

The Ambler

Amble's Community Newspaper

Issue 132 Feb/Mar 2022

Health care team 'one of best in England'

Northumberland is the best county in England for first and second Covid jabs and seventh best for boosters, The Ambler has learned.

Richard Hay of NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group also told The Ambler that "it was safe to say that [the Well Up North Primary Care Network (PCN)] is one of the best in England".

Dr Ben Burville of Coquet Medical Group, one of the Well Up North practices told The Ambler, "We are certainly one of the PCNs in the UK with the highest percent in population uptake for vaccines 1st/2nd and boosters"

He said that the uptake had been good due to a variety of factors. A personalised approach plus the use of social media had been important. The patient's whole experience of the procedure was also influential, so it was important to make it as seamless as possible.

He believed their methods could be useful when planning future campaigns.

Dr Burville also said that vaccination rates had been better in areas where there was more accessibility.

"Whilst many other PCNs stood up one Local Vaccination Site (LVS) we took the early decision to stand up three (Berwick, Alnwick and Amble). Morpeth patients initially went to Alnwick, with some getting vaccinated at Amble."

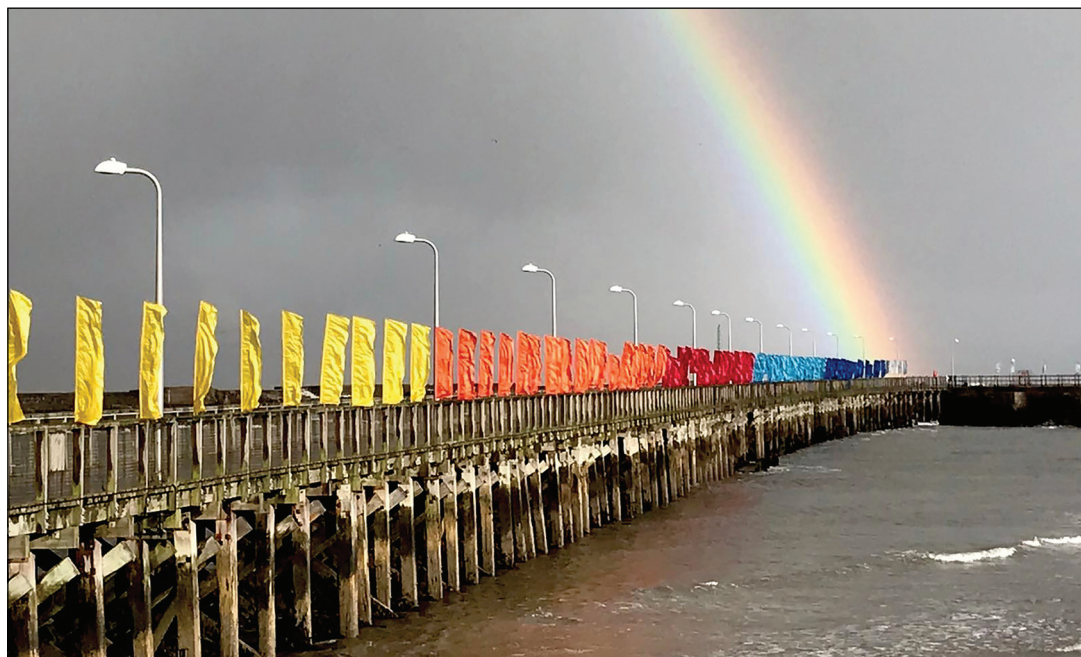
He said the Morpeth GPs then established a fourth LVS site to help with booster uptake.

"This ensured patients had local access to vaccine from trusted teams lead by GP staff."

The Well Up North group consists of 12 GP practices from Berwick to Rothbury to Amble and Morpeth.

Anna Williams

New date set for lights event



A new date has been set for the lights event which was cancelled at the end of last year. The ReKINDle lights festival will now take place (weather permitting) on Sunday 20 February, from 5pm -7pm at the Little Shore.

The event will feature hundreds of colourful flags and banners around the pier and promenade, with light projections, and an original soundscape featuring Harbour Lights Choir and voices of local children singing a specially commissioned song, 'A song for Amble'. As darkness falls, look out for the kayakers and their fabulous phoenix.

A spokesperson for Amble Events Committee said, "We hope everyone will come down to the Little Shore as dusk falls and enjoy the spectacle. So much work by so many people has

gone into bringing this event to fruition and we've all got our fingers crossed the weather behaves itself this time."



People are encouraged to dress up in their finest, shiniest, sparkliest gear and 'promenade and pose around the pier'.

There will be a selfie stall and fun from time travelling photographers Professor Weft and Miss Warp.

Organisers Dry Water Arts and Amble Events Committee had to reschedule the event originally planned for late November, after bad weather meant the whole thing had to be cancelled.

Call out for volunteers: The organisers are looking to recruit volunteer marshals and riggers.

If you would like to be involved then please contact Amble Events Committee via 01665 712929, or the Dry Water team on 07542 141411 or by email: info@drywaterarts.uk

The magnificent phoenix was made by Amble Coastal Rowing Club

The event is organised by Amble Events Committee and Dry Water Arts and supported by: Warkworth Harbour Commission, Amble Development Trust, Amble Coastal Rowing Club, Coquet Canoe Club, Coquet Shorebase Trust, Amble Town Council, Amble Youth Project, Amble Business Club, Northumberland Theatre Company, Amble Links First School, Harbour Lights Choir, Sample Builders, Infinite Arts, The Boat House Amble, Amble Christmas Lights, Going Good Dementia Positive Group, Steve Jinski, John Kefala Kerr, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service, Coastguards, RNLI, Rapid Reaction, Alnwick Triathlon Club
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Is it always 'jam tomorrow' for JCSC?

When does the promise of investment actually become a reality, and not just a series of wonderful words for future consideration?

For years, Amble has been promised an upgrade to our high and middle schools. And everyone understands that the last couple of years have been a bit difficult, to say the least. But the talk still continues. When will we see the fruits of these lofty assurances?

Every spring since 2017, just as Northumberland County Council (NCC)

sets its budget, investment is promised for Amble's James Calvert Spence College. But every year we seem to be just as far away as ever in seeing any actual progress.

Staying steadfastly in politically neutral territory, here is the timeline:

In February 2017, Amble was promised a £9m refurbishment for James Calvert Spence College. This was announced by the then Labour controlled county council.

Later in the year, the undertaking was reversed after the new Conservative controlled administration took over. They promised a review of all schools instead.

In October 2018, Cllr Jeff Watson wrote in The Ambler that £540,000 had been invested in the maintenance of the school buildings; £110,000 was to be spent on a new roof, and an additional £6M had also been requested. He said NCC told him they were pursuing reviews of the development 'with a sense of urgency.'

The following February, in 2019 Cllr Wayne Daley, then cabinet member for children's services, said Amble "needs a school fit for the 21st century," and JCSC was promised a £12M refurbishment. NCC declared the money had been budgeted for, and a business case needed to be drawn up.

A year later - now we are in February 2020, The Ambler asked what was happening with

the refurbishment. NCC told us they were working with senior school leaders to determine the best use of the money. In an interview with The Ambler, JCSC's Executive Head said they and the first schools were considering a change to two tier, but insisted that the promised investment would happen whatever the outcome of this decision.

In their March budget of 2021, NCC announced £20M for JCSC to be allocated over the next three years; £250,000 to be spent in 2021/22, the remainder in the following two years.

Writing in January 2022, Cllr Watson says that discussions are underway, and he looks forward to seeing an appropriate plan agreed this year.

So five years on, what has actually been achieved for JCSC? Has there been a decision about going two tier, and if so, will the public be consulted? What has this year's £250k been spent on?

We can't help but notice that since 2017, there have been nine schools built or significantly upgraded in other areas of Northumberland.

And we're still asking: when exactly will Amble see our school fit for the 21st century? Where is this urgency we were assured of in 2018? Or is it still to be more talk and 'jam tomorrow'?

Anna Williams

Timeline of promises

- 1 2017: Amble is promised £9M to refurbish JCSC. This is announced by the then Labour controlled county council.
- 2 2017: In July, the new Conservative controlled county council reverses the undertaking, promising a review of all schools.
- 3 2018: County Councillor Jeff Watson tells The Ambler £110,000 will be spent on a new roof, and a further £6M has been requested for the school.
- 4 2019: NCC announces a £12M refurbishment of JCSC and the head of children's services says Amble "needs a school fit for the 21st century".
- 5 2020: NCC say they are working with school leaders to determine the best use of the money. JCSC tell The Ambler they are considering a change to a two-tier system, and need to decide this first.
- 6 2021: NCC announces £20m for JCSC, to be allocated over the next three years.
- 7 2022: Cllr Jeff Watson writes in The Ambler that discussions on the school building requirements are underway. (See page 14)

£9 million investment at James Calvert Spence

Planning is under way for a £9m investment by Northumberland County Council at James Calvert Spence College. School representatives, NCC officers and designers have met to establish the educational vision for the relocation of the middle school to the James Calvert Spence College (JCSC) site on Acklington Road. In addition, existing accommodation on the site will be refurbished to form one large college for 9 to 13 year olds.

Initial designs and architectural plans have now been developed and a team of quantity surveyors are currently working out project costs to enable progress to the next phase. The building work is set to begin this spring.

The refurbishment will bring with it modernised classrooms, upgraded social areas and a new sixth form suite. The school will also provide more opportunities for the local community to use the new facilities outside school hours.

Councillor Robert Arkless, Cabinet Member for Children's Services at NCC, said: "Delivering the best possible educational environment for pupils is a priority for the Council."

County Councillors

Over the last few months many people have asked what is happening with regards to improving JCSC's environment.

Although I was involved in negotiations and forward planning I was not at liberty to discuss them in public or even answer questions from the press.

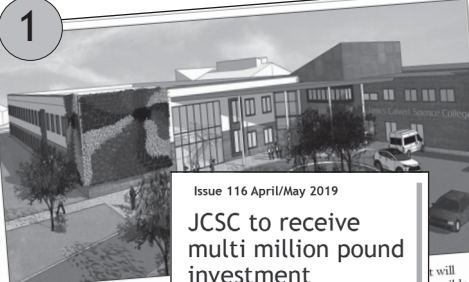
Unfortunately some people have taken misleading statements re the co-operation of the school and NCC I can now set the record straight.

