



The Ambler

Amble's Community Newspaper

Issue 141 Aug/Sept 2023

Photo by Ivor Rackham

Duke of Gloucester launches Bord Waalk trail

Full story on back page



Crowds flock to 'best ever' Puffin Festival



The Baghdaddies took a ride on the children's walzers. Photo Vivienne Dalglish

This year's Puffin Festival was the best ever according to organisers.

The sun shone on both days, bringing bumper crowds to the Friendliest Port, to see the stalls, watch the live entertainment and take part in the family fun activities.

"We were delighted with the turnout at this year's festival, and the feedback we've had has been fantastic," said Julia Aston one of the organisers. "Everyone seemed to really enjoy themselves and lots say they'll be back next year."

Big crowds gathered to watch the Bare Toed Dancers perform music, storytelling and their aerial dance show, which had been created especially for the Puffin Festival.

Tribe Zuza impressed the crowd as usual, after which Latin and samba band Salida brought out spontaneous dancing in the town square, and the Auckland

Shanty singers got everyone singing along.

At the Little Shore Ranger Jane's beach safari kept people of all ages busy learning about the seashore, and creating giant sand sculptures.

Sand artist Claire Eason created an awesome sand-raked design of starlings to reference the Amble Bord Waalk bird sculpture trail. You can see how she and her helpers made it on our YouTube channel.

Northumberland Dog Rescue's dog show was incredibly popular and other environmental and animal organisations teamed up to make it a really successful event. "The weather was perfect, the venue stunning and all the dogs behaved impeccably," said a spokesperson.

On Sunday, the Baghdaddies brought their enthusiastic and hilarious brand of world music to the town square,

continuing to play even as they took a ride on the children's walzers. Hopefully they will have recovered before they play Glastonbury later this year.

Caribbean Crew steel band, always a favourite at the festival then entertained the crowds, followed by Amble band the Boffs' playing psychedelic rock favourites.

Walks and talks and the evening events were well attended, and the organisers thanked all who had taken part. The Dovecote Street Show and Dry Water Arts also held events during the festival, which added greatly to the cultural mix. Amble Masonic Hall, NTC Dovecote Centre and the Cock & Bull micropub were thanked by organisers for the kind use of their premises.

"It was a cracking couple of days," declared stall holder Sandy Higson aka The Mad Jam Woman. She and the other stall

holders were busy throughout the weekend, and a live stream of the puffins directly from Coquet Island proved very popular (technology played up a little at times), providing a more serious note about the feathered stars of the festival.

The RSPB were on hand to talk to people about the puffins on Coquet Island and answer questions about the birds, the struggles they are facing due to environmental changes, and the situation regarding avian flu.

Julia said: "It's been a fabulous weekend. Thank you to the performers, event/activity holders, stall holders, volunteers, visitors of all ages, (including all the four pawed friends), puffin enthusiasts, and everyone who helped make this the best puffin festival ever. We also want to especially thank this year's sponsors Coquet Cottages. Everyone has pulled together to make the event really special."



Making happy family memories after heartbreaking news

The mother of an Amble youngster with an incurable form of cancer has been pulling out all the stops to make as many happy family memories as possible.

Kizzi Henderson told The Ambler that she was devastated by the news that her son Cyrus had only a short time to live, and as his 13th birthday was coming up, she wanted to hold the best birthday party he could ever wish for.

Cyrus Henderson was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia in February 2021 and underwent intense treatment, which Kizzi said the family wondered if he would survive. But against the odds, he went into remission, only to relapse just before his birthday last year. Initially, Cyrus responded well to a round of Car-T cell therapy, and in January this year, he was able to ring the bell signalling the end of his treatment.

But tragically this improvement did not last, and at the beginning of June, Kizzi was



Cyrus with his sister Cheyenne, and brothers Johnathon and Shay

given the devastating news that Cyrus only had months to live.

Kizzi said the family wanted "to give him the best birthday ever after everything he has been through, he really does deserve it, and to make memories to last us as a family. We brought his

birthday forward and he had an amazing time."

The family held a party for Cyrus at the Newcastle Foundation e-sports centre, and to which all his friends from the hospital ward were invited.

"Cyrus played games with

his friends and family and sat and chatted and laughed with everyone," said Kizzi.

And now she is determined to do what she can to keep the family as happy together for as long as possible.

"We are just trying to spend as much time as a family as we can. We have been going out for meals a lot as a family as Cyrus is very family oriented, we are looking for places that are wheelchair accessible to have days out with him while he is still able to."

She also added that she wanted to raise awareness of Cyrus' condition as his condition was not diagnosed at first. "We were told Cyrus had viral flu for a few weeks, and unfortunately it's a story I've heard a lot from some of the other parents I have met, but unfortunately at that point the damage is irreversible."

A crowdfunder has been set up to help make Cyrus' remaining time as happy as possible: <https://gofund.me/b6960a83>

Anna Williams



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The Lounge Bar, Bridge Street, Amble

New team on Coquet Island face another devastating season



Avian flu has once again hit Coquet Island's rare bird colonies, meaning staff have to wear PPE. Hundreds of adult birds and chicks have died, including Black Headed Gulls, Common, Arctic and Roseate Terns. Photo: Ibrahim Alfarwi

Working with nature brings both constants and change, and so it is with the team and the wildlife on Coquet Island. After a turbulent year with avian flu (AI), and a change of personnel, we took the opportunity to check in with the team on the RSPB run bird reserve, to find out how they and the wildlife are faring.

First off, the island has a new site manager; Stephen Westerberg. Stephen has a wealth of conservation expertise, having worked for the RSPB for 19 years and previously been the Site Manager at RSPB Geltsdale in Cumbria for 13 years.

Those familiar with the team over the last few years will know site warden Ibrahim Alfarwi, who has been on Coquet for eight years, having completed his PhD on the island and then working there as the warden.

This year the team includes assistant warden Hanna Derewnicka, and seabird assistants Lauren Band and Barry Mumford Lloyd.

Q: Last year avian flu hit Coquet Island very hard. How difficult was it for the wardens to see such death and suffering especially at breeding season?

Ibrahim Alfarwi told us, "It can be emotionally and physically tough seeing the impact of AI on such charismatic birds on the island, which we have worked for decades to

conserve. Our experience last year enabled us to prepare for this breeding season and we are doing everything we can to support the colony. Time will tell what the long-term impact is on the colony.

"Fortunately, much of the important work to prepare the site at Coquet Island for the breeding season had already been done last season in preparation for the birds arriving in spring.

"Since the confirmation of AI on the island, we are continuing our conservation work with some changes. Whilst the birds are on the island and we continue to have AI in the wider seabird colony, the RSPB conservation team will conduct their work on day visits (rather than staying on the island overnight)."



r-l: Ibrahim Alfarwi: Warden - Coquet Island Reserve; David Morris: Area Manager; Hanna Derewnicka: Assistant Warden; Mhairi Maclauchlan: Warden - Cumbria Coast Reserves. Photo: Puffin Cruises (Image taken in April before avian flu was confirmed on the island)

Q: How is the breeding season this year so far? Has AI affected the island again?

As of 5 June 2023, AI has once again been confirmed on the island. Hundreds of Black Headed Gulls, adults and chicks have been found dead. Hundreds of Common Tern and Arctic Tern chicks have been found dead, and dozens of Common and Arctic Tern adults have been found dead.

"So far there have been 86 active Roseate Tern boxes and we put rings on 79 healthy chicks," said Ibrahim. "Unfortunately since the beginning of July we have also begun to find dead Roseate Terns, including large numbers of chicks."

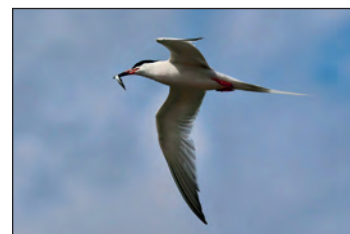
Q: There have been reports of warming sea temperatures in the North Sea. Last year there were industrial trawlers off the Farnes. Do you think this is affecting the food chain for puffins, terns etc? There's also reports of sewage in the sea just now - does this combine to make life very difficult for the birds?

Helen McLachlan, head of marine policy at the RSPB, told us: "The extreme marine temperatures we're seeing are of deep concern, especially for seabird populations that are already struggling. Climate change leading to rising sea temperatures and more extreme weather events impacts the whole food chain, from some of the smallest creatures in the sea like plankton, upwards. That has knock-on effects for species like sand eels - a vital prey species for so many marine species including seabirds, marine mammals and commercial fish."

Ibrahim said: "The presence of industrial trawlers, if not properly managed and regulated, can lead to overfishing and habitat degradation, further affecting the availability of prey for puffins, terns, and other seabirds.

"The presence of sewage can introduce pollutants and contaminants into the marine environment, potentially affecting the health of both marine organisms and the overall ecosystem.

"While it is challenging to determine the exact extent to which these factors are impacting the lives of puffins, terns, and other seabirds, it is reasonable to assume that they can collectively create difficulties for these species."



Roseate Tern with sand eel Photo: Tom Cadwallender

Q: Back to avian flu - what measures would the RSPB like to see instigated nationally in response to this pandemic?

A spokesperson for the RSPB told The Ambler: "We are calling on the government to do more research. We need all four UK governments to take impacts on wild birds more seriously, do more to understand the disease and to move towards implementing effective management and conservation measures. Governments need to see bird flu as a wake-up call for action to restore and protect the UK's wild species as part of our national response to the nature and climate emergency."

Meanwhile, Ibrahim says he and the team are determined to face up to the situation: "Despite the challenges we faced last year, our dedicated Coquetteers team remains strong and unwavering in our commitment to protect and conserve our seabirds.

"Through our surveys, proactive actions, and close monitoring, we are working tirelessly to ensure the long-term survival of our beloved birds."

Anna Williams

Three car crashes in one week



Three people were arrested after a collision on Percy Drive, which demolished a garden wall. The same wall was damaged by a vehicle in August last year

There has been a spate of car crashes in the town recently. Here's a round up of three incidents all within a week of each other in June.

Sunday 18 June

Shortly after 5.50pm on Sunday (June 18) police received a report of a one-vehicle collision on Philip Drive in Amble. A man and woman were arrested and later charged in connection with the report.

