervals throughout their innings and were eventually dismissed for 107 after 26.1 overs. The main contributions from the bat came from Charlie Cayless (25 off 20 balls), Ramzan Hussain (25 of 37 balls) and Leon Patel (24 off 41 balls). The following day the 2nd XI had a comprehensive victory by nine wickets at home to Bedale 2nd XI in the NYSD fourth division. Electing to bowl first, Aycliffe skittled the visitors for just 102 from 33.4 overs with Leon Patel (3 for 17), Leo Mercy (3 for 24) and Matty Greaves (2 for 17) doing the damage with the ball and Greaves also had a day to remember in the field, holding on to four sharp catches. In reply, Aycliffe coasted to victory after only 20.4 overs thanks to an unbeaten 2nd wicket partnership of 94 between Chris Palmer (sponsored by AccScents Aromas), who finished unbeaten on 70 off 56 balls and Matty French, who supported well with an unbeaten 22 off 55 balls. Earlier, opener Jai Sander scored ten off 13 balls before becoming the only casualty in the Aycliffe innings.

The U15's lost by six wickets away at Wolviston in the NYACC League. Electing to bat first, Aycliffe scored a respectable 101 for 3 in their 20 overs, thanks to good innings from captain Tom Norman, who top scored with 38 runs, Trent Telford with 24 runs and Liam Scott with 11 runs. In reply, Wolviston reached their winning target with three overs in hand despite some good bowling from Liam Scott (2 for 17) and Will Moffatt (2 for 19), who shared the four wickets to fall.

The U13's lost by 8 wickets at home to Sedgefield in the NYACC league. Batting first, Aycliffe were dismissed for 55 from 14 overs, despite a superb unbeaten 33 from 24 balls by acting captain Trent Telford. In reply, the home side reached their winning target after 9.4 overs with Jonah Harrop and Dan Collett taking the only two wickets to fall.

The following evening, the U13's were beaten again despite a much improved performance, this time by six wickets at home to Northallerton. Aycliffe batted first and reached 96 for 4 in their 20 overs thanks to good innings from Freddie Lawler and Jonah Harrop, who both retired not out 30 and Carys Myers who chipped in with 10 not out at the end. In reply, Aycliffe captain Freddie Lawler removed both of the Northallerton openers to give his side a good start, but the visitors clawed their way into the game and duly reached their winning target after 15.3 overs and for the loss of four wickets.

The U11's were well beaten by 117 runs at home to top of the table Richmond in the NYACC League despite some encouraging performances with the ball from captain Harvey Palmer (3 for 13), Carys Myers (2 for 13) and Gracie Hayman (1 for 23).  
*Photo: 2nd team batsman Leon Patel in action.*

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# Don't Miss Out on a Tax Refund for Work Expenses

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is reminding employed workers they can claim a refund on work-related expenses directly through **gov.uk**. More than 800,000 taxpayers claimed refunds for work expenses during the 2021 to 2022 tax year, but while the average claim was £125, over 70% of claimants missed out on getting the full amount they were due because they used an agent to make their claim instead of claiming directly with HMRC. It is quick and easy to claim a tax refund directly through HMRC's online portal on **gov.uk**, and the only way to guarantee receiving 100% of the repayment - with no small print and no middlemen taking a cut. Submitting a claim through HMRC's online portal is straightforward and takes about fifteen minutes. Customers can use the handy online tool to check eligibility and a full list of work expenses they can claim including:

- Uniforms and work clothing
- Buying work-related equipment
- Professional fees, union memberships, and subscriptions
- Using their own vehicle for work travel (excluding journey from home to work).

Customers who already have a Government Gateway account can follow the step-by-step guidance to submit their claim. Those who need to set an account up can do so quickly and easily via **gov.uk**. For customers who are considering using a repayment agent, HMRC is reminding them to be aware that an agent always charges for services - in some cases up to 50% of the value of the claim. And, while initially it may seem simpler, customers will need to supply the agent with the same information they could use to make the claim themselves using HMRC's free online portal.

It is important customers understand what they are signing up to. Before signing a contract with a repayment agent, they should research the company and always check the small print to ensure they understand what commission is being charged and how much of their tax refund they are likely to receive back. Customers can find out more about how to make a work-related expense claim and what type of expense they can claim at **gov.uk**

# Pathway to a Brighter Future



An innovative scheme aimed at preventing anti-social behaviour is helping young people find their pathway to a brighter future. More than 70 young people from the Darlington area have already taken part in the Future Pathways initiative over the past two years, as part of a successful programme supported by Durham Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Joy Allen through Safer Streets 4 funding.

Earlier this year, the PCC allocated further funding to support the ASB Prevention Programme, which links activity with issues affecting the community. There are currently 22 young people from across Darlington and Stanley taking part in the programme. Darlington Borough Council's Young People's Engagement and Justice Service has been working closely with Future Pathways to identify young people, and their parents/carers who would benefit from the programme. Sessions so far have covered a range of topics including online safety and social media usage, vaping awareness, drugs, alcohol and tobacco awareness and offensive weapons. Future sessions will focus on ASB, peer pressure and British values.

The latest session has seen Future Pathways bring businesses and education providers together for a special Career Aspirations Event to focus on employability and help young people find their path and learn more about the opportunities open to them in the local area.

Durham PCC Joy Allen added: "Anti-social behaviour strikes at the very heart of our communities, eroding confidence and heightening fear. For too long, residents have felt let down by the system designed to keep them safe, while perpetrators have faced little consequence or punishment for their actions. This must change.