The County Council has instigated a change in planning rules and in future any new housing development must contribute to the educational needs of its community. In Amble's case this means that £693,000 has been secured for the area so far from housing developments due to take place.

£540,000 has been invested in the maintenance of the school buildings and further £110,000 is to be spent on a new roof.

An additional £6 million has

Jeffrey.Watson@northumberland.gov.uk 0780



Issue 116 April/May 2019

JCSC to receive multi million pound investment

Only a few weeks ago, Northumberland County Council announced a huge investment of money for James Calvert Spence College.

Now plans and ideas are being made for what to do with this investment.

Executive headteacher Neil Rodgers explained what he knew; "We met with people from the county council last week who told us that they had earmarked around £12 million, which is great news."

"It means that we can start

Schools consider change to two-tier

One year after the announcement of millions of pounds of investment for James Calvert Spence College (JCSC), progress appears to rest on a decision on whether or not to adopt a two-tier system.

Executive Head of JCSC Neil Rodgers told The Ambler he had been meeting with heads of the first schools to discuss whether changing to a two-tier, or remaining as a three-tier system was best for the students in the future.

He said: "There have been discussions between ourselves and the first schools to see if we can come to a decision collectively as a partnership." However, he stressed, "The money is not dependent on one [decision] or the other."

"We need to agree on what is beneficial to us all for the future. We're still in discussions with all the other first schools in the partnership (Amble First,

Schools in Northumberland that have been built or significantly upgraded since 2017 are:

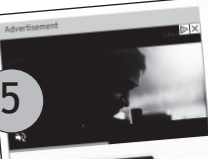
- Duchess's High School
- Prudhoe High School
- Bedlington High School
- Darras Hall Primary
- Morpeth First School
- Ponteland High School
- Ponteland Primary
- Hexham Queen Elizabeth
- Hexham Middle

Multi-million pound investments for our schools

I am delighted to announce massive investment James Calvert Spence College in Amble - some

As part of our ambitious budget proposals we have replace the ageing Berwick Academy buildings. W Spence College in Amble, with both proposals now

involve the schools working alongside the council and building professionals to develop the best proposals for each scheme



In the case of Amble's James Calvert Spence College (JCSC), following an initial promise in 2017 under the previous Labour administration, £16million was later agreed for the 2021-22 financial year.

The total allocation has now been increased to £20.3million.

but only £250,000 for 2021-22, with the remainder split over the following two years - £7.3million in 2022-23 and £12.7million in 2023-24.

Northumberland Gazette

Investment in James Calvert

development of detailed business cases. This work will

has also been the subject of concern due to the continuing dilapidation of the site as well as t

are scattered across a large area. It also comes following direct intervention by me to the

about my concerns over the pace of educational attainment in the school.

w houses approved in recent years and it needs a school fit for the 21st century. The plans are

ime of investment - with £589m proposed over the next three years to boost the county's

pects for all and create new infrastructure for the future.

en able to announce these plans for a new school in Berwick and a major long overdue

h school.

art of our wider commitment to educational excellence in Northumberland - and come on th

about new schools in Seaton Delaval and in Hexham.

Ambition from our Conservative Council and the Home of Education Ambition for our childre

www.northumberlandconservatives.org.uk

Construction to begin on 185 new homes



The latest housing development - for 185 homes next to Gloster Meadows - is due to begin construction very soon.

Esh Construction is building the £26 million scheme, which will bring 185 new homes to Amble. The development, now named Longstone Manor, was given outline planning permission in 2018, and now building can begin.

Working on behalf of Home Group, with the land belonging to Mr Ian Forsyth, Esh will deliver 73 homes for affordable rent and shared ownership on a seven hectare patch of land west of Gloster Meadows. A further 112 properties will be offered for outright sale by Home Group's private sales arm, Persona Homes.

Designed by P+HS Architects, a mixed blend of family homes will be constructed across the site, including two-, three- and four-bedroom houses, along with one-bedroom flats

and bungalows, and a collection of Tyneside flats. The properties are to be built in phases over the next four-and-a-half years.

providers of housing, health and care. Simon Williams, Head of Development and Delivery at Home Group,



Esh's North East Pre-Construction Director, Chris Hale, said: "Extensive work from all parties has gone into making this scheme viable over the past three years – collaborative working at its best – and I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in getting to this point."

The development was brought forward by Home Group, one of the UK's largest

said: "We're excited for work to get underway at Longstone Manor which is set to create a brand-new community and deliver much needed housing in Northumberland.

"The development is a fantastic example of collaborative working as it will not only see the construction of affordable homes for rent, but outright sale and shared ownership properties through Persona Homes as well."

Amble clothes bank initiative

A new project to help those struggling on low incomes or families facing hardship has been launched.

Sharon Crisp set up the Amble Clothes Bank after hearing about similar projects and realising there were none nearby.

Sharon told The Ambler, "After seeing the impact Covid has had financially on families and realising people were struggling I started to look into how I could help. Someone mentioned how useful clothes banks are and that it was a shame there wasn't one near us so I decided I would set one up."

I am aiming to help anyone that is struggling to clothe themselves or their families in our local area. There are no criteria to fill to be able to get the help; I'm just asking that if you need the help you get in touch."

To get in touch with the clothes bank, contact Sharon via the Facebook page, or they can contact her on 07931853442.

"All requests are treated with total confidentiality, and will not be discussed with anyone. Anyone wishing to donate can contact me and I will collect from them," said Sharon. "I'd like to thank the community for all of the support and help offered already it's all so gratefully appreciated."

Harry McQuillen's

Age of insecurity

A combination of Covid and the storm has changed things for people in the North East and other parts of the Country. Not that I would compare our minor troubles with those of people in conflict zones and climate change areas.

We should learn to count our blessings and be grateful for the fact that we eat every day, have somewhere to live, and have many of the consumer durables that just aren't there for much of other world's population.

Amble caught some storm damage, especially to roofs. No doubt all will be restored in the fullness of time.

Scenes of Christmas

shopping filled the media recently. One considers what someone born a century ago would make of the world of Amazon, Twitter, smartphones and tablets. We're told that there are 13 million people in G.B. who are left behind.

Energy is becoming ever more expensive. Check the cost of filling up the car. Of course, the oil companies are not profiteering or the gas and electricity companies, for that matter. Reality check in order here!

As I write this, Boris Johnson has hit a very bad patch. Credibility is the hallmark of any durable politician. The only way to

achieve it is to tell the truth and nothing but the truth.

By the time this goes to print our political landscape may have changed. Funny old business, politics. Or is it really just a game played by people who want to be respected, admired, even loved? All the politicians I've met seemed to me to be honourable. Has Twitter age made that less likely?

Lockdowns have come and gone, with possibly more to appear over the horizon. Our NHS is at full stretch, and it has been for some time. One wonders about the long term future of a service free at the point of delivery. I have an appointment tomorrow, will it

take place, or will it be cancelled?

There are signs of Green Shoots. The number of people in work is rising, even when those same workers do so from home. New cars are selling apace, only outstripped by the efforts of the second hand market.

We remain Two Nations: those who have houses that they own and those who don't. The future will bring what it brings for individuals, communities, nations and empires.

A good leavening of Hope will help us all through.

Harry



Remembering Mark 'Shakey' Dixon

We were shocked to hear of the death of Mark Dixon in December. Most people knew him as "Shakey" and with his distinctive clothes, piercings, and friendly manner, he was a well known character.

Mark was born on 5 August 1972 at Gateshead. He moved to Amble with his mother Liz when he was five. He had cerebral palsy and learning difficulties, and Liz worked hard to teach him to walk and talk.

He went to Warkworth school until he was eight, then Cleaswell Hill at Bedlington. He left at 15 and went to Ashington College, but after a year he decided he wanted to go to Newcastle College. His Mum took him the first few times to show him where he was going. He soon got the hang of it, and as many people knew, he'd travel the length of Northumberland, knowing all the bus times and numbers. He was twice voted student of the year. Shakey went into independent living 17 years ago. He liked to keep busy, working at Azure Printing at Pegswood and recently at

Pottergate Pantry in Alnwick. He also volunteered at the Real Deal in Ashington. He would chat with everyone, and will be sadly missed in Newcastle as well as Amble.

Mark's family have shared some of the eulogy from the funeral service:

"Firstly on behalf of Liz and Ian, Tracey and Mark and myself, we'd like to thank everyone for their support and kind words we've received during this extremely sad time.

Mark was amazing at knowing everything about every type of music. He enjoyed going to Glastonbury and went to trillions of concerts... mostly with his friend Ben, though he did allow me to go with him to see the Pet Shop Boys and Madness,

We also went to see the Gangsters of Ska, and he got talking, as he did, to the lead singer. Anyway about a year later Shakey said to me "Gangsters of Ska are playing at the City Hall, will you phone this number and ask the fat controller for a

backstage pass?"

I said "What's his real name?" and Shakey said "I don't know, but he said I could have one" So anyway I phoned and said "Hi is that the fat controller?" and he said "Yeah" – I said "We were at a gig and my friend with piercings..." and before I could finish he said "Oh yes, no problem, I'll get him a pass."

Another time he went to see Ian Brown from the Stone Roses and Ian recognised him from a previous gig and got his security to seek him out and get him to go for a few beers backstage.

Shakey will be remembered for his fashion – his love of Doc Martens and, well, everything really, and we used to spend hours discussing North Face jackets, hats and gloves.

Monday nights was Domino night. Shakey played for the Tav since the team was formed about 18 years ago. He was a canny little player and one of the best moments was when he won the Herbie Todd at the Bluebell in 2019. Everyone was so well chuffed for him.



Shakey with the Herbie Todd domino trophy which he won in 2019

"I could talk all day about the laughs and tears I shared with Mark, but will crack on and say farewell to the fashion addict, football enthusiast, music maestro, one of the most generous, kind and honest people ever. I'm honoured to have known you my little laddie. Love you Mark."