Thursday 15 June

At around 10.25pm on Thursday (June 15) police received a

report of a one-vehicle collision on Church Street in Amble. Enquiries are ongoing.

Sunday 11 June

Shortly before 9.15pm on Sunday (June 11) police received a report of a one-vehicle collision on Percy Drive in Amble. Three people were arrested in connection with the report and enquiries are ongoing.

Police have also told The Ambler that enquiries are still ongoing with the incident in August last year when a vehicle crashed into a wall on Percy Drive.

Questions over sale of Lord Mayor's Field

Questions have been raised by residents and a local councillor about the sale of the Lord Mayor's Field.

Residents claim that historically the land was given to Amble as a public space. They question why, if that was the case, it has now been sold to a private company.

In 2002, Alnwick District Council leased the Amble Links caravan park and Lord Mayor's Field to a private operator, until 2022 when Northumberland County Council (NCC) sold the land to Park Leisure 2000 for £12 million.

Questions have also been raised about whether the public were consulted or properly informed over the sale.

Resident Louise Little told The Ambler she was alerted to the status of the Lord Mayor's Field after seeing a land surveyor working there. She told us she had written to NCC asking why there had been no public consultation, and whether the correct process was followed, but as yet she had had no response.

She said: "The Lord Mayor's Field was and has been public open space for decades. It's

absolutely disgusting treating the people of Amble like second class citizens over profit for a company."

Land Registry documents a deed and covenants on the Lord Mayor's Field in 1954, between Michael Lawson Smith and Amble Urban District Council. In 1963 AUDC bought the caravan park 'and other land'. By 2022 the land had become part of Advance Northumberland's portfolio. (Advance is a development arm of NCC).

Cllr Terry Clark said "I've tried via Advance to get answers and I've written to the County Council. I need answers and the community need answers. I hope the Council will engage with me to either provide reassurance or just basic information".

Cllr Jeff Watson told The Ambler: "There hasn't been any change in the conditions from when the land was leased to Park Leisure and when it was sold. There was no need to consult the public as Advance doesn't generally consult when they sell land. I want to reassure people that the people of Amble will always have access to the Lord Mayor's Field."



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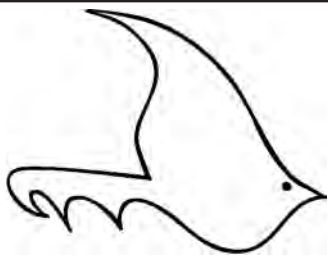
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#138 - 6 Jan	#141 - 23 Jun
#139 - 27 Feb	#142 - 1 Sep
#140 - 14 Apr	#143 - 3 Nov

Bumper summer edition

We have a bumper summer edition here for you, so we hope you enjoy reading it, and seeing all the photos. Thank you to everyone who sent us pictures and information. As usual, we've got serious issues and fun in equal measure; you might notice this edition has a lot of environmentally focused articles.

It's good to know that the Bord Waalk bird sculpture trail is now finished - including the long-awaited app. Check out the augmented reality (AR) boards on the app (See p15), and let us see your photos!

Last issue we went to print just before the Coronation; this issue the Colony music festival takes place while we are at the printers, so keep an eye on our website and social media to catch up on the action.



The Colony 2022. Photo: Wobbly Fingers

CORRECTIONS:

In the last issue of The Ambler we gave the wrong name to one of the students pictured in the *Mayor visits schools for coronation* article on page 4. The student in the second photo is Georgia. In addition, on page 6 underneath the letter from Rev McDermott, we signposted readers to page 3 rather than page 4. We apologise for the mistakes.

WHAT YOU SAY...

>> more letters on p7

Choice of unsung hero questioned

I was interested to read Councillor Jeff Watson's report (*Issue #140, p14*) concerning the nomination of unsung community heroes for the coronation. While his nomination may certainly have had some points of value, his choice of the wife of a fellow councillor suggests that there may have been a personal connection influencing his choice.

It is unfortunate that he did not seem to cast his net a little wider and looked, not only at the hard work put in by volunteers, but also at the impact that this work has on the community. The same edition of The Ambler mentions Luke

McTaggart's development of the arts scene in Amble, culminating in the excellent Dovecote Street Show, offering a superb exhibition as well as a showcase for many local artists. Would he not be worthy?

There are reports from many volunteer groups throughout the magazine including the RNLI, Amble Food Bank, and the Amble Development Trust. Awarding a volunteer from one of these organisations would show an appreciation of the work of all its volunteers.

Mr Watson courted controversy last year with certain comments, which seemed to suggest a disconnect between his views and the needs

of the community which he represents. That he did not seem to engage more with the community concerning who should be given the coronation honour seems a missed opportunity to heal this rift. Rather than see it as something which was his own personal gift, he should remember that he is the representative of the whole community, whether he personally agreed with them or not.

Guy Nutting, via email

Ed: We asked Cllr Watson if he would like to respond to this letter, but he declined, referring readers to the reasons for his choice in his original report (*Issue #140 p 14*).

Wildlife diversity lost to NCC eager mowing

There is a small triangle shaped plot of land which lies between Coquet Vets and Amble Autopoint, bordering Percy Drive. Over the past few years it has been developing a very distinctive flora including lady's smock, creeping buttercup, hoary ragwort as well as two lovely birch trees. Up until now the plot has been a sea of yellow as the buttercups flowered. In the past two years it had also been colonised by the cinnabar moth, a very distinctive day flying moth. The caterpillars of which are banded in gold and black while the adults are crimson and black.

Cinnabar moths have long been associated with common ragwort but on this particular site they had started to colonise hoary ragwort. Elsewhere in Amble they have adapted to using groundsel, a closely related plant, as a food plant for their larvae.

Unfortunately, the Percy Drive site has just been destroyed in the middle of June by being mown. All the wildflowers and associated insects have been pulped. Whoever decides where to mow in Amble should take a look at the Morrisons wildflower meadow which this year was

allowed to develop throughout May and June to see what a difference a no-mowing policy makes. The raised bed at the end of Broomhill Road is another example of the colourful vibrancy that wildflowers can provide.

Amble has an opportunity to celebrate nature in a meaningful way simply by allowing sites to develop their natural potential which at the moment are being so casually destroyed. What does this teach the younger generations about the value of nature?

Hugh Tindle, via email

Ed: See also p18

We welcome all your letters and email. Your name and address must be supplied, but will be withheld on request. Letters are accepted in good faith, but may be edited. Readers have a right to reply. See the About Us section on our website for more information.

WHAT YOU SAY....

>> more letters on p6

Where was the info on RMS Mauretania?



Well, what a huge disappointment!

I took my grandson down to the Amble Harbour Village today for the advertised "Mauretania Day". We were really looking forward to it.

Lovely weather; lovely music from Newbiggin Brass Band; nice vintage car display; lots of people enjoying themselves; but NOTHING to indicate that it was Mauretania Day!!

In the past there used to

be a picture of the Mauretania outside the Seafood Centre with information about its relevance to Amble.

The Mauretania, passing Amble on her final voyage to Rosyth where she was to be scrapped after a glorious career, referred to Amble as "...the last and kindest port in England", hence "Amble the Friendliest Port"!

What a missed opportunity to educate people about the

history of our lovely home town! A history worth celebrating surely?

I do hope this will be rectified next year! As for this year, I have one disappointed grandson!

Isabel Morrison, via email

The photo shows RMS Mauretania sailing past Coquet Island. Taken from the book "A Story of Amble" by David Wilkinson and Paul Morrison

Public toilet upgrades scheduled for this winter

Following comments sent to the Ambler about the state of the public toilets in the town, most particularly those at the harbour, we asked NCC for an update on the refurbishment of the public toilets in Amble. Readers may remember in Issue 133 (p5) where we reported that the Council had approved improvement and refurbishment works across the county at their meeting in February 2022, which included public toilets in Amble Town Square and at the harbour.

A spokesperson for NCC said, "We are committed to improving toilet facilities in the county. Across Northumberland we are carrying out a £1.35m three-year programme of works to improve the standard of all of the 54 public toilets in the county for which we have responsibility.

"This includes Amble, and both facilities have been scheduled for refurbishment this winter to ensure access to public toilets is maintained during the busy summer visitor period."

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Thanking the community for their kindness and support

On behalf of the family of Sheldon Flanighan

On behalf of all my family, we would like to offer our sincere thanks to the many people who have shown kindness and support since my dad Sheldon Flanighan's passing on April 1 2023. The many messages of condolence, with love and respect for my dad have been overwhelming at times. We have taken great comfort from these expressions of sympathy.

For his efficient, dignified and extremely sensitive approach to every request, we are so grateful to John Grenfell funeral director, his staff, caterers and for the beautiful floral arrangements. Being a great friend of my dad, we know this was a difficult assignment for Jonny, his professionalism and composure is exemplary.

Sincere thanks are owed to some of my dad's closest friends for undertaking their roles as pallbearers and speakers with great distinction, and to Reverend John McDermott and Father David Reilly for providing a private blessing and leading a beautiful funeral service. Thanks also to all the church officials and to Stu Vernon (music) for helping the service to flow seamlessly.

We would also like to express our thanks and gratitude to the management and staff at The Bede, for hosting a fantastic and memorable celebration of my dad's life.

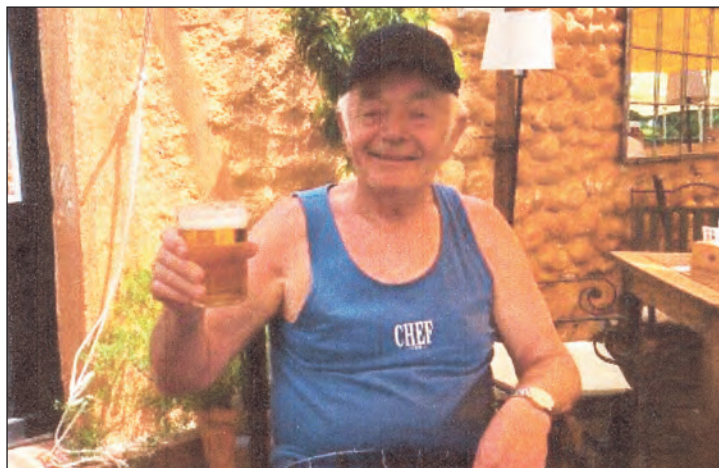
We are greatly appreciative of the dedication and professionalism of Northumbria Police, whose family liaison

team have supported us at this difficult time.