"Through this new programme, we will educate young people to respect the law and their neighbours and support them and their families to prevent further unwanted behaviour which could lead to more serious criminality if left unchecked.

"Enforcement by itself cannot solve the lawlessness on our streets. Young people need strong guidance at an early age to fulfil their potential, especially when their family support network is missing. Prevention first is a key strategy in my Police and Crime Plan and I am excited to work with partners on this exciting scheme to make County Durham and Darlington safer, stronger and more resilient to crime, drug and anti-social behaviour."

Photo: Martin Gray, Future Pathways company director, welcomes supporters and young people to the Career Aspirations Event.

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# RUNNING CLUB NEWS

It has been another busy week for Aycliffe Running Club with some unique races this week. On Wednesday 17th July, one member took part in the Run Nation Hexham 10k, with Ian Stothard (1:19:02) the sole representative for the club.

On Thursday 18th July, 16 members took part in the Durham City Run Festival. Seven members took part in the 5k race with Tamara Kirk (28:01), Alan Kellett (33:17), Jayne Rudd (33:30), Em Flynn (34:08), Anne Kellett (34:16) Steph Colvin (35:26) and Christina Lambert (40:05) representing the club. In the 10k race, nine members represented the club including Sam Keenan (in a new 10k PB of (41:23), Max Todd (44:13), Sarah Gill (54:33), Trish Kay (56:35), Jean-Pierre Hupin (1:02:23), Sue Podmore (1:02:28), Kirsty Cameron (1:02:49), Richard Tonge (1:05:52) and Sam Harding (1:06:45).

On the same night, two members travelled to Flatts Lane to take part in the fourth race of the Muddy Roads series of races, the Pine Forest 5k. Representing the club were Melanie Varley (34:21) and Peter Varley (36:08).

On Saturday 20th July, two members completed their fourth ultra marathon of the year, an amazing achievement. Salv (8:57:14) and Cath McDonnell (8:57:18) took part in the 50k Boudicca Way Ultra which follows a beautiful trail through historic South Norfolk Villages where Boudicca, The Queen of Iceni, once ruled with the race finishing in Norwich.

On the same day, one member took part in the Dalesrunner 30 which is a 31.7k trail race that ascends almost 3,000ft from Swaledale up to the Tan Hill Inn (Great Britain's highest



pub), taking in part of the Coast to Coast path and a section of the Pennine Way. Paul Dalton continued his training for an upcoming Ultra, finishing in a time of 4:27:27.

On Sunday 21st July, three members took part in the Run Northumberland Super-Fast 10k, with Angela Sutherland (49:31), third female overall and first in the over 50 category. Dave Stothard (52:13) was third in the men's over 55 category with Ian Stothard (1:14:31) also representing the club.

On Saturday 20th July, 29 members started their weekend with a parkrun. At Beckton Lou Mann (37:26) completed the first for the first time as well as it being her 50th different parkrun location. At Darlington South Park, Peter Varley (32:06) completed the course for the first time.

At Hackworth, John Firby (18:59) finished first, with Rob Young (21:12) third. Tracey Pickering (43:03) and Cliff Pickering (46:15) both completed the course at Horton Park for the first time with Sarah Gill (27:34) doing the same at New Earswick.

At Isabel Trail, Carley Cooper (28:42), Jean-Pierre Hupin (28:45) and Em Flynn (35:26) all

completed the course for the first time. At Jubilee, Bernadette Cooper (23:26) finished as first female. At Wynyard Woodland, Floyd Jones (21:16) completed the course for the first time, finishing third with Dave Stothard (24:31) setting a new PB for the course. Kevin Greenall (30:52) completed the course at Carlingwark Loch for the first time. If you are feeling inspired and are interested in joining the club, you can turn up for one of our sessions. More information is available on our website [www.ayclifferunningclub.org](http://www.ayclifferunningclub.org), uk or our Facebook page. If you would like to chat with someone, then you can email [ayclifferunningclub@gmail.com](mailto:ayclifferunningclub@gmail.com). If interested in the Junior Section you can email [arc.juniorsection@gmail.com](mailto:arc.juniorsection@gmail.com). Make this year the year you or your children get into running and join us to keep it going for many years to come.

# School Children's Designs to Slow Down Drivers

Pupils from a County Durham primary school have created eye-catching artwork reminding motorists to drive safely. Children from Timothy Hackworth Primary School in Shildon have designed the brightly coloured banner encouraging drivers to slow down and be vigilant of pedestrians.

The pupils, from the school's road safety squad, have worked alongside their teachers and staff from Durham County Council to raise awareness of road safety and active travel among their peers and community as part of a series of activities.

Featuring the school itself, as well as the head and deputy head-teachers and school crossing patrol, the banner reflects the pupils' local community. It also includes several trains to embody Shildon's local heritage and urges drivers to slow down and save lives. Cllr Elizabeth Scott, the council's Cabinet member for economy and partnerships, said: "We are really pleased to have been able to engage with some of the younger members of our community on road safety. They should be very proud of the finished product and all their hard work. "Not only have they created a fantastic piece of artwork which encourages drivers to slow down and look out for people crossing the road, they have also learned more about road safety themselves in a fun and engaging way." For more information about road safety in County Durham visit [www.durham.gov.uk/roadsafety](http://www.durham.gov.uk/roadsafety)



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