Angie Thompson, support worker

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#133 - 1 Mar	#136 - 2 Sep
#134 - 22 Apr	#137 - 4 Nov

A nod, a joy, a cheer and a hope

Spring must be round the corner because in mid January I saw a beautiful group of snowdrops on the side of the A1068 (at the old Radcliffe Club House, I am reliably informed). I'm sorry to say I do not know what the collective term for snowdrops is. A Google search suggests several: a nod, a carpet, a joy, a cheer and a hope. All seem particularly appropriate.

And is this issue of the Ambler full of the joys of spring? Yes of course! Apart from a few complaints (p3, p6, p8) and some sad memories (p5, p7), this edition is full of our usual positivity and good news. Our GP practice is second to none with vaccination roll-outs, we've got a gorgeous lights festival to look

forward to on 20 February (p1), new businesses and initiatives are springing up (p4, p8, p15) and at long last, events are starting to return (p17, p18).

But Covid rates are still eye watering high, so please don't let your guard down. Numbers shot up over Christmas, from 51 in Amble and Amble West on Boxing Day, to 267 on 9 January. Since then they have been on a downward trajectory, but it's a slow fall. On 24 January there were still 104 cases.

All the more reason to praise healthcare staff in the Amble, Shilbottle and Swarland area, who have administered well over 30,000 Covid jabs (1,2 and booster). No wonder they are at the top of the vaccination table in England.

WHAT YOU SAY...

>> more letters on p8

Gloster Park footpath and boundary concerns

Are the council putting your life at risk?

There is an optical illusion in Gloster Park that has gone unnoticed since its construction in the 90s.

The estate was built adjacent to a public right of way that runs along the north side of the estate. It has a culverted stream to one side and a retaining wall with a fence on top. This structure should actually be a 6ft fence, as specified in the planning application.

Retaining walls built adjacent to a public right of way require technical supporting evidence explaining method of construction and drainage materials used to comply with the 1980s Highway Act. The retaining wall that was built does not meet any standards; it is actually not even built high enough. The bottom 30cm of the fence is retaining the land that the wall should retain. Over the years the weight of this 30cm of land has compressed and spread forcing the fence slowly outwards, soon to fall onto the footpath.

There has already been



a failure in the fence due to pressure. In this section new foundations had to be built as the original construction was so poor. The entire fence was constructed in the same way, but no one thought to investigate further.

In July 2020, I reported this problem to building control as a dangerous structure; I also reported it as a breach of planning permission. I have requested the closure of the public right of way as the fence could fall onto the footpath and injure someone.

The council have a duty of care to protect the public. Why are the council not protecting those who use this footpath daily? If you use this footpath, you are putting yourself at risk. The retaining wall was built to artificially raise the level of the gardens, but it is not built to standards.

The highways agency would condemn this structure.

Lee Jackson
Gloster Park, Amble

This has been edited.

Family home memories

I was born in 23, Church Street in 1942. Lived there with Granma, Mam and Auntie plus cousin. It was rented from the shop in Queen Street that backed onto it and we could not access the top floor! It had a large kitchen to the rear, outside loo and a communal laundry! There were two small apartments at the rear of the yard. I now see that the house is a charity shop.

Mam married in 1948 and we moved to Shilbottle (stepdad was a miner!) into a new council house. Every Friday evening I was sent down to Amble to stay with gran in Church Street. Mam and Dad came down on Saturday to get the weeks shopping (rationing made few shopping baskets!!), so I never lost contact with my pals. Still in touch with two! I have been back a couple

of times and found the place somewhat confusing at first! I have many happy memories of growing up in Amble! We all (including Granma) moved to the midlands in 1954 but always came back to Amble for the miners holidays!! Happy days!

Ken Rochester via email
(I now live in North East Thailand)

'End of an empire' as Roland's butchers closes for good

Shoppers on Queen Street will be sad to see the closure of one of Amble's oldest family businesses. RC Roland closed their doors at the beginning of January after nearly 120 years in the town. The recent death of Jeff Roland left the fourth generation butcher's business without a figurehead, so the family sadly decided to close the doors for good.

Jeff's daughter Caitlin Roland told the Ambler, "Once my dad was diagnosed as terminally ill, the property was put up for sale, but there had been many conversations beforehand about who will take the business on once my dad was no longer here, and there was no one else to take over. We knew at some point the business would have to go, but we didn't think it would happen this soon."

Ted Roland, Jeff's father, joined the family business in 1952, taking over from his father and grandfather. Jeff started in 1992. Ted summed up his feelings; "The empire's gone."

The family said they were

overwhelmed and thankful for the number of cards and messages of sympathy.

Caitlin has fond memories of the shop in which she spent so much of her life. "I've been here since I was a tiny baby in my pram and now my daughter has done the same."

Wendy Donaldson, Jeff's sister told the Ambler "It's not the same when Jeff's not there. It's all I've ever known."

The non-stop work around Christmas time featured large in the family's memories and a good sense of humour was obviously a necessary part of the job. "Malcolm Barclay who's worked here for 40 years jokingly says it's been a life sentence!" said Caitlin.

Memories of Roland's

The business was founded in Amble in 1904 by Richard Charles Roland. In time they had the Queen Street shop, one in Leazes Street, now the Harbour Guest House and one on the corner of Albert Street, now the vets.



l-r: Wendy Donaldson (Jeff's sister), Malcolm Barclay, Ted, Thelma, Steven, Wendy Roland (Jeff's widow), Caitlin and baby Grace

Long-time customer Vivienne Dalglish also has vivid memories of the business told to her by her father. "The building in Leazes Street was the slaughter house. When my father was a child, he remembered the 'bull walloper' a man called Jack Johnson, who would drive (walk) the beasts from the market in Alnwick to Amble.

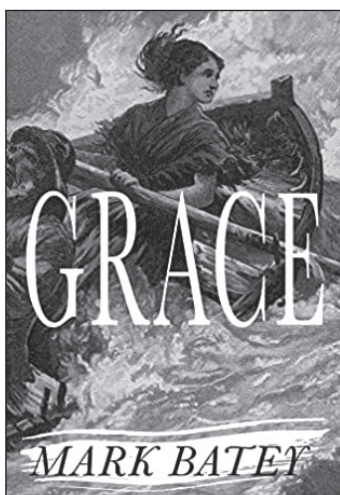
The children were warned not to go near the harbour on a Saturday as it could be dangerous if the beasts ran

amok, but that was too exciting an occasion for young boys to miss. The slaughter house was closed in 1939 with the outbreak of war and the introduction of rationing."

Vivienne was sorry to see the closure of the butchers. "There was always a friendly greeting when you entered the shop. As a customer I was very grateful for their service during lockdown, when I was able to order meat over the phone and have it delivered the same day."

Grace by Mark Batey: A review

In Grace, Amble author Mark Batey wishes to explore how instant fame affected Grace Darling. In order to do this, of course, we need to look at Grace's life and background and the place where she lives.



Mark goes into the background very thoroughly. He starts with the geology of Northumberland and its seabed. We need to understand how dangerous the dolerite of the Farne Islands is.

We are introduced to the SS Forfarshire. Passengers go to see

the engine and are entranced. Women and children are on board. We get excited about the voyage from Hull to Aberdeen. On board, we are introduced to the crew and some passengers round the Captain's table as if we are amongst them.

In the lighthouse, Grace seems to live an idyllic life, William playing the violin up and down the stairs and Grace lighting the lamps. There is much love and laughter.

When the Forfarshire sets off, there is worry about the engines, and sure enough they start rattling and banging and water is all over the floor in the corridors and cabins. They had to put sails up, but even that makes no difference. The wind blows the ship around and it is heading for the treacherous Outer Farnes, when Grace spots it from the lighthouse. Survivors and bodies have to be rescued so Grace goes out in a coble with her father William. Many books on Grace Darling would end here but for Mark this is just the beginning. Saving lives was just part of everyday life for Grace and her father, but

in 1838 it was unheard of for young women (Grace was 22) to perform heroic acts, or to perform any acts at all.

Complete strangers write to ask for a lock of her hair, an autograph or a picture. Artists and sculptors turn up on the island to paint her portrait or make a sculpture. A circus owner, Batty, wants Grace to appear to bring in the crowds. She is, by now, a freak. It is not long before Grace is brought to the attention of the Duke of Northumberland and Queen Victoria. The Duke proves to be a good friend and mentor and takes charge of the increasing amounts of money coming in for Grace. Grace never took any money out for herself. Much of it was used to improve maritime safety.

Grace continues to be hounded by the Press and we are reminded of Princess Diana suffering the same predicament. Unsurprisingly Grace becomes ill, with symptoms very similar to Covid, and she dies of TB (or Consumption as it was called then). You feel that the cold and the water and the stress and the

anxiety all contributed to her death. Just as, with Diana, we were never quite sure who or what killed her, it is the same with Grace. She didn't want the fame that was thrust upon her and somehow it was the fame that killed her.

The book is well-researched, informative, exciting and complete. It is available online and from good bookshops from 25 January. Use local independent bookstores where you can.

Chris Herzberg

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Air Source Heat Pump replies

Thank you to all who responded to the article on our journey into alternative heating system in the last Ambler (#131 p7). I would add that our decision process was far longer and involved many considerations than were reflected in a short article.

Some of the information posted about alternative fuel sources was interesting and we were not aware of these options.

I reiterate my closing comments that there is no provision or independent objective guidance to help home owners to decide what is best and most practical for your house and circumstances.

Ian MacKarill

Gifts for crafty Valentines

Readers may be interested in Amble Pin Cushion's Valentine Gift Guide, which can be found at <https://amblepincushion.co.uk/product-category/kits/valentines-day/>

It features the whole Northumbria Knit and Stitch range of cross-stitch, modern Guernsey (gansey) knitted accessories, and apron kits.

*Norma Arthur
Amble Pin Cushion*

Choice of charities

Replying to the response to my original letter (issue 130), I will attempt to clear up any misunderstandings over what I wrote.

I did not criticise Councillor Clark for donating £2,000 of taxpayers' money to charity. I simply disagreed with his choice of charities, namely the Northumberland Wildlife Trust and the RNLI. Both charities are well established and already have strong fundraising capabilities, as Jill Faulcanbridge illustrates, in the case of the RNLI. In her own letter to the Ambler. The Wildlife Trust, currently running

the Big Give appeal also attracts substantial widespread financial support.