Finally, a big thank you to all my dad's colleagues at North East Ambulance Service, for the support given to the family and for the very moving words expressed on the day. We understand a great deal of logistical planning and personal sacrifice was made to ensure a huge turnout. We felt privileged and humbled at the sight of his ceremonial guard of honour and all those in uniform who lined the streets to pay their respects.

We are sorry that we did not get the chance to speak with everyone at my dad's funeral, but are so pleased and very proud that you were part of such a special day.

Calvin Flanighan



Fenwick Brabben

On 18 April, Fenwick Brabben died, a few weeks before his 79th birthday.

So many people knew Fen, who loved to walk and to chat to passers-by.

He was a much-loved character who took a keen interest in greeting everyone, often dropping foreign phrases into the conversation, a legacy of his army days stationed in Germany.

His wife Marj told The

Ambler "I would like to thank the wonderful people of Amble who kept their eye on him on many occasions, and sometimes even brought him home, or informed me of which field he was walking!

"I want to thank people for all the things they did for him. Everyone will know how much he loved walking and talking to people.

"As Fen would have said: 'Alles klaar'."

Amble Welfare in running for play area refurbishment

Amble Welfare could benefit from an upgrade to the Multi User Games Area, after funding was secured for identified PlayZones across Northumberland.

Funding to replace the safety flooring to the children's playground has been secured through Section 106 money, but a timescale for the work has not yet been confirmed.

£300,000 from Sport England via the Football Foundation is being invested in the development of PlayZones across Northumberland, and the County Council will meet the additional £900,000 costs.

PlayZones are outdoor spaces - often referred to as a Multi-Use Games Area

(MUGA), which can be used for a range of sports and physical activities for all ages.

An extensive consultation exercise with community organisations and residents was held throughout the county, including Amble.

The project will now progress to the next stage, where work will begin on selected sites included in Phase One of the project.

Phase One locations are Alnwick Community Centre; Hexham Priory School; Amble Welfare, Newbiggin MUGA, Westlea Football Field Bedlington, Hirst Park Ashington, and Eastwoods Park West Wylam.

Northumberland's PlayZones

will be open for community use day and night, all year round, providing a safe and inclusive recreational space for everyone.


County Councillor Jeff Watson, Cabinet member for Healthy Lives, said: "We are very happy to confirm funding for the PlayZones project.

"Council staff have worked hard to make the consultation process as broad as possible, and the response we have seen from our communities has been fantastic.

"I am particularly proud of the work this project is doing to address the needs of our priority groups. Access to sports and wellbeing facilities is a crucial factor in improving the health outcomes for our residents. The

opportunities they offer for safe inclusive physical activity are endless."

**edie pebble**
Pod 14 Amble Harbour Village



Beautiful handmade gifts,
vintage treasures and
nautical decorations



Summer's here and my first year of uni is done. Or, technically it's been done since May (which combined with two month-long breaks in the middle does make you wonder a bit where your money's going, but oh well).

It's almost time for a whole new cohort of freshers to start the uni experience, so I thought I'd try to come up with some advice from what I've learned so far.

1. Make the most of societies and students' union events. They usually have loads of really fun

trips and activities for super cheap prices.

2. Student accommodation beds are usually worse than sleeping on the concrete outside - a mattress protector is going to save your life.

3. You don't need that many tupperware tubs. Seriously. I promise.

4. Say yes to as many things as you can, because you never know where you're going to meet a new friend or pick up a new hobby.

5. But don't be afraid to take some time for yourself too.

There's a lot of pressure to do everything, especially in the first few weeks. Listen to your mind and take a break if you need to. You're not falling behind. People aren't going to all make friends without you.

6. Start a cleaning rota early. Trust me.

7. Don't pressure yourself into making friends for life in the first couple of days. Sure, you might meet your soulmate on your very club night of freshers, but for most people it takes a while to find the people they click with, whether it's course mates,

flatmates, people you meet at societies, or people you bump into randomly (you bump into a lot of people randomly). Chat to strangers. Go to lots of places. But trust that it might take time to find your circle.

8. No, seriously. You have nowhere to put them. You don't need all those tupperware tubs.

Population falls in Amble



Residents may be surprised to know that the population of Amble has fallen slightly in the last 20 years, according to the latest census data.

In 2021 the population of Amble was 5,860, a fall of 165 on the 2011 census which recorded 6,025 residents. 2001 figures show the population was at 6,044.

This is in stark contrast to the number of houses in the town which has risen dramatically over the same

period.

849* new houses were built/are being finished between 2014 and 2023, with 678 still in various stages of planning and 60 in a planning coma.

A couple of questions spring to mind; were we all crammed in together living cheek by jowl 20 years ago and now we live separately swinging our proverbial cats?

Some people will have sadly passed away, some will have moved. Some Amble residents

own more than one house in the town. We haven't even looked at the number of people renting. But we're not aware of a load of empty properties, so let's make a bit of a wild guess here... are non residents buying the new houses?

The new school for JCSC will be designed to take 720 pupils aged between 11-18yrs. The current school caters for 731 aged between 9-18yrs, so it does not appear they are expecting a huge rise in demand, despite the new Longstone Manor (185) and Tantallon/Acklington Road (up to 500) developments.

The perception is that Amble is growing more than ever. But with interest rates still rising and mortgages harder to secure, it will be interesting to see how fast the new developments fill up in the coming months, and whether the resident population continues to fall.

What do you think?
Anna Williams

*New housing finished or still being built 2104-2023:

Coquet Grange 250
Coble Quay 25
Tynedale 48
Gloster Farmhouse 48
Percy Drive 275
Roseate View (St Cuthberts school) 14
Longstone Manor 185
Marina West (Artique) 7
Lighthouse View (Signal Cottage) 3

Developments still in various stages of planning process as of 2023

Tantallon (Acklington Rd) 500
[See Planning Ref: 23/02116/REM]
Persimmon (Hauxley View) 166
DP Builders (Southmede bungalows) 12

Developments in a coma

Coble Marina 54
Gloster Hill 6

Developments withdrawn

Additional 60 houses for Hauxley View
Braid Hill 93

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T-Level Transition courses at James Calvert Spence College

James Calvert Spence College is proud to announce the introduction of T Levels to the students in Sixth Form. From September 2023, we will be delivering the T Level Transition course and from September 2024, running T Level courses.

A T-Level is a two-year course mixing class work with industry placement and is equivalent to three A Levels. On completion, students will be prepared and equipped to go directly into work, further education or an apprenticeship.

Next September we will be

delivering T-Levels in Business and Administration, Education and Early Years and Digital Production. In 2025 we hope add more subjects.

This September, we will be offering a T Level Transition Programme (TLTP). If students think they might like to do a T-Level, but need more time to prepare, the transition programme will help them develop their skills and obtain any required qualifications such as GCSE English or maths to progress to the next level. It's a one-year post-GCSE course designed to

get students T- Level ready. It gives them relevant knowledge, practical and study skills, work experience and support tailored their chosen T level subject area.

James Moore, Head of Sixth Form, says "At JCSC we have a lot to offer. We offer a tailored curriculum to fit your needs, teachers who really know you and can help you to academic success. This is an exciting time to be part of the life here at JCSC".

For more information, see <https://bit.ly/3NaSAYd>

James Calvert Spence College

Puffin poster winners



Congratulations to these star artists from Amble First School and Amble Links First School, who won the Puffin Festival poster competition. Puffin posters designed by pupils from both schools were displayed in shops along Queen Street during the Festival, afterwards the winners were chosen, and Tommy Noddy presented them each with a puffin toy.

How Charles Road celebrated Charles' coronation



Residents of Charles Road celebrated King Charles III's coronation with bunting and flags, and held a street party with music and games. Zoe Ramsay told *The Ambler* they all had a lovely day. "We came together as a street and had a street party. We had party food and music and dancing, and we even played games like charades."

Pictured below l-r: Tommy-Leigh, 4 months; Fallon, 9 months; Florence, 5; and above: some of the partygoers



Residents urged to recycle vapes

The County Council has become one of the first local authorities in the country to offer vape tube recycling bins at its Household Waste Recovery Centres (tips).

The devices used as an alternative to real cigarettes, contain lithium batteries which can be highly flammable and should never be disposed of in general waste.

Last year a Suez recycling plant in Aberdeen was hit by a devastating fire involving more than 100 firefighters. The company believes it was caused by a battery or battery-operated device that had been put into a recycling bin, as lithium-ion batteries can explode if damaged or crushed.

The vape tube bins, now in place at all the council's household waste facilities, will help tackle the growing environmental issues the devices cause.

In the UK, people buy half a billion vapes a year and bin a massive three million of them every week. They are becoming part of the fastest

growing waste stream in the country, with over 155,000 tonnes of the electrical waste being binned a year.

Councillor John Riddle, Cabinet Member for Local Services, said: "While vaping poses a small fraction of the risks of smoking, disposing of the vapes should always be done correctly.

"No batteries should ever be put in general waste, they must be disposed of in a proper battery bin.

"Vaping is one of the most effective and popular tools for quitting smoking, and we urge people to recycle their vapes correctly in the bins at all our recycling centres.

"We have a contract with a local company who can break down the vapes into their component parts and recycle the batteries and metal parts."

The county council also has dedicated battery bins at every household waste recovery centre, and proper disposal bins are available at numerous retailers, including Vapour Tech on Queen Street in Amble.

Ed: See also Artograggi page

Tenacious birds return to Amble beach



Shorebird nesting season is in full swing, and we have been busy protecting as many of their precious nests as we can, with the help of Coast Care volunteers.

We are only three months into the season, yet this year has been one of our busiest so far. We have had more pairs of ringed plovers nesting along the coast than in previous years. Most of the early nesting attempts were unsuccessful due to a combination of stormy seas mixed with big spring tides and predation. However, ringed plovers are tenacious birds, and are already back incubating eggs. Amble and the surrounding areas have been a particular hotspot for the birds this year, with pairs returning to nest on Amble Links beach, on Warkworth

Beach, and on a sandy bank on the Coquet Estuary.

They are all very busy areas, and the birds are relying on us to give them as much space as possible. They need the best chance possible at raising their young. Please look out for the nest protection areas we have created, and give the fence a wide berth. Do keep dogs close to you when passing.

