



The Ambler

Amble's Community Newspaper

Issue 144 Feb/Mar 2024

Robson's seal of approval

TV star's new show features Amble businesses



Robson Green and his
sisters Joanna and Dawn,
with Steven Banks of
Puffin Cruises. Image: BBC
See page 3

County Council submits plans for affordable social housing

Plans have been submitted by Northumberland County Council for affordable social housing for older people in Amble.

Four applications have been submitted to replace council owned garages with a total of 11 bungalows.

A consultation was held before Christmas to gauge public support for the proposals. (See Issue #143 p3)

The plans are for three two bedroom bungalows on Andrew Drive: Ref: 24/00144/CCD;

Four one and two bedroom

bungalows on Kennedy Road: Ref: 24/00145/CCD;

Three one and two bedroom bungalows on St Lawrence Avenue, Ref: 24/00146/CCD;

One two bedroom bungalow on Windsor Terrace, Ref: 24/00147/CCD

All the bungalows will be designed for the over 55s, with accessible accommodation and energy efficient features. See NCC's planning website for more details.

The number of houses in Amble continues to increase - see page 4 for more on this subject.



Welfare MUGA to be upgraded



One of the two Multi User Games Areas (MUGAs) at the Welfare

Northumberland County Council and partners including Amble Development Trust, are working hard to have the multi-use games area at the Welfare upgraded to a Playzone – a modern facility for outdoor sports and activities.

Who can use the Playzone?

Everyone! The Playzone is yours, for use by individuals, groups and clubs in this community. The space will be available to book for private use.

This project is part of the Playzone scheme funded by the

Premier League, The FA and Government via The Football Foundation.

What will the Playzone have?

It will have a new, all-weather playing surface, improved fencing, as well as

improved floodlighting.

Would you like more information?

Contact Amble Development Trust: 01665 712 929 Email: info@ambledevelopmenttrust.org.uk

Amble inconvenienced

Northumberland County Council appears to have spent too many pennies, leaving the public in Amble waiting in a queue.

Despite an announcement last spring that the county council had approved £1.35m over three years to refurbish all their public toilets, increasing costs and the extent of works carried out so far have caused delays, meaning Amble will not see refurbishment work this winter as promised.

Readers may remember The Ambler was told that work would be carried out on both Amble's public toilets this winter. (Issue #133 p5).

When we asked for an update, a spokesperson told us that the whole project is now being reassessed during this year's budget.

The spokesperson said: "The programme to improve all 54 public conveniences in Northumberland has delivered a number of improvements so far and the quality of refurbishments has been well received throughout the programme. However, achieving those good standards has taken longer and has been more expensive than anticipated due to the comprehensive nature of the works required and the inflationary pressures in the



building trade.

"Both inflation and building costs have slowed our programme but, unlike many other councils, we have spent very significant amounts of money on our public toilets

improvement and cleansing so far, and we will be looking at the final detail of the programme going forward, including Amble, once the budget process is complete."

Anna Williams

'People forget what's on our doorstep'

Actor Robson Green has delighted his Amble fans by taking a cruise around Coquet Island, and having a go at surfing, in his latest TV show.

The star filmed one segment of his Weekend Escapes series, alongside his two sisters. They took a boat trip and learned about the puffins and Roseate terns on Coquet Island from Puffin Cruise owners Dave Gray and Steven Banks.

Robson and his sisters Joanna and Dawn thoroughly enjoyed themselves, with Robson recommending a trip around the island for a family weekend event.

Robson said "People forget what's on our doorstep. Sometimes the marine life here is off the scale."

Steven told The Ambler that he and David were thrilled to be involved with the series. "It was a great feeling to find out he wanted to feature us in his new series of Weekend Escapes. It didn't really sink in until we saw him walking along the quay with his team to meet us and begin setting up for filming."



Robson Green, Sarah Hunter and surf instructor Amber Nolan at Warkworth beach. Image BBC

News soon spread that the popular actor was at the harbour, and Robson was happy to pose for selfies and sign autographs.

In another episode, Robson and England rugby player Sarah Hunter had great fun learning the basics of body boarding and surfing with Jon Nolan and his daughter Amber, who

run Northside Surf. It was a lovely sunny day but the sea was calm, meaning conditions were not ideal for surfing. Jon told us, "Robson was just like one of the guys, laughing and joking around on a lesson. I was really pleased we were able to get Sarah to stand on her board despite the tiny waves."