I suggested that it would have been better to donate the money to smaller charities within the community where proportionally it would have had a greater effect, such as the Hadston House scheme and the Amble Foodbank, which are both mentioned in the current issue of the Ambler and which contribute greatly to the community.

Failing this, I then suggested that the taxpayers' money could be spent on projects within the

community and I gave, as an example, the still much-needed maintenance to the path linking the Coquet Industrial Estate with Priory Park.

The above thoughts are simply my opinions, to which I happily attach my name, nothing more, nothing less.

Finally, I would like to see the development of a plan of action for all public rights of way in Amble. Please see Anna Williams' own article on "Transparency needed..." in the current issue.

*Hugh Tindle
Priory Park, Amble.*

More footpath misery

I agree 100% with The Ambler's plea in the Christmas 2021 issue to get the Coble Quay footpath open again.

However, it all follows a depressingly familiar blocked footpath tradition for Amble. We've already had a brand new blocked path built for Coquet Grange estate (as covered in previous Amblers) and last year Morrisons opened next to an existing footpath that would provide great offroad pedestrian access from countless Amble houses, but left the 2m high steel fence blocking it off as the attached photo shows. Instead the path acts as a drainage ditch, much the same as the connecting path Hugh Tindle complains about in the same issue. Aren't



the Council supposed to be encouraging pedestrian journeys?

Once the 250+ houses are built at Hauxley Grange, scores more kids could be walking to school along these paths if they were connected, surfaced and drained correctly - instead I

suspect they'll continue to have the traditional Amble choice of mud or traffic. Is it any wonder the official England Coast Path still grinds to a halt at Amble?

*Tôm Lloyd
via email*

Hannah can fix your sweet tooth

An ex NHS dental nurse has set up a bakery and deli on Leazes Street.

Hannah Maughan moved to Amble last September, just after getting married. But sadly she then lost her job as a dental nurse, due to Covid and cuts to NHS England. So she looked around for another venture.

Hannah told the Ambler, she was enjoying her new life. "I had the opportunity to open the shop, so started The Puffin as a new way to make ends meet, despite never doing anything like this before. It's been an adventure I am very much enjoying."

Hannah makes a selection

of stotties and cakes from scratch each morning, the cakes are made from Hannah's own recipes which change every day.

"There is a playful sandwich menu named after celebrities and characters, ranging from ham and salami (The Soprano), to falafel and hummus (The Tommy Cooper) with new additions to come!"

There is also a selection of gifts, trinkets, European snacks and dried goods to browse, as well as painted canvases on the walls from local artists.

The Puffin is situated at 2 Leazes St and is open Thurs-Sat 10:00-18:00 and Sunday 10:00-17:00, and may open more days



as summer approaches.

Hannah said, "I would like to thank everybody who has

been so kind and welcomed us into the community, Amble is such a lovely place to be."

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Good luck to Northside Surf School

Good luck to Northside Surf School who have been shortlisted for an award for the Unsung Hero in the North East Tourism Awards 2022.

The awards ceremony will take place at the Sage in Gateshead in March.



Jon Nolan and Jacob Poulton of Northside Surf

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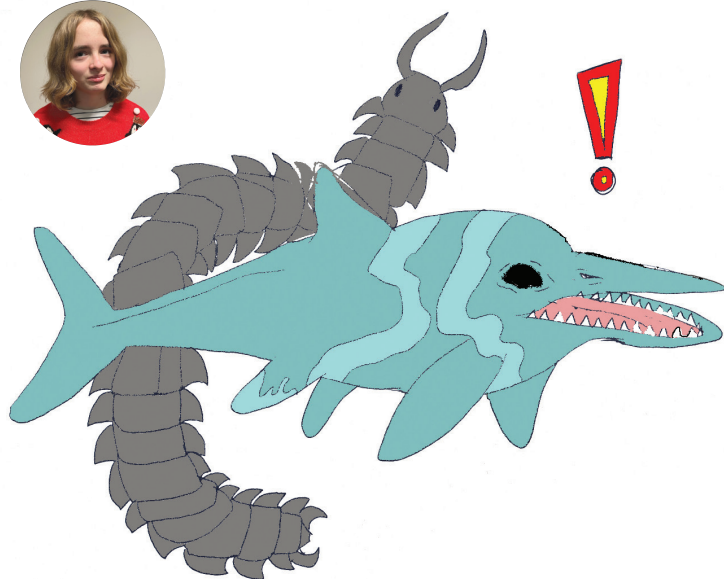
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Sea dragons and massive millipedes invade Britain



Scientists have found evidence of these two creatures living in the UK, but don't worry, they're LOOOONG dead!

The giant millipede (Arthropleura) has been found in Howick when a bit of cliff fell and exposed the huge fossil. The creature was around 2.7 metres long, about the size of a car.

The 'sea dragon' (ichthyosaur) was the first complete skeleton found of its species. It is around 10 meters in length – which is half the size of a tennis court. The ichthyosaur is assumed to look like a big dolphin, even though they aren't dolphins, and since they have quite big eyes,

it is thought that they lived near the surface, but obviously not on land. They ate fish and other marine animals and lived 200 million years ago. It was found in Rutland water reservoir in the East Midlands.
By Grace

Who wants ice cream for breakfast?



On the 5th of February, it is national Eat Ice Cream for Breakfast day. It was invented in New York by Florence Rappaport in the 1960s.

On the 6th of February, it is national Yorkshire Pudding Day. Tradition is to serve a Yorkshire with a Sunday roast and with the 6th being a Sunday it makes sense.

What a great weekend.
By Megan



Lil and Ava's boppin Winter Olympics (From Home Edition)



Do you love the Winter Olympics? Do you want to participate but it's raining not snowing?

Is your home tragically unequipped with an indoor ice rink and ski slope?

We have the perfect solution for you: an at home Winter Olympics! All your favourite sports without the multi-million dollar set up.

Luge- For this fan favourite sport where competitors slip and slide down an icy track, which already sounds like a recipe for disaster, all you need is a large tray and set of stairs and you can try sliding along at high speeds for yourself. Go head first to try the skeleton race!

Figure Skating- Try some elegant sliding on your very own ice rink, now in your kitchen! Just empty a bottle of washing up liquid onto the floor, get your favourite slippery socks on and glide beautifully (avoiding kitchen counters).

Curling- One of our favourite sports of the winter genre, you can do curling from home, and the best bit is if you've done our figure skating then you already have the rink. Just get your iron (feel free to use the ironing board for snowboarding) and throw it along the floor, then mop up its path.

Skiing- For skiing, get some planks of wood from a fence (check with your parents which fence is your neighbour's so you can take



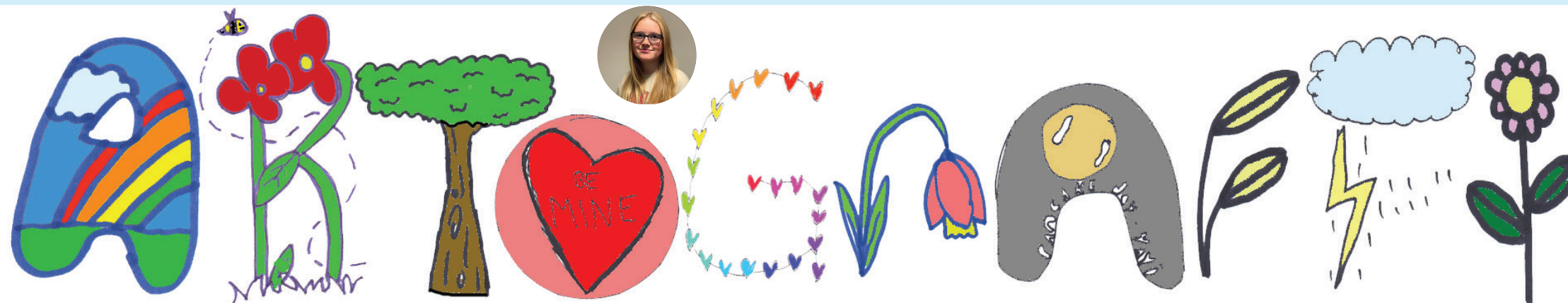
one of those) and remove the pole from any lamps to use as ski poles, then ski around your house, or around your street if you're feeling confident.

Snow Angels- This one isn't technically an Olympic sport, but we thought it deserved a mention.

Just empty a can of shaving foam onto your floor (carpet is fine) and make your angels- feel free to turn it into a snowball fight afterwards!

We hope you enjoy your homemade Winter Olympics and don't destroy too many items of furniture. Make sure to send in photos to Anna!

By Lily and Ava



A dinosaur's guide to the metaverse



Who has heard of the metaverse? Well, obviously everyone. Except maybe some parents, grandparents and fellow dinosaurs. So here's a crash course in where your kids are hanging out these days.

Let's take Roblox for example. Roblox is a gaming community where people create, share, hang out and play in 3d worlds. Roblox say they have 47 million (!!) daily active users, and it is so big that global brands use it to promote brand awareness.

Roblox is free to download, but the company makes its money when players buy in-game upgrades, extra perks, and accessories for their avatars. So if, for example, you are hanging out in the Ralph Lauren "Winter Experience", you might feel very tempted to buy something so your avatar looks like you belong there.

And as Hannah points out below, half the people on Roblox are under 13. That's a lot of young consumers in the new metaverse.

By Di Nosaur



Hannah gives us her take on Roblox

Did you know half the people on Roblox are under 13? This is not good. This is mostly because of the general dangers of online video games.

There is a lot of not very nice stuff for children on there. Like catfishes and inappropriate games. Catfishes are people that disguise themselves as younger or older to attract attention etc.

Also they get enough money so why do they need all these young people? Roblox is a game with lots of different platforms in it. It is very good but still can be dangerous.

Roblox has been going on for around 15 – 16 years. You can play it on most devices. I think kids under 13 should make sure they get permission off a guardian to purchase stuff off the website.
By Hannah

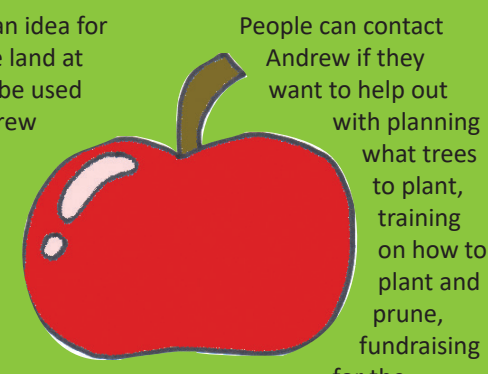
How'd you like them apples?