To keep up to date with all of the latest news about the nesting birds, follow us on social media (search Space for Shorebirds on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter). Please also get in touch if you see any ringed plovers, along the coast, that may be nesting outside of fenced areas, and we will do what we can to protect them.

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Savvy student's super startup

Six year 9 students at James Calvert Spence College have been becoming entrepreneurs - selling terrariums. Their business, called 'Light Clouds and Co', is part of the Tycoon Enterprise Competition, meaning they have received a loan and will compete with other student companies, and, if they win, they have the privilege of going to Buckingham Palace.

Although their original ideas included stickers, pin badges and bake sales, terrariums are an excellent opportunity for something unique and easy to look after. When asked what they want to achieve with their

"It's quite fun being independent and having to focus on an actual business that you're actually earning real money with". Over the last few weeks the group have sold nearly 20 terrariums, and have enjoyed a variety of things about the process. Emma said they enjoyed the trips out to gather materials, "I got a little octopus thing" and "tried a Malteser bar", while Minnie loved being at the market stall 'when we're at the stall we just got to mess around and have fun'.

The students have faced a few challenges along the way, "trying to sell them as they are a difficult



Left to right: Bethany, Becky, Olivia, Jess, Minnie, Emma

business, Olivia said "we would like to earn some money... but also to have fun and provide little things that were handmade to other people, that would be a difference because a lot of people don't have terrariums". These terrariums come in small and large sizes, and contain a mix of cacti, succulents and "stringy plants" which all require minimal care and attention, perfect for an unintentional plant killer like myself.

price for some people" (Olivia's words) and that few people carry cash. Despite this, the group has been successful and are hopeful for the future of the competition. It's important to instil in young people that they can be successful in unconventional and enjoyable ways. Good luck to the group!

By Ava



Artograffi's top 5 places for kids

...in Amble

Paddlers park - amazing for playing with your friends and there's grass for football with a new giant puffin.

Skate park - good for playing on your bikes, scooters and skateboards.

Sweets and treats - great for nice sweats.

Spurreli's - is a really good ice cream shop.

Artograffi - its so cool and has the best people ever!!! On Monday nights 4:30 - 6:00.

By Issy, Katie, Grace, Hannah and Ava

CORRECTION:

In the last issue of Artograffi we accidentally stated that the Coronation had cost £100billion, instead of £100million. This was a typo and we apologise.

Rockin' new art installation!

Cast your mind back to Amble in summer 2020. It's the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, but a few locals have been using their time to paint rocks, and it's becoming quite the attraction down by Little Shore beach. Over winter, the stones were removed, never to be seen again...

Until now! Groups of volunteers have spent countless hours varnishing, sorting and placing these rocks, which are now in prized place in the flowerbeds opposite the fourways building. We spoke to Issy Dunn (pictured right) and her mother Kayleigh who have enjoyed being part of this art piece.

Issy is 10 and heard about the project through her family in Amble. Originally, she helped paint some rocks to create the snake, but recently has been helping "putting down the cement for the rocks" and installing the piece. She said, "I like getting my hands dirty... I had to climb in one of the flower beds!"

When asked why she thought the piece was a good idea, Issy said "because people can go past and see the hard work that people have done". Even in the short time we were out for our interview, several people stopped to admire the art work and compliment the dedication that went into it.

Issy's favourite part of the project has been "laying [the rocks] out and spreading the concrete to put them down". I would definitely recommend coming down and having a look, and we challenge you to count the number of ladybirds.

An update:

Only a few weeks after its installation, one of the rocks has been removed. It's really important to look after this piece of Amble's history and to respect all the hard work that went into it. Look but don't touch!

By Ava



Vaping and why it sucks

Young people in schools all around the UK are vaping - even year 5 and 6's - and it needs to stop. We do not know the long term effects of vaping yet but we know it's not going to be good. We all know smoking kills people, but did you know it causes 1300 deaths every day? In addition, vaping isn't much better, in fact there are chemicals such as nickel, tin and lead in vapes. Also nicotine, which is a highly addictive and harmful substance.

Almost three times as many young people vaped in 2022 compared to 2021, with one in three children saying they had vaped in the last month*. 44% of young people in UK schools are said to have vaped at least once in their life and that has risen from 15% in 2021. This adds up to almost 3.5 million young people. Vaping is very dangerous and no young person should be doing it.



We think vapes should be banned from shops and only prescribed to people when they want to quit smoking, because this is what they were originally made for. Vapes cause life threatening problems which most young people fail to understand. For example, 26 year old Dylan Nelson was feeling sick one day after using one of many vapes he had. The next day he felt worse and immediately went to hospital where his symptoms got worse throughout the day. By nightfall, his lungs were filling with fluid and doctors had to put him into a medically induced coma. He has since been discharged from the hospital and is recovering slowly. Even though he suffered years ago, he is still not fully recovered which just proves how dangerous vaping really can be.

We spoke to Scott from Vapourtech on Queen Street and he told us:

"Being in the vaping industry for over 4 years we have seen first-hand how effective vaping can be in aiding quitting smoking, as this is what vaping was designed for. However, in recent years the tobacco giants have seen this as an opportunity to cash in with the disposable vape market which in my opinion was done to target kids with the super sweet flavours and bright packaging.

"For people unaware, these 2% vapes contain as much nicotine as 40 cigarettes!"

Scott also mentions the difficulties in disposing of vapes and how they often become litter, so Vapourtech are working on their own recycling scheme. Use the bin in their shop

"Disposable vapes should only be used by adults. We would not advise a non-smoker or children to do so as it can become very addictive. IF YOU DON'T SMOKE DON'T VAPE."

By Hannah and Katie



*Figures collected in 2022 by Opinion, a market research agency.

Canada's forest fires

16.06 million acres of land in Canada have been scorched by record breaking wildfires, which are most likely caused by climate change.

Since late April, these wildfires have started, usually by lightning and sometimes by people, which strike dry trees and cause the fires. These same fires are also responsible for 85% of wildlife destruction.

Climate change, like I mentioned before, also has a big role to play in this. Even just a one degree increase of temperature can lead to as much as 12% more lightning, which leads to - you guessed it - more wildfires. Not including the human caused ones, which have been formed due to things like discarded cigarette butts. (Don't smoke kids)

Even though we are only halfway through 2023, these wildfires are already Canada's third worst wildfire season in a decade. To add on to that, this year's wildfire season came earlier than usual. If you couldn't already tell, that's not good news.

That isn't all though. The large amounts of smoke that these fires have produced have gone through the USA, and places like New York, Washington DC and Philadelphia have been covered in smoke.

Although the fires started in April, in early July the smoke was still visible in New York.

Well, are people doing anything to help prevent/combat these wildfires? Don't worry, they are! The government are funding through the Fighting and Managing Wildfires in a Changing Climate Program, where they will train 300 indigenous firefighters and 125 indigenous fire guardians. You can probably guess what they will be doing. Canada is also at 'national preparedness level 5' - which means that Canada has committed all national resources to fight wildfires across the country.

By Grace



It's getting hot in here

In very unsurprising news recently, the climate is still in disaster. According to the World Meteorological Organisation's newest study, there is an approximately 50% chance the global temperature will exceed the dreaded 1.5 degree Celsius increase. This means that the average temperature is 1.5 degrees higher than pre-industrial times, as measured c1850- 1900.

But is this all a big fuss about nothing? For now, the temperature increase is not too much of a concern for scientists as it is only temporary, due to the natural fluctuations in temperature and an el nino weather phenomenon, where the surface temperature of the sea rises in the tropical pacific ocean. This is an entirely normal occurrence. However it has been happening for longer and more dramatically in recent years. If the global temperature exceeds the

1.5 degrees limit for an extended period of time, the Paris Agreement of 2015 will have been breached, reflecting concerns of greenwashing and empty promises from the world's governments.

The general trend in rising temperatures is largely caused by greenhouse gas emissions. Huge industries are mostly to blame for this, with the energy sector producing well over half of CO2 emissions. Of course personal consumption and emissions should be kept in check, but as with most arguments around climate change, it is only when businesses and governments begin to take genuine action that the planet may be saved.

By Ava





Reports from our *County Councillors*



I am pleased to report that I have funded the following, through my

small schemes budget:
Northumberland Theatre Company: supplying theatre and cinema equipment comprising a mounting beam to fit a projector to the ceiling bringing the cinema experience back to Amble. Keep an eye out for films during the summer.

A new waste bin on Turner Street, next to the car park.
High Hauxley: contribution towards an interactive speed sign.
Horse warning signs at Togston bends. Riders do cross this section of road gaining access to the bridle way running to Warkworth. The signage makes drivers aware that they may come across horses and riders on this section of road at some point. Driving carefully, particularly around the bend, helps horses and riders by giving the driver time to react safely if a horse is spotted.

Speeding issues

The recklessness of speeding down residential areas means drivers are more likely to be involved in a crash. Some of the reasons for this are:

- speeding drivers are less likely to keep control of their vehicle.
- their vehicle requires a longer distance to stop.
- they are less likely to see someone in time to come to a stop safely.
- they are less likely to see something in the road.

Speeding through residential areas puts families at risk. Speed limits exist to try to keep everyone on the road safe, both pedestrians and drivers. Ensure you abide by speed limits.

Complaints continue to be received, with accidents happening along Percy Drive and Church Street lately. Residents do request traffic calming measures within these and other areas. To introduce these schemes we have to go through the Local Transport Scheme. Concerns are constantly raised with me, regarding road improvement schemes, traffic safety issues, parking, calming measures, road markings, foot/cycling maintenance.

The public can assist by identifying priorities in any area. Send submissions to NCC Highways by email or letter, stating your requests to NCC HIGHWAYS, COUNTY HALL, MORPETH, NORTHUMBERLAND, NE61 2EF.

Percy Drive Zebra crossing road safety audit is being done in June, there may be some tweaks to make before construction begins.

ENJOY the summer, please stick to the speed limits and keep your community safe.

Cllr Terry Clark Amble, Hauxley and North Broomhill.

Unfortunately, Cllr Jeff Watson was unable to send a report for this edition.