Lorna Watkinson of Rainbow Pottery Painting, Morwick Dairy, Woodland Chase glamping at Old Felton, and Hauxley Nature Reserve also feature in the same programme. Watch both episodes on iPlayer (BBC2): Robson Green's Weekend Escapes Series 2 Episodes 10 and 14.



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Amble Town Council plan to sell land for housing

Amble Town Council is proposing to sell land it owns to a housing developer, with the proceeds possibly going towards supporting a community building.

An outline proposal for 12 flats and 11 houses on the site of the old coal yard at the bottom of the Wynd was submitted to Northumberland County Council at the beginning of January. If planning permission is granted, Amble Town Council will sell the land to Amble Homes, who would develop the accommodation.

In a statement on their website, the Town Council say: “Amble Town Council is delighted to announce that an ‘Option to Buy’ subject to planning permission has been agreed for the land just off the bottom of the Wynd including the overgrown scrubland and the redundant fenced area within the allotments. Amble Homes has been working with us for a while and are now preparing an outline planning application to build some smaller homes/apartments as well as some town houses here preferably for permanent residence.”

A mix of one and two bedroom flats, and three bedroom houses are proposed on the site.

The council hopes this development comprising of one and two bedroom flats, and three bedroom houses will help locals, and especially young people to stay in the area.

Current allotment holders have been assured they will not be affected and will still be able to access their gardens.

In the statement the council say they have not decided what they would spend the money on, but in minutes of their



The old coal yard is at the bottom of the Wynd

December 2023 meeting, they do identify a specific project: “A statement has been drafted for residents which outlines the reasons for doing this which includes addressing the desperate need for smaller properties and using the funds to support a community building.”

“The council has undertaken all the processes required of a Town Council, including inviting other interested parties and having the land independently valued. We cannot divulge that information at present as the transaction remains business in confidence.

they clearly would have a vested interest in the application being passed. The spokesperson told us the council itself would not comment, although individual members could comment on the application if they wanted.

Number of houses in Amble continues to increase

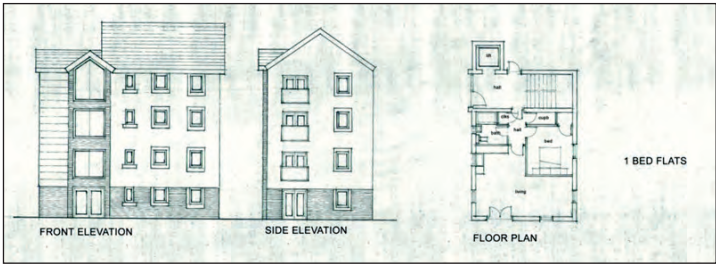
The plans will add to the large number of recent developments in the Friendliest Port. Northumberland County Council’s Local Plan identified that Amble required 540 additional homes between 2016 and 2036. That number has already been vastly exceeded, with 776 homes already built or being finished as of the beginning of 2024. A further 666 homes have also received outline planning permission, bringing the total to over 250% of the identified need. (See chart.)

Population has fallen

In 2023 The Ambler identified that despite the huge increase in new housing, the population of Amble has fallen suggesting that those buying properties in the town are either not residents, or perhaps already live here.

The coal yard development joins Northumberland Estates’ plans on Braid Hill for 98 homes and Northumberland County Council’s 11 bungalows, bringing the number of proposed homes still to be decided by planners to 132.

For more information on the coal yard plans, see Northumberland County Council’s planning website. Ref 23/04659/OUT
Anna Williams



A mix of one and two bedroom flats, and three bedroom houses are proposed on the site

Land ‘is not public land’

The Ambler understands that if a local authority sells public land, the land should be valued, and advertised for sale for two consecutive weeks. The authority should ensure it gets the best return that can be reasonably expected.

We asked the council if they had done this, and how much the coal yard land is worth. A spokesperson told us:

“The coal yard is not public land but a brownfield site. We can confirm that access from The Wynd to the allotments and round to West Avenue will remain accessible by the public. The council anticipates that access to the area will also be improved as a result of the development.”