Last issue, we mentioned that a new community apple orchard was being planted at the Welfare, and now we have more information on how it's going to work from the project manager Andrew Gooding.

"The orchard is an idea for how some of the land at the Welfare can be used differently," Andrew explained. "At present, the orchard is only an idea- it's up to the people that get involved to determine how the project progresses and how it helps the community."

The community orchard will help to sequester carbon and improve biodiversity, but most importantly it's a way in which people can see where food comes from and encourage them to grow more of their own. Andrew

also says that it will improve mental health. "Personally I think any time spent outdoors in nature is positive for mental health- if this project helps to give people a focus to spend more time outdoors, then that's great."



People can contact Andrew if they want to help out with planning what trees to plant, training on how to plant and prune, fundraising for the orchard or just getting involved with looking after the trees and eating the apples.

Email andrew@ambledevelopmenttrust.org.uk for more information or if you want to lend a hand.

By Lily

Don't boil lobsters alive - whether it's legal or not



Late last year, on the 19th of November, the UK took a huge step for animal welfare. The Amendment to the Animal Welfare bill legally recognises lobsters, octopus and crabs (and all other decapod crustaceans and cephalopod molluscs) as sentient beings. This means an end to the inhumane treatment of these animals, usually in cooking practices.

Personally, I hate the way lobsters are boiled alive- would you ever boil a dog alive? No, because it's recognised that it's cruel. That's why in my opinion this amendment is long overdue; these animals haven't just started having sentience, we've just started caring. Admittedly, this may be the easiest way to cook them, but is it really worth the pain we put them through? Also, lobsters and octopi are so cool! The way lobsters can see over five times the number of colours we can, and octopi solve puzzles is incredible.

Unfortunately, the amendment does not extend to industry practices like fishing or restaurant kitchens, so won't have a huge effect, but it's definitely a start!

By Ava



Are you prepared for your digital death?

Facebook reported that in the next decade or so they anticipate having more accounts of those no longer alive than those who are. It's a shocking truth that dealing with the digital legacy left by someone can be complex and painful.

The preparation of our physical death is hard enough for most people to consider. But our digital death is unlikely to

look for your online accounts, profiles and passwords?

To give families a helping hand, we've created a free guide to managing your Digital End of Life which you can download from williampurves.co.uk/digital-death

Containing helpful and practical advice, we've included links to specific pages to set up your own digital will, or to

sites where you can record key details in a protected place. The main steps are summarised so both reading, and then taking action, is not a minefield.

To have all your affairs in order, including your digital legacy, is such a

kindness towards those who will be wrestling with - and confused by - their grief at the time of your death. Our planning ahead resources are free: williampurves.co.uk/thinking-ahead and copies are also available from branches in St Andrews, the Lothians, the Borders and the North East.



even register as necessary. Yet so much of our lives are online and digital, whether that be social media, streamed entertainment, online accounts and payments, banking and utilities. When the inevitable does eventually happen, would those closest to you know even where to start to

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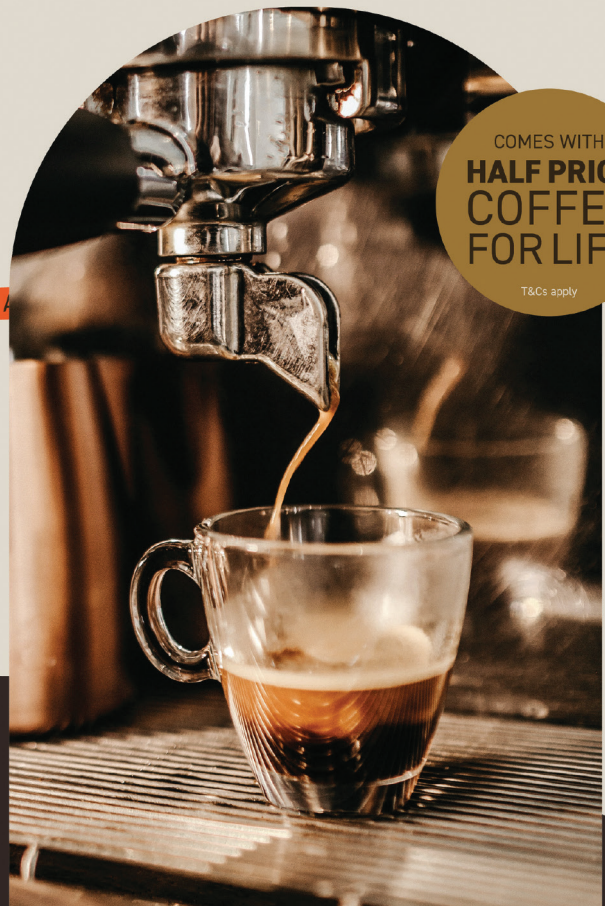
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Microchipping cats

In December 2021, as part of the government review on microchipping pets and the government's action plan for animal welfare, it was announced microchipping cats was going to be made compulsory. An official date is yet to be announced.

It is estimated as many 2.8 million cats are unchipped in the UK and as many as eight out of ten stray

cats coming into Cats Protection Centres are unchipped (Gov.uk 2021).

Under the new plans all cat owners must ensure their pet is:

- Microchipped before 20 weeks (five months) of age
- Contact details are stored and kept up to date on microchipping databases



If owners are non-compliant with the above they have up to 21 days to have a microchip implanted or could face a fine of up to £500.

As a practice we welcome this new law with open arms. Microchipping is a safe and

easy way to ensure you and your pet are reunited if your pet wanders too far or is injured and handed into a vet practice.

We will be holding a promotion in February 2022 where you can have your cat microchipped for £8.00.

If you would like to book your pet in to Coquet Vets please contact us on 01665252250 or email us at info@coquetvets.co.uk

From the team at Coquet Vets

Update from Amble Food Bank

Amble Food Bank would like to thank our local communities for their generosity and kindness shown in the run up to Christmas. These donations supported families and individuals. Amble is becoming the most generous port, in addition to the kindest!

We know that 2022 is going to be even more challenging with rising food and energy costs. Despite this, we hope that people will continue to be as generous as they feel they can.

The Giving Tree at Amble Morrison's raised £304 and this will be shared between Amble and Widdrington food banks. Customers were so generous with the pick-up bags of food items that they purchased there. In the week of 12 -19 December customers spent £641 on pick-up bags, beating all other local Morrison's - THANK YOU!

Our collection tins at Amble Co-op raised £505.07 over the last year. Thank you to the Co-op for facilitating this, also for the FareShare items that we get donated at the end of every Sunday. Chilled and ambient surplus food such as bread, meat, fruit and vegetables are collected by our volunteers and taken to some of our most in need families, or frozen for future distribution.

Co-op Members can also select Amble Food Bank as their preferred local cause. When they buy selected Co-op products, 2p of every £1 spent goes into their membership account and the Co-op then matches the same amount. With the funds raised, we can provide nutritious packed lunches through the holidays this spring, to children who are in receipt of Free School Meals.

Should you wish to make a donation to Amble Food Bank, cash or cheque can be placed in an envelope addressed to us and posted through the letter box at Trinity Methodist Church on Percy Street, Amble. Or, if you prefer, you can do a bank transfer to us using the following details: Amble Food Bank, sort code 77-20-04, account number 17925260.

If you are in need, you can get a referral through an agency such as CAB, Social Care, your local school or GP. Or you can contact Northumberland Communities Together on 01670 620015, 9-6pm, 7 days a week.

Finally, all the volunteers at Amble Food Bank thank you for your continued support and we wish you all a very happy, healthy and peaceful New Year. amblefoodbank@aol.com 07922 739892

Warning, graphic imagery

The legendary skills of Dr Robertson

Here is an excerpt from the book, 'Wor Tomis The Polis' which refers to revered Amble GP, Dr Robertson, whose dedication and skills are still remembered and indeed missed by many locals.

Dr Robertson practised in Amble from 1946 to 1976 and was our family doctor up until we left the area in about 1963.

He sometimes had breathing difficulties himself and often was in a worse condition than the patients he attended but he was never known to miss a call, even if he was a little grumpy perhaps because of his well-being on occasions.

However, we all respected him and accepted his character, knowing Amble was lucky to have him. He was on call 24/7 and if needed urgently you called at his home/surgery out of hours in Oswald St. To my knowledge no one ever left untreated irrespective of the hour. His work took him down the pit and to sea on the Amble lifeboat. He was a great doctor to have. I believe he had been an officer Dr/Surgeon in WW2.

In 1958, when I was about nine, I vividly remember an occasion when he saved the day. My brother Ray worked at Hauxley pit. I remember that my mother and I were at Ronnie Jones grocery van when Mr Coxford from 53 Links Ave. approached us. He was blackened with coal dust and had come straight from the pit. He handed my Mam one wellington (a shock in itself) and said Ray had been hurt at the pit and would be brought home in some sort of improvised transport very soon. Ray had been on bank (the pit surface) and was crossing a track when a run-away tub had smashed into him and severely crushed his inner thigh.

Poor Ray who was about 18 or 19 was brought home. He was semi-conscious and shaking uncontrollably. He was laid out on the floor in front of the open coal fire in the front room. The fire was stoked up and beds were quickly raided and the covers were piled up high on top of him. I remember peeping through the gap between the door frame and the door and

seeing Dr Robertson set to, cutting large pieces of flesh from the injury as he carried out quite major surgery. The bruised and damaged flesh was put into a bowl and disposed of, on the other open fire in the kitchen.

I considered whether or not to give that last detail but it is true and was the best way of disposal available. I also feel that it also gives a true account of pit village life and how the emergency treatment was dealt with when hospital transport was not so readily available in 1958.

The leg was saved, without any after-effects barring a very large scar. Ray and our family were always grateful to Dr Robertson and his skills, undoubtedly saving my big brother's leg, in a make-shift operating theatre, on the floor in front of the fire, in our front room.