Jeffrey.Watson@northumberland.gov.uk 07802 385367

Fun at the prom



Photo by Dru Dodd photography

Our year 11 prom was held at The Alnwick Garden where students celebrated finishing their GCSE exams. The night was a huge success, with local sponsors being a huge help to us at JCSC and making this event extra special.
James Calvert Spence College



- The Council have agreed to place an automated speed sign in High Hauxley and this should be in place soon
- Councillor Andy Brown has recently stepped down from his role. The Parish Council would like to thank him for his service and wish him all the best.

NOTICE OF VACANCY

Are you interested in making a difference by working for your local community?

Notice is hereby given that a

Parish Councillor vacancy has occurred among the members of Hauxley Parish Council. We are looking to co-opt someone to take on this role. This is a voluntary unpaid role, and to serve as a Parish Councillor you must:

- be at least 18 years old
 - be a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union
 - meet at least one of the following four qualifications:
- 1) Your name must appear on the register of local government

electors for the parish/community at the time of your nomination and throughout your term of office should you be elected.

2) You have occupied any land or other premises as owner or tenant in the parish/community during 12 months before the day of your nomination and the day of election.

3) Your main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of your nomination and the day of election has been in the parish/community area. You do not have to have paid employment to qualify, as long as your main or only place of work is in the parish/community area

4) You have lived in the parish/community area or within three miles of it during 12 months before the day of your application

- You cannot stand for election if you:
- are the subject of a bankruptcy restriction order or interim order
 - have, within five years before the day of the election, been convicted in the United Kingdom of any offence and have had a prison sentence (whether suspended or not) for a period of over three months without the option of a fine
 - work for the council you want to become a councillor for or debarred from Standing as a Councillor.

Any person willing to fill this vacancy should apply by forwarding their CV with a covering letter explaining why they would like to be a Councillor to the Parish Clerk by 30th July. If you would like further information please email the Clerk. Contact details below.

Jade Reynolds Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer
Hauxley Parish Council
c/o 14 Oswald Street | Amble | Northumberland | NE65 0EG
Telephone: 07786255649 Email: hauxleyipc@gmail.com
Website: <https://northumberlandparishes.uk/hauxley>

This section is written and paid for by Hauxley Parish Council



We started off the year with a community workshop to build an Investment Plan for the town and we have been informed by NCC that Amble is to be included in the area covered by their share of the UK Prosperity fund, which is a replacement for previous EU funding. This is good news, so once we know what the criteria are for applying we will be looking at the investment plan to see if we have identified any projects that fit. Of course it then becomes a bit of a beauty contest for who has the best application – but you have to be in it to win it, so we will be trying our best for Amble again.

The formal process of funding the proposed refurbishment of the MUGAs is ongoing and we hope to make a start very soon. Unfortunately I cannot give a start date as NCC are having to coordinate multiple sites through the one application, so it is a longer complicated process than anticipated, but we'll get there.

AMBLE DEVELOPMENT TRUST ACCOUNTS 2022/23

Current financial year				
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Total
	2023	2023	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:				
Donations and legacies	2,670	78,290	80,960	5,348
Other trading activities	112,120	-	112,120	112,095
Other income	5,767	-	5,767	15,181
Total income	120,557	78,290	198,847	132,624
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	129,666	129,375	259,041	200,530
Net expenditure for the year/ Net movement in funds	(9,109)	(51,085)	(60,194)	(67,906)
Fund balances at 1 April 2022	2,480,689	94,867	2,575,556	2,643,462
Fund balances at 31 March 2023	2,471,580	43,782	2,515,362	2,575,556

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

We are in a similar position with the play area as we wait for a date to begin the work from the contractor as we now have the funds secured through NCC

S106 funding.

Still in limbo is the decision on a Neighborhood Development Plan. Although some progress has been made as we await a date to meet with the

came along and enjoyed the sunshine and cake afterwards!

If you have time to walk the full length of the trail we hope you enjoy the additional info that the app includes, from poetry,



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Above: One of the Augmented Reality (AR) bords which is now accessible via the Bord Waalk app

Town Council and NCC officers. We had a very successful Royal visit to officially open the Bord Waalk sculpture trail. His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester carried out the ceremony accompanied by Her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland as well as lots of school children and members of the community, and groups who had participated in the workshops and the artists who created the sculptures.

Thank you to everyone who

bird recordings and the virtual and augmentation that bring the whole Bord Waalk story to life.

Our job search facilities are now open from 9am – 5pm each week day. If you would like to contact the Ambler or are requiring a CV you can do so by ringing: 01665 712929 or emailing editor@theambler.co.uk or Julie@ambledevelopmenttrust.org.uk

Julia, all Trust staff and Trustees
julia@ambledevelopmenttrust.org.uk



Amble Town

COUNCIL

Town: 6pm at Fourways 2 Top Floor 10th August, 14th Sept

Amenities: 6pm at Fourways 2 Top Floor 27th July, 28th Sept

EAST WARD:
Ian Parks,
33 Warkworth
Ave, Warkworth.
NE65 0TP
ian.parks@
amble.gov.uk

Helen Lewis,
5 Meadowburn,
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Craig Weir
(Chair/Mayor)
76 Priory Park,
Amble NE65 0HY
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WEST WARD:
Vacancy x1

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Jackie Turpin
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CEN. WARD:
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Paul Dancer
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paul.dancer@
amble.gov.uk

BOUNDARY COMMISSION REPORT

This review has proposed minor changes to the county boundaries but still retains two members to cover the Amble area as part of their remit. However it acknowledges that the increasing population within the Amble Wards requires some adjustment. The Town Council will retain nine members but instead of three in each ward, there will be two in the Central Ward, three in the West ward and four in the East ward. If agreed these changes will apply to the next elections in 2025. Whilst those are the legal parameters, all members prefer to work as a team and for the benefit of all our community.

TOWN AWARDS

Councillors spent the last days of June looking at gardens in their wards to shortlist those for the judge from Alnwick Gardens to view in July. It is always a pleasure to see the beautiful sights whilst walking around the town and these awards are just a small token of the community's gratitude for the hard work and thought which goes into producing them. The Allotment Society's Committee will also be recommending awards for the best in each area and the most improved throughout. The Civic Awards are a way of thanking individuals who willingly give up their time to help others in our community in a variety of ways.

WALKWAYS AND RIGHTS OF WAY

We continue to press NCC to find a solution to the problem of the Coble Quay Walkway so that people can enjoy the walk and the views over the Marina and beyond. There is only a small amount in NCC's budget to deal with any problems on Rights of Way. Whilst we have no powers and no legal authority to intervene, we are assured by them that all those within our parish boundary are regularly monitored to ensure safe passage for the public. We still lobby them to find the money to stop further deterioration thus preventing a greater financial burden.

COMMUNITY HUB

As the town grows so do our needs- for example more meeting spaces, more access to employment, more spaces for over 18 courses. Councillors have been visiting nearby communities to find out what they offer, and how they are funded and finance themselves. We have asked what they would now do differently at the planning stage! We are getting advice from NCC on this, including any funding which might be available. We hope to set up a community steering group to take the idea forward. If you have thoughts on uses for such a space or are interested in helping to plan, promote and guide this project, please contact the Clerk or a Councillor.

ESTATE WALKABOUTS

Councillors continue to join with Northumbria Police and NCC Officers to walk around areas in the town to spot problems and make suggestions for improvements. These are approximately every 2-3 months and focus on different parts of the town. When you see them, please do approach them with your concerns. As this is a joint group, often this direct approach can see that it reaches the right organisation and can result in quicker action than a series of emails or phone calls.

TREES

Sadly the evergreen tree in the Memorial Gardens has died. We tried a smaller height hoping it would establish itself better than the tall variety. Whilst the same species continues to thrive in the High Street Garden, the Memorial Garden one has not and has been removed. Ways of replenishing and enhancing the soil are being considered to see if this would be of benefit and if so, then in September it will be considered whether to try again. If not, then as was the traditional location, once again the town's Christmas tree will be the one at High Street Gardens.

WE CARE ABOUT OUR TOWN AND OUR COMMUNITY

Members of Amble Town Council were disappointed by the letter published in the last issue of The Ambler.

Councillors were accused of not having the interests of our society or community at the heart of what we do. Nothing could be further from the truth. Page 4 and page 16 of that edition set out stories about what we are doing and issues raised to us and by us, as does each news page. Residents are welcome to come along to our meetings, which are open to the public, to hear about the variety of things we do. We are all volunteers who work for and engage with the Amble Community; we welcome people coming forward to join us. However we do acknowledge that we may be guilty of following the maxim 'self-praise is no recommendation' and in future should perhaps 'blow our own trumpet.'

Regarding the Coronation itself, very few people came forward with proposals to discuss or with offers of help to arrange any form of community celebration/commemoration, nor to ask if we had any plans. Without other voluntary help, the Council cannot physically carry out these types of events. Money from NCC was available and was publicised through Social Media but no-one came forward to take up this offer!

We had thought about fireworks as we did for the Platinum Jubilee, but the bird nesting season would be underway plus the nights are too light, so this could not be organised. Other ways of marking the Coronation were discussed.

Almost 1000 trees for the late Queen's Platinum Anniversary have been planted in the West Cemetery and on the Braid with the residue given to Country Parks. Work has taken place in memory of our late Queen to have a lasting floral memorial in Amble- alongside this is a flowerbed for the King. Other forms of remembrance have been placed by ATC including the Peace Sculpture and with other's help, the Seafarers Memorial.

The town has a number of seats including the one to thank all those in the community who helped during the height of the Covid epidemic. The new seat scheduled for Dilston Terrace will be dedicated to the King. All these were considered before deciding to provide Amble's 1000 school children with a commemorative mug as a lasting memento of this historic occasion.

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

Animal adoption scheme launched

Northumberland Wildlife Trust is calling on the public to help it protect two national treasures through its new animal adoption scheme.

Wildlife is disappearing at an alarming rate across the UK, but the Trust is committed to reversing that trend by creating 30% more space for nature. This will give wildlife more space to call home, recover and adapt to climate change.

As part of this commitment, the wildlife charity has launched its new Adopt an Animal adoption scheme. The scheme celebrates two iconic UK wildlife species - owls and hedgehogs.

By adopting either a hedgehog or an owl for £20, the money

raised will support important conservation work, such as managing nature reserves, creating new habitats and delivering educational activities to help more people understand how to protect these endangered animals.