We also asked if Amble Town Council would be commenting as a statutory consultee, given

New Housing in Amble (Jan 2024)

Chart showing number of dwellings built in Amble versus the number required in the 2022 Northumberland Local Plan

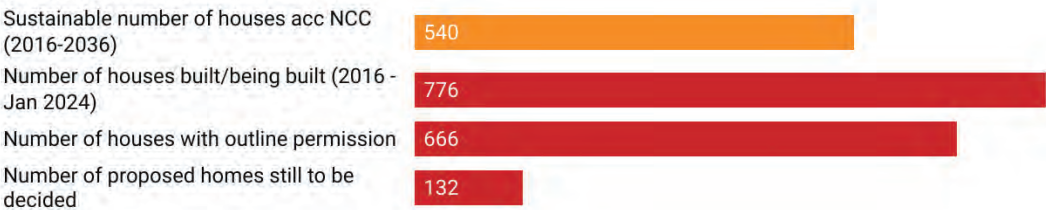


Chart: The Ambler • Created with Datawrapper

Poet in residence at Hauxley

The team at Northumberland Wildlife Trust's Hauxley Wildlife Discovery Centre has welcomed local author Paul Mein as its first ever Poet in Residence.

Paul, who now lives in Warkworth grew up in Newcastle's West End before embarking on a professional life in education, first as a teacher in local comprehensives then as a lecturer and education inspector. He also has extensive experience in running poetry workshops, directing and performing.

Since returning to Northumberland in 2018, much of Paul's work has focused on North East landscapes and characters, with his collections: 'In quiet Places,' 'The language of Sands' and 'Singularities,' reflecting this passion. He has also set up Writers Live groups in Amble and Alnwick.

Paul is now on a mission to get visitors to the Hauxley nature reserve sharing their wonderful experiences of the site through workshops and open-air performances. A number of poetry boxes will be installed in the wildlife watching hides

for people to share their 'wild' experiences with others.

Frances Smiles, Northumberland Wildlife Trust Events Officer says, "Our events, with Paul at the helm, will give us even more opportunities to the stunning Northumberland coastline and all the wildlife on our wonderful Hauxley reserve."

"I am sure many people will develop an even deeper appreciation of the natural world via Paul's poetry and literature, so why not come along and find out for yourself."

Author Paul says, "I am delighted to be appointed as the first poet in residence for Hauxley Wildlife Discovery Centre. Hauxley reserve and the surrounding area inspire so much of my own writing I want to encourage people to enjoy and respond in a similar way to this unique environment."

Paul will be hosting an event - a walk around the Hauxley reserve while reading a selection of his landscape and nature inspired poetry on Saturday 9 March, between 1- 3pm.

For more information visit www.nwt.org.uk/events

Appeal for more firefighters

Northumberland Fire and Rescue (NRFS) is appealing for more on-call firefighters

Kerry Shotton is Station Manager with responsibility for nine on-call stations across Northumberland. He has been an on-call firefighter at Amble Community Fire Station for eight years and is using his experience to promote the role around in Northumberland, and to put out an appeal for more on-call firefighters.

Kerry says "Over time, I have not only responded to incidents within my local community, I have also been afforded opportunities to carry out key prevention work including Safe and Wellbeing visits, which involves educating and engaging with local schools."

What is an on-call firefighter?

An on-call firefighter is expected to respond to their designated station within eight minutes. Historically that meant you had to live within eight minutes of an on-call fire station. However, there are volunteers who work near an on-call station, responding during the daytime only - so help can now be offered by those who don't actually live in the area.

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service is committed to



Kerry Shotton

ensuring that opportunities to become an on-call firefighter are more available. They provide additional training courses to allow for greater accessibility and flexibility.

On-call firefighters have to commit to being available for a specified number of hours per week and to also attend a two-hour evening training session each week.

Further information is available on the NRFS website: www.northumberlandfireandrescue.gov.uk/on-call-firefighter-jobs.

Look out for future key safety messages from Kerry, and learn more about Amble's Community Fire Station crew.