Dr Robertson used asthma inhalers himself. He first prescribed them for me in about 1961. I used them for about 25 years until I stopped using them and now I do not suffer from any asthma problems. He rightly



Dr Robertson, Amble GP

predicted all those years ago that I could eventually grow out of it but it did take longer than anyone anticipated.

It is well reported that his pet hate was Lucozade and every time he spotted it, he would say something like, "Have you got money to throw away on that stuff? Tizer is considerably cheaper and will do the same job."

Tom Curry's book can be obtained direct from him via. email, twc34@btinternet.com and is priced at £9.99p or is stocked at Lumiere Pod 5, Amble Harbour and N&F Young's, Queen St.



Reports from our *County Councillors*



Storm Arwen arrived on the 26 - 27 November hitting Amble and surrounding areas during the night and following day leaving behind a dire situation, 100mph winds blowing roofs off, fencing over and trees down, with residents fearing for their safety.

NCC had teams working all weekend in atrocious conditions to support communities affected by the storm, this included removing trees in danger of falling onto homes, unblocking major routes and roads around Amble, Hauxley and North Broomhill, as well as helping make safe public space around collapsed walls, gable ends and chimney stacks.

I can't speak highly enough of the sterling work put in by council staff and volunteers offering support within our community, everybody involved worked extremely hard keeping our communities safe throughout one of the worst storms we have ever seen.

They have done a tremendous job in incredibly challenging conditions managing hundreds of reports of storm damage which came in over that weekend.

Terry.Clark@northumberland.gov.uk 07779 983768

NCC continue to prioritise incidents, this means it may take longer than usual to attend to incidents such as fencing, road signage and smaller amounts of debris which have been left by the storm, also dealing with less urgent service requests.

I would like to thank all our residents for their patience and understanding while NCC work their way through these issues.

Labour leader Keir Starmer made a visit to Northumberland, visiting people affected by the storm, taking the views and responses from residents and businesses on the challenges facing people from Storm Arwen and Storm Boris.

He also took time visiting Coquet Medical Centre vaccination site, thanking all the staff and volunteers for all the hard work they put in vaccinating our community and keeping us safe.

Protect yourself and others by getting vaccinated and continue with updated booster vaccinations.

Keep safe and well.

*Cllr Terry Clark
Amble, Hauxley, North Broomhill.*

Storm Arwen caused a considerable amount of damage to trees in my ward, particularly between the A1068 and The Braid area. This is a great loss to the town and many fine specimens were lost.

After I examined the damaged area, I requested that it was properly managed and tidied up, I have also requested that new trees are planted to replace the ones destroyed. I believe the work is just about to start as I write this report.

Northumberland County Council are to hold an investigation on how the utility companies and our own highways department dealt with the issues of the storm and hope to learn how we can handle such an event if it ever reoccurs. The public are encouraged to have input and access to this investigation.

The draft budget of NCC for the year 22/23 is just about to be published but you will be pleased to know that no front-line services will be cut and there is good news re: affordable housing, upgrade of public toilets and substantial funding for road improvements in our area.

I understand that the promised discussions re: school building requirements with JCSC are underway and I look forward to seeing an appropriate plan agreed this year.

*Jeff Watson,
NCC Councillor for Amble West with Warkworth*

Jeffrey.Watson@northumberland.gov.uk 07802 385367

Sue returns to lead theatre company

The new Chair of an Amble based theatre company has had a baptism of fire thanks to a combination of COVID restrictions and the devastating effects of Storm Arwen. However, her wealth of experience in business and the arts is already having positive results and the company is looking forward to a bright future.

The Northumberland Theatre Company (NTC) based in Amble's Dovecote Centre is a self-funding professional small-scale touring theatre company which has firmly established itself as a part of the community.

New Chair Sue Wilson CBE is no stranger to the company as she held the same position as Chair more than 25 years ago.

"This is a great theatre company and I'm delighted to be able to get involved once again despite the effects of Covid and a terrible storm which has caused devastation to the building. We have a lot to do in very trying circumstances, but we have a great team, wonderful community support

and a willingness to make things happen."

The company is in safe hands with Sue's vast experience in business. After 20 years in top engineering roles at Ford Motor Company and Vickers Defence Systems, she became Chief Executive of development organisation the Newcastle Initiative. She has served as a non-executive board member of a wealth of organisations including HMRC, the Newcastle Hospitals Trust, Northumbria University, One NorthEast, and the Baltic Contemporary Art Gallery.

"I particularly love what Northumberland Theatre Company does because it takes high quality theatre to local venues in rural communities engaging people who perhaps wouldn't normally travel many miles to get to a big city or town to watch a performance," she said.

Sue has a number of priorities to work on including the renovation and repair of the Dovecote Centre which was severely damaged during

Storm Arwen. The building work has started but it has created additional problems as the facilities in the centre are inaccessible due to health and safety regulations.

"We'd love to hear from any organisation in or around Amble who could perhaps offer us a meeting room for up to 10 people every couple of weeks so that we can hold staff meetings, script read throughs and planning sessions. We would also love to hear from potential new trustees – particularly young people with skills we can use either in administration, education or on the creative side. It's a very challenging time for us but we know that there are good people out there who can help to bring back quality theatre to the town and beyond."

The theatre company is already planning several new shows as Artistic Director Louis Roberts explains:

"In May we are touring with "Northumbrian Ghost Stories" written by Stewart Howson, then in the autumn we will be touring with William



Sue Wilson CBE

Shakespeare's Comedy of Errors before starting two projects at Christmas. Leading up to the festive season, we will be touring a production of Wind in the Willows and at the Dovecote Centre we will have our panto, Cinderella which was postponed last year."

Anyone wishing to find out more about being a trustee can contact Louis via the website www.northumberlandtheatre.co.uk

To help with funding for essential repairs to the building please see: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/ntc-dovecote-repairs



Welcome back to Trust Life, 'springing' back into action.

Well sadly we all know that adverse weather caused the Events Committee to cancel the Lights Festival, which disappointed everyone. Volunteers turned out to help set up the site in the cold and rain, but the weather forecast said it would clear so they ploughed on. But by 2pm it became obvious the weather forecasters had got it wrong!

After several attempts at identifying another suitable date it was decided to wait until the new year which would give everyone something to look forward to. Currently February is looking favorable for tides and weather. Fingers crossed.

We also have the Queens' Jubilee weekend to look forward to and the Events committee are working in conjunction with the Trust to bring activities forward that link to the bird sculpture project. This will include workshops and entertainment.

We have made slightly more headway with the bird sculptures, with all but one installation clearing planning conditions,

although the building conservation officer has now requested information not previously required. Hopefully 2022 will finally be the year we complete this project, two years behind schedule.



Many trees came down during Storm Arwen

Storm Arwen tore through the town causing severe damage to many buildings. Sadly many are still trying to come to terms with the devastation and damage caused.

Several of the trust buildings had damage to the roofs, and at the Welfare four large trees were brought down. One pulled up the stone perimeter wall leaving debris lying close to the roadside, which had to be hastily

removed.

Our thanks go to those who volunteered or turned up as soon as asked to help clear up. And for those with wood burning fires, please help yourselves to the wood that has been cut up and safely stored at the Welfare.

We did manage to plant 20 fruit trees in the Welfare, and hope to have the remaining 120 through the county council scheme soon, but officers have been redeployed to help with their big clean up.

We plan to meet up with those who have shown an interest in the community orchard in the coming weeks. This will help us plan the site for future planting.

If you are interested in a community orchard, contact andrew@ambledevelopmenttrust.org.

Trustees have agreed to reopening job search facilities from 9.30 – 11.30am each week day. Currently if you want to contact the Ambler, or require a CV, you can do so by ringing: 01665 712929 or emailing editor@theambler.co.uk or Julie@ambledevelopmenttrust.org *Julia and all trust staff and trustees*

Wedding planner is best newcomer

Congratulations to Amble's Hannah Taylor who was awarded Best Newcomer for the whole region at the North East and Yorkshire Wedding Awards held at the Vermont Hotel, Newcastle, and the only person not full time to win.

It's an amazing achievement for an up and coming local small businesswoman.

Hannah has worked her way up from a waitress to co-ordinating weddings at a country house hotel, which she has done for the last five years as a senior wedding co-ordinator.

"TheWeddingTaylor" was set up by Hannah during the pandemic. Her Facebook and Instagram pages offer everything from advice with general planning, to running the wedding day, to planning a wedding from start to finish.



The business, which she runs in her spare time, was helpful recently with issues surrounding the rearranging of weddings following cancellation. Hannah has now done weddings everywhere from Birmingham to York and even has a booking in Wales.

Hannah's husband Dale told us, "This is completely separate to her full time job and she does it at evenings, weekends and whenever she can between her full time job, looking after our two year old and putting up with me. Her hard work was noticed and she was entered into the regional wedding awards along with 900 suppliers from all over the North East and Yorkshire and now we are off to London on February 23 for the National Finals with high hope of another win".

Hannah's Instagram and website are full of advice and clients can pay for an hour zoom consultation, where she makes them documents to help.



Funeralcare

Our caring staff are here to listen and advise you, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week



Coquetdale Cottage, Queen Street, Amble
Tel: 01665 710437



Amble Town

Town: 6pm, 10th February, 10th March both at Masonic Hall, Gloster Terrace

Amenities: 6pm, 27th January, 31st March both at Council Offices

COUNCIL

EAST WARD:	Helen Lewis, Ian Parks, 33 Warkworth Avenue, Warkworth. NE65 0TP	Craig Weir (Chair/Mayor) 76 Priory Park, Amble NE65 0PH 07751 229 739 01665 712342	WEST WARD:	Jeff Watson Tracey Hinton, 13 George Street, Amble NE65 0RZ	David Bewley 11 Brinkburn Place Amble NE65 0BJ 07525713086	CEN. WARD:	Jane Dargue Kate Morrison, 3 Island View, Amble NE65 0SE 01665 711191	Vacancy 10 Sylvia's Close, Amble NE65 0GB 07795360513
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TREE PLANTING

It was late in December before the 'whips' were received so planting had to be deferred to this year. Hopefully by the time you read this, the cemetery boundary planting by the school pupils will have either been carried out or be scheduled. There is also planting to be done at the Braid copses by Amble Youth Project, Coquet Rowing Club and volunteers; there are plans too for some in other areas of the town. Country Parks have agreed to take any remaining whips and plant other copses at the Braid and elsewhere, so in years to come Amble should have more trees for our future generations to admire and also to encourage more bird and insect life.