The UK's owls are declining at an alarming rate with numbers falling dramatically since 2000. Since 2015, tawny owls have been added to the Amber List on the BTO Birds of Conservation Concern report: breeding and winter population have declined due to loss of woodland habitat and suitable trees for nesting.

Likewise, the UK hedgehog population is on the decline, with numbers dropping by up to 30% in urban areas and 50% in rural areas in the UK, since 2000. Urban development and rural hedgerow removal are causing hedgehogs to struggle to find somewhere to breed, hibernate and to find enough food to survive.

In addition, 335,000 hedgehogs are estimated to die on British roads each year, and thousands are taken to rescue centres with garden injuries and dog bites. Because of all these factors they are now listed as 'vulnerable' on Britain's Red List of animals of concern.

Visit www.nwt.org.uk/support-us/adopt-animal



Commercial fisherman fined for breaching fisheries legislation

At North Tyneside Magistrates Court on 22 June, Charles "Michael" Denton of Newbiggin by the Sea, was found guilty and sentenced for two breaches of national fisheries legislation.

This related to incidents in July 2022 when he failed to return 179 lobsters to the sea that were below the minimum landing size.

The case was brought by the Northumberland Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NIFCA) who manage the inshore fishery along our coastline.

During the trial, the court heard that on 18 July 2022 Mr Denton, owner/skipper of the commercial fishing vessel Talisman II BK176, was observed at sea by two Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Officers (IFCO's) from NIFCA setting conspicuous plastic boxes along with lobster pots off the coast of Cambois before returning to the port of Blyth. The two officers, later recovered these boxes and found 168 undersized lobsters stored inside. On the same day Mr Denton landed the remainder of his catch to a wholesaler in Blyth and on inspection this catch contained 11 lobsters beneath the conservation reference size.

Mr Denton had committed two offences, he pleaded not guilty to the first and guilty to the second.

After hearing evidence from two IFCO's and from Mr Denton, the bench found Mr Denton guilty of both offences. Mr Denton was sentenced to pay a fine of £1,000, a further £1,000 in prosecution cost and a victim surcharge of £400.

Nick Weir, the Lead Enforcement Officer for NIFCA, said: "The authority is pleased that the court recognises the importance of national fisheries legislation, Mr Denton's disregard for legislation designed to protect fish stocks is absolutely unacceptable. By preventing these lobsters reaching maturity and spawning he has endangered the long-term sustainability of the fishery affecting the entire fishing community."

"Fishing in Northumberland is an economically sensitive activity and of great social importance to our local heritage and character. NIFCA will vigorously pursue anyone who jeopardises the health of the fishery or fails to comply with our officers and legislation."

Northumberland IFCA

South Avenue leavers disco



Above: Evangeline, Jack and Jude at the leavers' disco

JCSC students in years 5 - 7 were invited to a Leavers Disco to celebrate and say a final farewell to the middle school building.

South Avenue will be closing down in September, in preparation for years 5-7 moving up to the high school before the school's new build planned for 2025.

The school hall and gym were transformed into a ballroom and a dancefloor.

There was a photobooth, buffet, sweets and even some leaving notebooks for the children to sign and put their photographs in.

The night involved lots of dancing and some great outfits - it was a blast!

The middle school building was built in Amble in 1949. The night was fantastic and a great send off for the middle school.

James Calvert Spence College

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Local in a big way

School art project a huge success

An art exhibition held at Amble Links First School was the culmination of a very successful art project, led by artist Katherine Renton, who attended the school as a pupil in the 1970s.

'Northumberland's Colourful Coast' is an initiative fully funded by the Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership, with the aim of using art to promote an appreciation of our coastal environment and wildlife within its community.

During the project, that ran over ten weeks, the Year 4 class were taken on trips to Alnwick, Warkworth and Bamburgh Castle where they learnt skills in sketching the castles. They also enjoyed a trip to the Farne Islands, courtesy of Serenity Farne Island Boat Tours, prior to creating their own clay models of the wildlife that they saw there. A visit to the beach by Cliff House included the opportunity to create land art, using found

materials on the beach, followed by an afternoon of birdwatching, led by the Space for Shorebirds team who provided binoculars for all the pupils.

The class were also treated to a visit to the Bailiffgate Museum and Gallery to view Katherine's recent solo art exhibition 'KEEP' which was the initial inspiration for the idea of a community art project with the school.

"It's been an absolute pleasure to work with Penguin Class and the staff at Amble Links First School," Katherine remarked, "The pupils have been beautifully behaved throughout and given 100% to every activity."

She explained, "At the beginning of the project the children were only able to identify the puffin as a local species, but on the Farne Islands trip, towards the end of the project, they were happy to point out gannets, razorbills, and many other species."



Amble Links Year 4 pupils with artist Katherine Renton

Head Teacher, Paul Heeley, said "From the outset, the children have absolutely loved being a part of this project. They have listened carefully and with interest to Katherine and learnt a range of new skills and techniques that have led to some excellent

quality artwork. The trips that Katherine arranged have been a real highlight for the children, offering them opportunities that we might not have been able to easily provide ourselves. The end of project exhibition showcasing the children's work was also a great success."

It is hoped that the children's exhibition will now be transferred to a shop window on Church St.

Katherine's exhibition 'Castle Coast' has just opened at the Newbiggin Maritime Centre and will run until the end of October.

Exasperation as 'backing' to protect wild verges comes too late for Amble

Northumberland County Council (NCC) says it is looking at ways to protect grass verges, just as a local group claims heavy handed mowing has destroyed 70 percent of a section of wildflower verge.

Council Leader Glen Sanderson recently visited a Hexham school to see an environmental project which included sewing wildflowers on verges. Afterwards he said, "There has been a lot of talk in the community about the mowing of our verges and I wanted to see first-hand the benefits they bring to our environment. While there is a need to cut verges for road safety reasons, protecting the natural environment is something very close to my heart and I will be exploring ways the Council can further protect these corridors for nature."

Sadly, for Amble and Warkworth, this expression of support comes too late for two wildlife areas.

After complaints that the wildflowers along the A1068 Rotary Way were obstructing visibility for users of an adjoining access track, NCC mowed along a 100 metre section, provoking exasperation from the Rotary Club of Amble and Warkworth.

A spokesperson for the Rotary Club told The Ambler they had not been made aware

of any visibility issues, which if they had, they might have been able to address. As a result of the mowing, Rotary say they are unlikely to replant the area.



Northumberland County Council has been criticised for destroying wildflowers on Rotary Way.

Rotary Way project

The spokesperson said: "In 2010, the Rotary Club of Amble and Warkworth made the development of Rotary Way, a project. To this end we have planted 20,000 crocus and 50 primroses on the sea side of the Way, and four hundred yards at each end of the Way have been planted as wildflower meadows."

"We have had the full support of NCC in our endeavours and have been

awarded a National Rotary prize in recognition of the way our input has improved the environment. We have successfully applied for thousands of pounds in grants to facilitate the project and have had invaluable help from local farmers, seed merchants and also Rotarians who have given many hours of their time in preparing planting and maintaining the wildflower meadows.

"The last part of the development of the Way, a 100 metre length at the Warkworth end of the Way was completed in 2021 and the first growth appeared last year (remember the poppies). This year saw the first flush of wild flowers."

However, The Ambler understands that NCC received complaints that the wildflowers were obstructing the visibility for users of a track which joins Rotary Way near a bend in the busy road.

The Rotary spokesperson said: "In response to the complaints, NCC have cut down all the wildflowers between the trackway and the apex of the bend looking towards Amble, and on the other side of the trackway looking towards Warkworth, have cut a four metre strip of the wildflowers up to the stone planter in front of the 30mph sign. This has destroyed seventy per cent of

the wildflower meadow at the Warkworth end of Rotary Way.

"The mowing took place in late June, before the wildflowers had set seed and using a mower which mulches grass into a pulp. As a consequence these wildflower areas will never recover and will rapidly return to wild grass."

"With a bit of notice we could have changed the nature of the of the wildflowers so they were thinner and lower, thereby improving the sight-line between the trackway and the problematic bend in the road."

"As it is, it is just not worth our time and expense to continue to maintain the small bit of wild flower meadow at the Warkworth end of Rotary Way, especially with NCC's approach to the wildflowers which were there."

Mowing on Percy Drive

Elsewhere in Amble, another patch of land has seen the council mowers cut down wildflowers and grasses. Reader Hugh Tindle has written to The Ambler complaining that an area on Percy Drive had been intensively mowed in the middle of June, and by doing so, NCC had destroyed a habitat full of wildlife. See letters p6.

NCC was contacted for comment, but have yet to respond.

Call to be careful with disposable BBQs

As the weather starts to heat up, Northumberland Wildlife Trust is issuing its annual plea for the public to be nature conscious and vigilant when out and about.

A spell without rain means many heathlands, moorlands and grasslands are 'tinder dry' and run the risk of catching fire from the tiniest hot ember or spark. Fire, which would leave the land scorched and nature without a home.

Last summer, some parts of the UK experienced the driest

weather since 1935. In this region it was exceptionally dry. The peat on Northumberland Wildlife Trust's Border Mires reserves were seriously affected as the sphagnum moss that covers peat turned white instead of green. This not only became a fire risk but it also affected the many birds, mammals and insects relying on the mosses for survival.

The wildlife charity is now asking visitors to its reserves in Newcastle, Northumberland and North Tyneside to help it by:

- Packing a picnic, not a disposable BBQ
- Only lighting BBQs or campfires in authorised locations, with a fire pit where there are fire extinguishers available
- Extinguishing cigarettes or matches and never throwing them onto the ground
- Taking litter home because discarded bottles and cans can cause fires
- Anybody spotting smoke or flames, should make sure they are safe, and then dial 999 immediately.

Update from Coquet Medical Centre



Doctor and nursing staff levels at the practice are now up to strength which means that appointments are a little easier to arrange.

There are now some days when there are available appointments after the 08.00 early morning rush so it is worth phoning a little later in the morning as same-day appointments may still be available.

There is an out of hours appointment facility available on a Tuesday evening between 18.00 and 20.00.

A patient survey has recently been completed. Securing an

appointment came up as the most pressing issue. Overall levels of satisfaction with treatment received was high. Staff at the practice are going through the responses and are committed to continual improvement of patient services.