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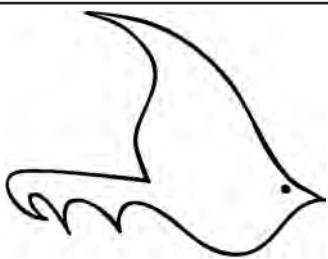
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#144 - 5 Jan	#147 - 21 Jun
#145 - 23 Feb	#148 - 30 Aug
#146 - 19 Apr	#149 - 1 Nov

On spring and secrets

Spring is on its way, all being well. Of course, environmentally all is not necessarily well, and this may explain the number of nature-based articles in this edition. It's interesting just how many stories, projects and events on that subject you told us about for this edition.

Keeping information away from the public might not always be prudent as it tends to get people's backs up. We see this in the ongoing saga of the Coble Quay walkway (See p17). Who knows, in the future there may even be a TV drama about it.

Speaking of TV dramas, we were reminded of a visit back in 2016, from a certain Post Office CEO to celebrate Amble Post Office's award for 'Best Improved Branch in the UK' (See Issue #101 p14). Ms Vennells even described Queen Street and the harbour developments as "England's best kept secret." And it looks like she knew quite a bit about secrets.



Paula Vennells visiting Amble PO, back in 2016 Photo: Andrew Mounsey

WHAT YOU SAY...

>> more letters on p8

Thank you Amble from Revd John

On 14 November I reluctantly stepped down from my post and role as Priest in Charge at St Cuthbert's, Amble. It was a huge wrench for me to leave the work which I have very much loved.

I have been very fortunate to be part of a very friendly community. My church wardens Mack, Lesley and more recently Wendy, our treasurer Mike and the PCC members have been very supportive. My work in church has been made much easier by those around me. I wish to thank David our verger and Beverley our organist for their assistance and help. I have been greatly helped by our worship team and I also wish to thank the very many who volunteer for jobs in and around the church and church hall. I have benefitted from working

with Mothers Union and men's group members.

As well as my own church flock I have made many pals in the wider community and I thank them for their friendship. I have valued the links with our sister churches in the ecumenical partnership Coquet Churches Together including my friends at Hauxley Chapel. I owe a debt of thanks to those in our local schools especially the heads, staff and governors, Amble Youth Project, Northumberland Theatre Company, Amble and Warkworth Rotary, Amble Lifeboat, the local businesses including cafes, pubs and restaurants, Amble Sword Team, local funeral directors, not forgetting our Mayor Craig Weir, the town councillors and the county councillors and

Amble Development Trust and of course my lovely neighbours in Straffen Court.

This has been an intense six and a half years for me. Sometimes life has been rather challenging such as during the Coronavirus Pandemic when the government forced the closure of all churches in the land.

However, when I reflect on my time here, I realise that I have been greatly blessed. I will leave with many happy memories of my time in Amble, the town I have learnt to call my own.

I wish to record my grateful thanks to everyone who has contributed to my positive experience here in any way whatsoever.

Thank you, Amble.

John McDermott
Hauxley

Could the Duke do the 'right thing'?

There is a need in Amble for accommodation for those who are not healthy enough to enjoy full independence but not in need of fulltime care. Prolonging healthy independence is not only the right thing to do but also the most cost effective.

An important component for healthy living is to live within a neighbourhood like this proposed development could be. What can possibly go wrong? As it stands, buyer's greed for personal gain is what will prevent the stated long-term objective for the development to be a Lifetime Neighbourhood unless the terms of sale incorporate legally

binding use restrictions for primary residence only and prohibiting second home and business use.

It is not too late for Amble to reverse the course it is on but the will to do so appears to be non-existent. We must learn from Cornwall who are doing too little too late.

Behind every threat lies an opportunity. In this case, a golden one for the Duke, through his representatives, to take the initiative and incorporate a clause in the sale of each property restricting it for primary home use only. It would cost them nothing and would enhance their reputation. If this precedent

was repeated for future developments, it would follow that the depth of workforce expertise would be strengthened which in turn would encourage companies to choose Amble for a base thereby reducing dependence on tourism and encourage families to make Amble their home.

For the sake of future generations, have the courage to do the obvious and right thing. Put Amble on track for a Lifetime Neighbourhood.

Douglas Temple,
Amble.

Planning Ref. 23/04183/
FUL Land south of the Gut.
Amble.