HIGHWAYS

Talks continue with NCC regarding additional speed signage for the centre of town, removal of some redundant information signs and changes in markings to give safer passage out of the Leazes Street car park by prevent parking too close to the exit. Northumbria Police continue to monitor speeding in Church Street and Acklington Road areas. NCC have agreed to place some crossing points in Percy Drive to make it safer for all those trying to traverse it. Discussions about the state of many of our Rights of Way and well-travelled pathways continue; however maintenance is often hampered by attempts to determine actual ownership of some of these areas. We continue to press for improvements as we feel it is important to encourage more healthy walking and cycling for both business and leisure.

MEMORIAL CLOCK

Did you miss the clock striking midnight and heralding in 2022? It's many people's habit to glance at the clock as they walk down Queen Street and around the Town Square area....so it is a real miss when it is not working. Unfortunately the pendulum spring has broken- a part which lasts many years and so did not need replaced in any of the previous refurbishment works which were carried out. Due to the specialist nature of the mechanics in these old clocks, there are very few firms who carry out the work. We have placed the order but must await our time slot for repair, so please be patient and hopefully it will not be too long.

COUNCILLOR'S CORNER

(Views expressed are those of the individual and not necessarily those of the council)

Winter is still officially with us but as I view my garden on a bitterly cold day, I can already see signs of new beginnings- the first signs of bulbs emerging, the buds starting on the shrubs. A cheering sight that brings great hope that despite all the hardships of the last months, we can all look to a brighter future. Those of us who have been unwell with whatever ailment can wish for better health; those who have lost loved ones can try to hold fast to the good memories made over the years; some will be looking forward to expanding their family either by new birth or new partnerships. Forget about new year resolutions which are so quickly broken- just let us all look forward rather than back and in so doing try to be as good a person as we can possibly be.

Helen Lewis

STORM DAMAGE

Storm Arwen had a devastating effect on many in our area as well as those in our own community. Roof tiles, chimney stacks, walls, fences- anything and everything you can imagine suffered. Water, electricity, phone lines, roads were all affected too. Thankfully there were few reports of people being hurt despite damage to property and vehicles. It was wonderful to hear how people rallied round to help those in their locality, offering food, shelter, clothing and goods to ease the stress of such troubling times. Thank you all for your immediate assistance and your continued kindness, compassion and generosity to all. The West Cemetery is still in rather a mess as we await the removal of the debris of fallen and split trees- despite them being inspected regularly and found safe, nothing could have prepared anyone for the scene of destruction there! It will be some time before everything is sorted. Fences have been repaired but the damage to the newly laid surface around the fountain will have to wait for assessment until the massive root ball is removed. Please be assured that all damage done will be assessed and repairs carried out where needed but meanwhile please do be extra careful if you are visiting the cemetery.

PLATINUM JUBILEE

Tree planting is the first of the celebration events planned by the Council. Procedures are well underway for the Fireworks display to be held on the Braid on Thursday 21 April- Her Majesty's birthday. If any local traders with their own energy supply would like to come along to offer refreshments to those gathered there, can you please write to the Clerk stating what you propose to serve by 28th February. Successful traders will be contacted by 15th March and asked to provide copies of their relevant documentation. Plans are being finalised for a leisure activity on Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 June- details soon.

ALLOTMENT WALKWAYS

Please take extra care when using these as there are still several areas where individual plot boundary fencing has not been repaired after the storm. Whilst many have been replaced, some are either awaiting removal or leaning over. Tenants are responsible for repairs but even getting materials is a bit of a challenge at the moment. Skips were provided to help with debris removal as lots of sheds, green-houses, polytunnels etc. were wrecked by the gales.

THANKS

Despite all the staff shortages caused by Covid and its variations, we should remember to be grateful for all those who have still worked so hard to try and maintain services for us. Yes, there are some differences, but in the main shops are open, businesses are working, deliveries are made, health centres and pharmacies operate, hospitals care for those who need them, schools function, tradesmen are busy helping all, county operatives empty our bins and carry on their other duties, hospitality and leisure venues are adapting, utilities staff maintain and repair as quickly as they possibly can- and numerous others in various capacities are still out there for us including our wonderful community volunteers. Don't forget that a simple 'thank you' goes a long way.

TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, FOURWAYS 2, AMBLE. NE65 0DT Tel: 01665 714 695 www.amble.gov.uk

Email ask@amble.gov.uk Twitter: @AmbleTC Facebook: www.facebook.com/AmbleTownCouncil

Office hours: 10.30am-12noon & 1.30-3p.m. Monday to Friday Vicki Smith, Town Clerk Minutes available to view in Office or online

Films in Warkworth

True Grit

Warkworth War Memorial Hall
Sat. 5 February
Doors and cash bar 7pm, film
7.30pm
£5 donation: info 01665
711341

House of Gucci

Warkworth War Memorial Hall
Sat. 5 March
Doors and cash bar 7pm, film
7.30pm
£5 donation: info 01665
711341

The game is afoot

Forthcoming Highlights Events: The Death of a Great Detective
Thursday 3 March 7.30pm in the Parish Hall

Audiences are invited to solve the seemingly impossible murder of Sherlock Holmes himself. Though it comes as a surprise to no-one but Doctor Watson that – shock horror – Holmes is alive and well. Nevertheless, the game is afoot as Chief Inspector Scott Lanyard has been found shot, stabbed and strangled all inside a locked room. Holmes has enlisted help to crack the case alongside stalwart allies Mrs. Hudson, brother Mycroft and Inspector Lestrade.....but could the killer really be among them? A whodunnit that's more than mere elementary!

If you enjoy a murder mystery, then this is the event for you. We will be serving a two-course meal during the evening. The cost of this is included in the ticket price. (Please indicate any dietary needs when booking)

Tickets available online at www.highlightsnorth.co.uk or from N&F Young, 8 Queen St., Amble

Children (age 12+) £14.00, Concession £18.00, Adult £20.00

The return of the witch!

An alleged local witch who was indicted in January 1683 will make a dramatic re-appearance at The Memorial Hall, Warkworth on Wednesday **23 February 2022.**

Margaret Stothard was summoned to appear before Henry Ogle J. P. with her life at risk, having been charged with 'Maleficium' or 'harmful magic'. Find out if she is found guilty or not in the forthcoming production of 'The Witch of Edlingham'.

This 'play for voices', created by local writers Paul Mein and Mike Lyons, is based upon the original depositions against Margaret, now held by Northumberland Archives at Woodhorn Colliery. Only four of the eleven featured characters are fictional, the remainder being actual participants in the proceedings, several of whom were the alleged witch's main accusers.

To produce this and other dramatic works, a company of writers and performers called 'Far Horizon Voices' has been set up, with a substantial catalogue

featuring Northumberland-based stories and incidents. At present, the group consists of fourteen members.

Its plays for voices are essentially dramatised readings involving elements of theatre and building on the tradition of oral rendition of poems, ballads, stories and dramas. Extensive use of the Northumberland dialect in its creations has earned the group support from established organisations like Northumbrian Words and The Northumberland Language Society.

In order to maximise the use of the available space, this first showing in Warkworth is limited to an audience of fifty. Tickets may be purchased at £5 from Warkworth Post Office or reserved by email at farhorizonvoices@gmail.com

All proceeds will be donated to the local branch of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution.

It is highly likely that the production will be enacted at other venues in the County in the months to come, including in Edlingham itself!

Photographic group's success



Amble Photographic Group has won a major competition. Blyth Camera Club hosted the Northern Counties Photographic Federation Interclub Knockout Competition on Sunday 14 November 2021. Six clubs entered and Amble won by a good margin of nine points.

In the whole competition only two images were awarded the maximum 15 points. The images belonged to Mavis McCormick (Hong Kong) and Graeme Pattison (Black Rock Cottage, pictured), both members of the Amble Photographic Group. Well done to both of them!

Anyone who is interested in joining the Group should contact Helen Holmes on helenholmes1947@gmail.com

HospiceCare donation boost

More than £450 has been added to North Northumberland HospiceCare's successful BigGive -backed Christmas match-fundraising campaign 2021 thanks to Warkworth Drama Group.

The cash was raised during the group's recent three-night run of "Old Actors Never Die... They Just Lose the Plot".

The Group's initial £230 donation, later doubled under the BigGive scheme, helped the hospice surpass the £20,000 target to raise over £26,000 for its local nursing services.

The cash will help finance hospice care at home, bereavement support, advanced dementia support and an information and advice telephone service.

Ralph Firth, who directed the play, said: "We were very pleased to give the raffle proceeds and a bucket collection to such a wonderful cause. And

it was a bonus to know that our donation would be doubled to £460 in the match-funding campaign."

HospiceCare's Events and Community Fundraiser Rebecca Taylor said: "The donation was a fabulous amount to make particularly given that audience numbers had been affected by storm Arwen that hit the area during the show's run.

"Community events such as these are a vital source of income for the Hospice and we are always so grateful for that support.

"It also gives us an opportunity to meet our local communities to talk about the impact of our care and support to patients who wish to spend their remaining days at home with their families."

For more information please visit: www.hospicecare-nm.org.
uk or call HospiceCare on 01665 606515 or 01289 309997.

Amble WI Celebrations



Double Christmas Celebrations at Amble WI who got together for their monthly meeting at the Masonic Hall where they enjoyed a quiz, games and a sing song.

On their second night out, they attended a Christmas Party organised by the Radcliffe Club where they enjoyed a three-course meal and live entertainment. A good night was had by all. Amble WI meet every second Monday of the month at The Masonic Hall from 7 to 9pm.

Women's workshop in 2022

There are going to be a few changes for the Women's Workshop in 2022. Storm damage means the Dovecote Centre will be closed for repairs, which is a challenge, but we have reached out to partner organisations and projects, and we're delighted to say that we can still run a Thursday in person programme from the Mind and Sole Hub in Alnwick, as well as activities at the Women's Workshop.