NHS Health Checks for the 40 to 74 age group started this June. This is aimed at those who don't attend an annual medication review. This is a major undertaking involving a significant number of patients. Patients will be informed directly regarding an appointment over the coming months.

A COVID vaccination

booster programme for those over 75 years old was undertaken this Spring. This has now been completed.

Those wishing to play a part in helping the Practice improve the patient experience of health services might consider joining the Patient Participation Group (PPG). This is held every three months. Parents and younger people are under-represented and would be particularly welcome.

Details including minutes of previous meetings are on the Coquet Medical Group website: wellupnorth.co.uk/coquet-medical-group
Coquet Medical Group

An easy way to report potholes, streetlights and flytipping

A new online service for people to report problems on the county's streets has gone live.

Using FixMyStreet Pro, people can now photograph, locate and highlight an issue all by using their mobile phone.

Issues can be reported simply by going to nland.cc/fix on a mobile phone, computer, tablet or the council's website.

All reports go straight into the council's digital systems where they can be assessed, allocated for any necessary actions and if the user sets up an account, they can be informed of progress and completion.

The system will significantly improve communication with residents, help reduce duplicate reports on the same issue and even speed up responses by giving staff a precise location of where the problem is.

FixMyStreet Pro can be used to report a range of issues from potholes and faulty streetlights to abandoned vehicles and incidents of fly tipping.



Council Leader Glen Sanderson said, "We're so pleased to be launching this system which should revolutionise the way we deal with issues on our roads and footpaths.

"This new online tool is the most direct way to report anything to us that needs fixing, cleaning or clearing across the county.

"In a short few clicks, people can easily alert the council to an issue and receive an update once it's been resolved."

Allotment project for adults with learning difficulties

Border Links' Amble group have acquired an allotment, which they are planning to transform into a safe and welcoming space for their members to grow and maintain vegetables, fruit and flowers.

Border Links provides training and day care for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities. They work with, and for local people in their communities. They aim to

enable people with a learning disability to "play a part" and "get the most" out of daily life in their community. They do this by developing Border Links courses and community projects.

The Amble allotment will provide opportunities for members to work outdoors in a safe and inclusive space. They can learn new skills and improve their wellbeing through working together. The produce they grow

can be used to create nourishing meals which can help with food costs and healthy eating.

To learn more about our project or to get involved please get in touch with the office on 01289 305423 / 07900 252894 Our Facebook and Instagram pages show the work all our groups are involved in every week. Have a look at what they have all been doing.
www.borderlinks.co.uk

Robson Green delights Hauxley visitors



Robson Green and Alex Lister, NWT Druridge Bay Landscapes Manager. Image by Zoila Brozas.

Robson Green - actor, singer-songwriter, angler and TV presenter plus film crew - headed to Northumberland Wildlife Trust's Hauxley reserve and Wildlife Discovery Centre last weekend to record his second series of Robson Green's Weekend Escapes.

Robson was joined for the filming by Alex Lister, the wildlife charity's Druridge Bay Landscape Manager who will also appear in the programme, which is scheduled for broadcast on the BBC next January (2024).

What they filmed and what they talked about is all top secret

so the public will have to make sure they tune in to find out more.

Alex Lister, Northumberland Wildlife Trust's Druridge Bay Landscape Manager says:

"Robson's visit was another great boost for our reserve and Wildlife Discovery Centre.

"We hosted Springwatch for one week in June 2022 and are now all set to appear on TV screens next January.

Robson was an absolute delight to work with and was at home chatting to visitors and pausing for photographs around the reserve."

Amble Food Bank update

Amble Food Bank would like to thank our local communities for their continued generosity. We continue to be amazed by the amount of food donations that come in. We really do appreciate EVERY SINGLE item donated! A huge thank you also for all financial donations that we receive. As well as food bins at Amble and Hadston Co-ops, there is now one located at Amble Tesco Express. We rely solely on food and money donations. Without these we simply could not operate. So, thank you. And thank you to these supermarkets for their support.

Thank you also to local businesses and charities that support our cause. Special thanks go to Alexa's Canine Trust and to The Mad Jam Woman for their recent donations to AFB.

With inflation rising, we are now paying almost double for the paper bags that we use for food parcels. This is costing us almost £2000 a year on bags alone. If you have any spare paper shopping bags (the ones that hold a lot of weight), please drop these off in the Morrison's

cage or in the Co-op and Tesco food bins. Thank you.

With the increase in referrals to AFB, we now have to carry out regular large food shops. Should you wish to make a financial donation to help with this, cash or a cheque can be addressed to us and posted through the letter box at Trinity Methodist Church. Or you can do a bank transfer via: Amble Food Bank, sort code 77-20-04, account number 17925260. We are registered with HMRC, so if you pay tax you can Gift Aid any donations (email us for a form). We also have collection tins at the Co-op, The Farm bakery and The Boat Shed Gallery at Amble Harbour Village.

If you are in need, you can get a referral through an agency such as CAB or your Health Visitor. Or contact Northumberland Communities Together on 01670 620015, 9-6pm.

Any general enquiries may be emailed to amblefb@gmail.com.

Many thanks again for your ongoing support.

Amble Food Bank

Blister Pack recycling issues

Earlier this year St Cuthbert's Church announced that they would collect Blister Packs for recycling (*Issue #138 p4*). This fitted in with the Church's policy of exploring a deeper environmental approach.

Unfortunately, it became apparent that Superdrug could not handle the volumes of packaging we were taking to them.

Despite our efforts to secure an alternative channel, it seems these can only be recycled through a pharmacist, and the scheme is aimed at individual low volume 'drop off' of personal packs. In addition, the recycling centres charge the pharmacies for this facility, which does not cater for large volumes.

St Cuthbert's are sorry for any confusion this has caused but at present, we can no longer offer a blister pack recycling service.

St Cuthbert's Church

Another successful Mauretania Day



Above: Amble Sword dancers and the Morgan cars

Below: Jayess Newbiggin Brass Band



Mauretania Day was held on Sunday 2 July. It was a very successful day with performances from Tribe Zuza, Amble Sword, Jayess Newbiggin Brass Band, Amble's Harbour Lights Choir and the Boffs singing selection of Byrds songs, sorry nothing to do with the Bord Waalk!

The day had one disadvantage - where a strong breeze threaten to blow away the gazebo. This was prevented with the help of John Lee, Kevin Henderson and Paul from Geordie Banger. The day rounded off with Café Church led by Sister Penny Horseman.

On display was a selection of Morgan cars and two cars of MG nature.

The visitors appeared to enjoy the sites and entertainment. It was pleasing to think of the several musical genres on view throughout the day being enjoyed by many of the public.

Next year's Mauretania Day takes place on Sunday 1 July 2024 and we are already looking to another enjoyable event. Thank you to all came to the event.

*Bart Rippon
Amble Harbour Village
Co-ordinator*

Amble WI: What do we do?



Our year begins in April, with election of the committee and renewal of membership. We pass our thanks on to outgoing committee members, welcome new ones and wish our members who have left to follow a different path our best wishes.

We have had very interesting talks on Bee Keeping, clothing styles through the ages and our own Mayor telling us about his life as a sub mariner. Some members have ventured to Bailiffgate museum for an interesting talk and exhibition by local artist Katherine Renton, a very informative and eye-opening tour of Hauxley Nature Reserve and a fascinating guided tour of the Amble Art Exhibition.

Future trips are being planned to places such as Howick Hall, Raby Castle, Linden Hall Christmas Market and along with regular coffee mornings and evening meals out, we have plenty of time for a chat.

Members support Amble Food Bank with donations each month, and at present some are knitting more poppies to revamp our display in the town square for Remembrance Day. We will be supporting the RNLI by baking cakes for their Harbour Day this August, and we are starting to prepare for another Autumn/Christmas Fair which we hope will be as successful as last year.

A number of members meet up to do a Litter Pick at various sites around Amble, along with keeping up with and supporting current environmental issues. We also collect used postage stamps to donate to the RNIB for their fundraising efforts.

We will be participating in our own class at Warkworth Show, along with some members entering other classes individually and hopefully winning some prizes.

As you can gather, we are quite a diverse and busy bunch, with everyone contributing in their own way. Amble WI are moving their monthly meetings from the Masonic Hall to the Parish Hall, from August 2023.

Clare O'Brien Amble WI

Praise and Picnic

Sunday 13 August sees the return of the successful Praise and Picnic event.

Invite your friends and family along to the Little Shore green, Amble. Bring your rug or chair and a little something to eat that you may want to share. The Customs House tea room is close by for drinks.

1.30 pm Music and singing, headed by our own Amble Pop-Up Christian Band

2.30 pm Bedington Salvation Army Band will play for us. There will be opportunities to sing along with them too.

The weather should be with us. If not then the event will take place at Trinity Methodist Church, 26 Percy St, Amble, NE65 0AG, five minutes walk away from the Little Shore. All are welcome.

Coquet Churches Together

Season of creation (creation tide)

Welcome to this year's Season of Creation in the Christian Church calendar, from Sept 1 until October 4.

The 2023 theme for the Season of Creation is 'Let justice and peace flow'. This theme invites us to take up climate and ecological justice and to speak out with and for communities most impacted by climate injustice and biodiversity loss. This theme invites us to change our attitudes and actions and let justice and peace flow.

The Season of Creation and our call to action is like a river that flows with justice and peace. Just as a river brings life-sustaining water to the land it passes through, our call to action brings attention to the urgent need for justice and peace in our world.

Here are some simple lifestyle changes that you can make to help promote justice and peace for the environment:

- Reduce your water usage: Just as a river needs a certain amount of water to flow properly, our planet's water resources are finite. Simple actions such as taking shorter showers, fixing leaks and planting trees can help conserve water.

- Reduce your energy usage: Just as a river needs a certain amount of energy to flow, our modern lives depend on energy for power and transportation but dependence on fossil fuels is damaging the environment. Turn off lights and electronics when not in use, use energy-efficient light bulbs, and drive less or use public transport.

- Reduce your waste: Just as a river can become clogged with debris, or our beaches choked with plastic, our planet is becoming overwhelmed with waste. Use reusable bags and water bottles, compost and recycle.