The 2022 programme includes the 'She's Ready' partnership project, the KIN project with Dry Water Arts, morning Zing sessions with Sarah Gray, support for women in abusive relationships with Carole of Rape Crisis

Mondays – Drop-in day at the Women's Workshop including fortnightly garden sessions.

Tuesdays – Team and Volunteer meetings, one-to-one support sessions by appointment.

Wednesdays – Learning Day, includes accredited courses on working in the community, getting involved in enterprise, employment skills, youth work, mentoring skills, practical skills.

Thursdays – Getting Active Day.

Fridays – and other occasions – Partner-led activities such as health walks, wellness, coaching, campaigns etc. We'll let you know what's on and can be around if you need help to get online. Drop-in learning support for anyone involved in any learning programme or who would like some technical support to learn online. At the Women's Workshop.

You can register your interest in new courses starting soon – DIY skills programme and Mentoring skills training for anyone interested in becoming a KIT (Keep in Touch) volunteer.

To sign up for any of these sessions please email Lesley at admin@womensworkshop.net asap and if you have any access requirements eg travel, child or elder care, sensory, to help you to take part. Please remember:

- We'd also be happy to hear from any woman who would like to get some support, and our offer of one-to-one mentoring will be continuing through the year.
- Visit our website at: <https://womensworkshop.net/> for all information on what we offer and all events.

Great set of concerts in Warkworth

It's a bit of a lottery now in terms of what events can take place. Despite the uncertainty, we have a great set of concerts scheduled from February through to July. If you are not familiar with some of the names, have a look at the web site for more comprehensive information.

Saturday 19 February: Tom McConville and Andy Watts – legendary Tyneside fiddle player and singer combines with Newcastle based guitarist bringing you some wonderful singing, great music and a light hearted delivery.

Friday 18 March: The Alex Hamilton Band - original blues/rock/americana combining melodic rock vocals, hard hitting lyrics and superlative heart-felt guitar.

Friday 22 April: The Cloudberrys - original modern folk, blues and acoustic arrangements of their favourite songs.

Friday 20 May: A double header with Jez Lowe and Benny Graham – two of the best contemporary and traditional singers from the North East.

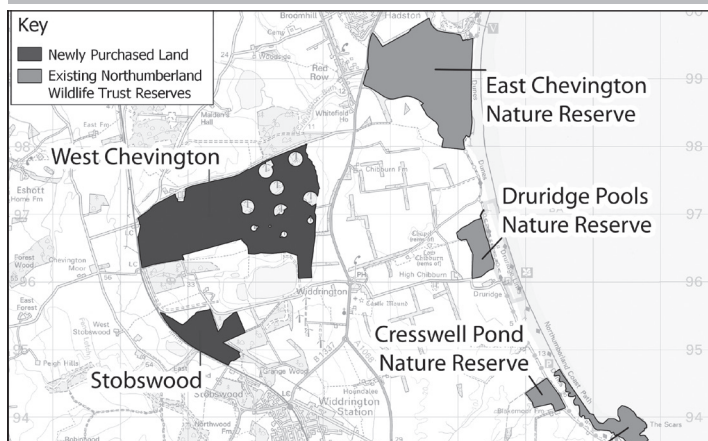
Thursday 14 July: Paul Anderson MBE and Shona Donaldson - a rare opportunity to see two of Scotland's foremost traditional music talents bringing fiddle mastery and ballad singing to Warkworth.

Concerts take place at Warkworth War Memorial Hall. Normal start time is 20:00, with doors (and bar) opening at 19:30. The hall will normally be set up in cabaret style, enabling reasonable space between attendees. Ticket availability will therefore be limited and some concerts are likely to sell out.

Tickets need to be reserved in advance by contacting me - Peter Burnham (email: peter.burnham@gmail.com , Tel: 01665 711388).

See www.wwmh.uk/concerts.html.

Trust aquires land for rewilding



A £2 million donation from The Reece Foundation has enabled Northumberland Wildlife Trust to purchase a 327-hectare piece of land at Druridge Bay as part of its bigger plans for a wilder Northumberland.

The large site at West Chevington was acquired from regeneration specialist Harworth Group plc. It sits atop a former opencast coalmine, like many of Northumberland Wildlife Trust's existing reserves in the area, and will showcase how nature can recover in this manufactured landscape.

The new land at West Chevington will provide opportunities to explore the rewilding concept further, and to work across a much larger scale. It will become a game changer for nature recovery, and will be one of the most ambitious lowland rewilding projects in the north of England, forming an integral part of the wildlife charity's fight against global warming.

The site will allow conservationists to test a number of rewilding methods with the aim of storing carbon, boosting biodiversity and connecting wildlife habitat on an unprecedented scale locally. They will restore natural processes to reduce climate change impacts and encourage people to become more engaged with their natural heritage and take action for nature and climate.

Ambler Discount Code
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When The One Show came to Coquet Island

Fans of BBC One's the One Show were able to see our very own Coquet Island in a segment which was filmed in December and screened in January. If you missed it, don't worry, you can see it via iPlayer

RSPB Coquet Island Warden Paul Morrison told the Ambler: "The One Show have wanted to come to Coquet Island for a long time, and they were curious about what makes it so special and why it's a protected site all year round. They wanted to know about the winter conservation scheme on Coquet Island."

The crew chartered a kayak and safety boat from Coquet Shorebase Trust, and presenter Hannah Stitfall was filmed meeting Paul and hearing about the importance of the island as a bird and nature sanctuary. Permission was given from Natural England for Hannah and the cameraman to film the birds.

Paul said, "Hannah was about 20 metres off the island as we talked, and of course the



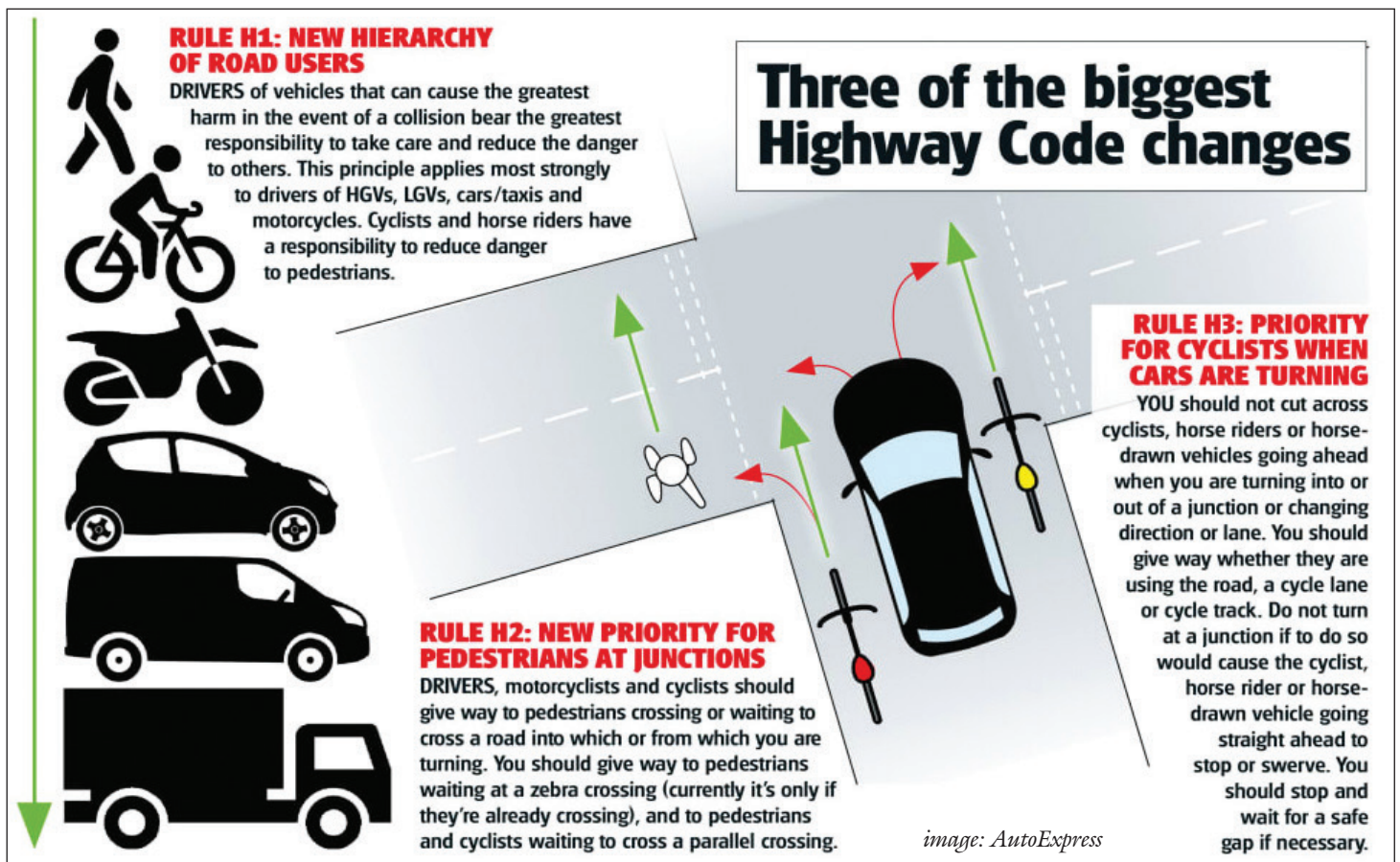
birds and seals were making a noise in the background. We've got 25 seal pups this year, the biggest number we've ever had, and there were fulmar sailing

right past our noses. It was very enjoyable. Coquet Island will be famous again!"

Anna Williams

The item was broadcast on Tues 11 January and can be seen for 28 days via iplayer: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0013cst>

Changes to the Highway Code: a brief guide



Drivers may be aware of new changes to the Highway Code, which took effect at the end of January. There is now to be a hierarchy of road users, meaning motorists should give way to

cyclists and cyclists should give way to pedestrians. This will have the biggest impact at junctions and road crossings, when cars and lorries now need to give way to cyclists and pedestrians.

However, at the time of writing, the Department of Transport says these changes are only to be advisory. It would be up to the police to decide whether an offence has been made.

In total, nine sections of the Highway Code will be updated, with 50 rules being added or updated. A summary can be seen in the Highway Code updates list on GOV.UK