- Support sustainable practices: Just as a river depends on its surroundings for health and vitality, our planet depends on sustainable practices to maintain a healthy environment. Buy locally grown produce, use eco-friendly products, and support companies with strong environmental policies.

- Educate and advocate: Just as a river can benefit from community efforts to protect and preserve it, our planet can benefit from collective action. By educating ourselves and others about environmental issues and advocating for policies and practices that promote sustainability, we can work to ensure a healthy and just planet for all.

St. Cuthbert's Parish Church

Lifeboat Day

Come and join us for our Annual Amble Lifeboat Day on Sunday 27 August in front of the Lifeboat Station, Radcliffe Quay.

The fun day starts at 10am with the Opening Service. This is a fun day out for all the family includes the Harley Davidson motorbikes in the Harbour Car Park, and King's Own Yeomanry on the Quay. Meet the crew and watch them on a lifeboat exercise in the morning and afternoon. Many stalls for adults and children and entertainment during the day. Look out for the RNLI mascot Stormy Stan who will be around.

First prize in the grand raffle is a painting, kindly donated by Luke McTaggart a talented young local artist and lots of other prizes. Tickets are already



on sale, the draw will take place in the afternoon.

Coffee, tea and home bakes will be served upstairs in the boathouse which has wonderful views.

If you have any unwanted gifts etc. and would like to donate them to our Tombola/Raffle, you can drop them into the Queen Street Convenience store or contact us on Facebook Amble Lifeboat Fundraisers or phone/text 07434 544924 or 07860 219716. All donations will be very welcome.

What a weekend for the Castles and Islands 24 hour challenge

This year's Castles and Islands race was a glorious affair, with eight yachts and 16 runners taking part. The annual event is organised by Coquet Yacht Club, and sees teams of runners and sailors competing to be the fastest to complete the route in 24 hours.

The race takes in five castles in total; runners leave from Alnwick and run 16 miles, past Warkworth Castle to Coquet Yacht Club at Amble, where they board their yachts. After circumnavigating Coquet Island in a clockwise direction the teams then choose their own route to include Dunstanburgh, Bamburgh and Lindisfarne castles.

The race was officially started at the gates of Alnwick Castle at 6pm on Friday 23 June by Ian Gibson and his wife Gill. Ian recently retired as Treasurer



Albany Express was overall winner

of the Coquet Yacht Club after many decades of service.

Some teams decided to have the same two runners for the whole race, other teams sent different runners ashore for each leg, only one boat had each crew member run a leg of the race for full multi skill participation.

One team sadly suffered engine problems and had to withdraw, but under what was described as feeling like Caribbean heat, all remaining boats were back at Amble and finished the race by 1.30pm on Saturday.

A spokesperson from Coquet Yacht Club thanked all the competitors, some of whom had flown in from the Netherlands, and the sponsors who had donated and provided services. "The event couldn't happen without the time and efforts given by all our volunteers, the committee who arrange the whole event and the marshals who spend their night looking after the safety of the competitors from remote locations."

Castles and Islands Challenge 2024 is already in the planning – check out their Facebook page if



Sixteen runners took part

you are interested in sponsorship or taking part.

This year's all round winner was the Lene Solo team, the fastest corrected sailing time was from Harriette Express, and the Challenge Cup and therefore overall winner was Albany Express.

Dancers receive awards



An awards evening was held at the Radcliffe Club for pupils at Carol Gray School of Dance who recently took their Examination with Northern Counties.

The dancers are aged from four years upwards and this was their first examination. They gained a total of 21 Honours, and 13 Honours with a Distinction.

Monthly writing group at library

Creative juices will be flowing in Amble once again thanks to a volunteer stepping in to run a writing group in the town library.

Northumberland Library Service volunteer Ian Williams is a keen writer himself and stepped forward so like-minded people can get together in a supportive environment.

The first meeting at the Middleton Street library will be on Wednesday, September 27 from 10am to noon and then on the third Wednesday of the month.

Ian said: "All are welcome whatever they are writing - prose, poetry, flash fiction, plays, short stories or novels - regardless of their writing experience. Meetings will include a monthly writing prompt and a brief writing exercise, as a friendly way to get ideas flowing."

"It has been three years since there has been a club like this in Amble and it's great that there will be somewhere they can share their writing, gain support and develop their ideas and skills, free from any critique."

Foster volunteers for Guide Dogs

Have you ever thought you would love to have a dog but work full time? Would you like to make a real difference to the lives of people living with sight loss? Then this could be the perfect opportunity for you. Guide dogs are looking for volunteer fosterers

As a Training Dog fosterer, your role is to take the dog to 'school' for training in the morning and collect them before 5pm during the working week, so it fits in perfectly. At the weekends we spend time doing 'normal' dog activities like walks, free runs and lots of play!

You are not expected to do much training with the dog, merely encourage and maintain behaviours they are working on in school, such as loose lead walking, crossing the road or walking up and down stairs.

Nadia is a volunteer fosterer, who works full time, she said: "I have my own pet dog and had been thinking for a while about getting another to keep him company; however I wasn't sure I would have the time and there were the costs to think about too. I became involved with Guide Dogs after seeing an advert on social media

appealing for fosterers and after I made enquiries, went on a one-day training course. I have since fostered three dogs. It has been a great way to have a dog without the associated costs and be involved in a great charity.

As a fosterer myself, I would definitely urge people to get involved. You will get all the benefits of having a loving pet at home, without the financial commitments and other burdens that can come with having your own dog. Guide Dogs provide everything when the dog moves in, food, bedding, lead, and vets' bills are also covered, and they are always on hand to support you. If you want to go away on holiday, the team will arrange for holiday cover too.

"At the end of the process the dog will leave to start their next chapter. While this is the hardest part of being a fosterer, it helps to remember that you are directly involved in the process to make a significant difference for someone with sight loss, and you can then get another dog to take care of!"

For more information: bit.ly/4320tFm



Two hundred races but Tracey takes it all in her stride

Congratulations to Tracey Sample who has competed in her 200th multi sport race.

Tracey who usually competes in road triathlons, took part in the cross triathlon world championships in blazing 31 degree heat in Ibiza at the beginning of May. Cross tri is 1km sea swim, 21km mountain bike and 6km trail run.

The race took in some spectacular scenery but was described as 'a brutally hard bike course with rocky uphill climbs and technical descents.' It was harder still for Tracey due to an injury to her hip and shoulder, which meant the swimming section had to be done with one arm.

Despite worrying she would be last, Tracey finished in 12th



place, and had time to rest before her next challenge; the European Sprint Triathlon Championships in Madrid at the beginning of June.

The weather again joined in, this time thunderstorms caused torrential rain that was ankle deep in the streets within 10 minutes of the storm starting.

Tracey told the Ambler, "The organisers couldn't guarantee the water quality in the Cassa de Campo lake so the race was changed from a swim, bike, run (triathlon) format to a run, bike, run (duathlon), but it meant we got to run up the hill to the palace and old town instead of biking up. Swimming is my stronger discipline so didn't do as well as I'd hoped but it was great fun and I finished in 18th place."

New autumn courses with ADEA

Amble and District Education Association (ADEA) runs two 8 week terms per academic year. We meet on Wednesdays at the Amble

Masonic Lodge, 10am - 12noon. We cover a wide variety of subjects and are proud of the quality and appeal of our lecturers. If we are

new to you, you are most welcome to come along for a free taster session on October 4th!

Each term's fees are £30-£35

(this includes tea /coffee and biscuits). For any queries, please contact Terry: 07401978418 or Rosie: 01665 713967



MS Society Alnwick & District are hosting FREE seated (or standing) supported exercise and relaxation classes for those living with MS in collaboration with Active Northumberland.



These friendly and fun classes are run by Jayne from Active Northumberland and Sophie from MS Research and Relief Fund.

Every Friday morning, 10.30 am to 11.15 am

Willowburn Sports Centre, Willowburn Avenue, Alnwick, NE66 2JH

For more information please contact alnwick@mssociety.org.uk or telephone 07581 460 207

Read more on the MS Society UK website: <https://www.mssociety.org.uk/care-and-support/local-support/local-groups/alnwick-district-group>



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Duke of Gloucester flies in to launch bird sculpture trail



Above: the Duke met artists and organisers of the Amble Bord Waalk sculpture trail project, and children who had taken part in some of the associated workshops. Photo by Ivor Rackham



Left: inside the Sphere sculpture. Photo by Bart Rippon, Above: meeting the artists. Photo by Vivienne Dalglish. Below, right: photos by Ivor Rackham



Artist Rob Mulholland describes how he created Sphere. Photo by Ivor Rackham. More photos on our website.



HRH the Duke of Gloucester officially opened the Amble Bord Waalk sculpture trail at a sundrenched ceremony on the Braid. His Royal Highness arrived by helicopter, landing on Amble Links, where he was met by Her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland.

On arriving at the Shorebase Trust, the pair were introduced to Diana Barks, High Sheriff of Northumberland; Catherine Seymour, Northumberland Civic Head; Craig Weir, Amble Mayor, Abby Briggs, representing Anne Marie Trevelyan MP, and Julia Aston and Andrew Gooding from Amble Development Trust.

The Duke and the Duchess met trustees from Amble Development Trust and were shown a presentation about the Amble Bord Waalk sculpture trail, after which they walked to see two sculptures; Sphere by Rob Mulholland, and Tern by Jon Voss.

On learning of the immersive intention with the Sphere sculpture, the Duke duly stepped inside, and was interested to know from the artist more about the design and manufacturing process.

The Duke then met artists Rod Harris, Katrina Porteus, John Kefala-Kerr, Jonnie Mitchie and Frances Anderson, hearing about their sculptures, poetry and soundscape. Matthew Connolly from Amble Youth project described the work some of the artists had done with local children.

At the Bird Song sculpture the Duke and the Duchess were greeted by children from Amble Links, Amble First and JCSC. The Duke then gave a short speech in which he said he hoped the people of Amble and visitors would enjoy the trail, the birds, nature and the environment. He then cut the ribbon and was presented with a porcelain bird box made by artist Rod Harris.

Julia Aston, Director of Amble Development Trust told the Ambler: "We were delighted that the Duke was willing to open the trail and glad that it has been such a lovely day. We are pleased to announce that the app and the website are now up and running. It's taken a long time to get to this point, but we hope the finished trail brings a lot of enjoyment."

Anna Williams