Cash boost to help young people improve the environment



Photo by Liz Heard

Young people in the region are set to have a great 2024 thanks to a fabulous cash boost. Ambitious plans to improve the environment from the Tyne to the Scottish Borders will be introduced and spearheaded by young people, and it's all thanks to a scheme which has brought funding into the area.

Northumberland Wildlife Trust was among 22 charities to successfully bid for funding from the Blue Influencers Scheme, and is being awarded £20,000 a year for three years.

The Blue Influencers Scheme is a groundbreaking project from UK outdoor education charity The Ernest Cook Trust, with the ambition to support young people from underserved communities and those living

in deprived, coastal, estuary and riverside locations. These young people, aged 10 to 14, with the support of their Blue Mentor, will create and run social action schemes to improve the environment of their schools, neighbourhoods and communities, with specific focus on coastal areas around Amble and Blyth and nearby rivers.

The £2.25 million scheme is being match-funded by The Ernest Cook Trust and the #iwill Fund. Its ambition is to engage more than 4,000 young people as 'Blue Influencers', as well as over 15,000 community members across England.

The scheme is entirely youth-led. Additional funds of up to £5,000 will be available for specific projects, and again the

Youth Advisory Board members will approve these awards.

Ed Ikin, Chief Executive of The Ernest Cook Trust says, "Young people are often the most passionate about the environment and are very aware of the issues we face with climate change. The Blue Influencers Scheme will give them the funding, platform and tools they need to make positive changes to benefit their entire community."

"We were pleased to select Northumberland Wildlife Trust to join the Blue Influencers Scheme and are excited to see just what the young people come up with."


Liz Heard, Northumberland Wildlife Trust's acting Wild City Manager says, "We're thrilled to be joining the Blue Influencer

Scheme to support young people as they create their own projects that help our coastline and rivers. From our previous work, we know that young people in the north east are passionate about protecting our oceans and cleaning up our waterways so wildlife can thrive.

"The Blue Influencer Scheme offers these young people the opportunity to use their passion, hobbies and creativity to make a real difference through their chosen project."

Any teachers or youth leaders working with young people aged 10 - 14 who wish to get involved in the Blue Influencer Scheme should contact demmi.robinson@northwt.org.uk

For more information, visit www.nwt.org.uk



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Amble artist stages new exhibition after Scottish success



Above: "By the river, early Spring" by Luke McTaggart
Right: "Roots" by Gillian Lee-Smith

Amble artist Luke McTaggart has a new exhibition of work on at Alnwick Playhouse, fresh off the back of his success in being part of a prestigious Scottish exhibition.

'The Morwick Paintings' comprises a dozen of his paintings at the Playhouse Gallery in Alnwick.

Luke said "These paintings explore the twisting and turning

landscape of this hidden corner of Northumberland. I'm sure lots of Amble folk will recall happy memories of playing down at the Old Mill in Morwick when they were kids. It's a place I love to paint at, and this body of work captures the location over the course of several seasons".

The exhibition comes off the back of his success in being

accepted into the prestigious Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Watercolour Annual Exhibition, which runs until February 6 at the Royal Scottish Academy on Princes Street in Edinburgh.

Luke said "I was really pleased to have a piece included in such a huge show, which had 377 works in total. It was a great and slightly daunting feeling to know that my work was hanging inside a building with such a rich artistic heritage".

You can see Luke's exhibition at the Playhouse Gallery, located upstairs in the Alnwick Playhouse until Sat 16 March.

Luke was not the only local success at the Edinburgh exhibition. Gillian Lee-Smith from Widdrington exhibited her evocative mixed-media piece "Roots" inspired by the grounds of Belsay Hall.

Gillian's painting was also awarded first prize at the 2023 Woodhorn Museum Open Exhibition.



WHAT YOU SAY...

>> more letters on p6

Citizen scientists wanted for Coquet

Water quality and water pollution have been the subjects of many news stories recently. Only 14% of rivers in England have good ecological status. Warkworth and Amble are proud to be involved in a Citizens Science project, as part of the Coquet Rivers Action Group.

The Environment Agency are supplying us with water testing kits to gather information on the health and status of the River Coquet. Data will be recorded and coordinated with other areas

all along the river, with a view to identifying and rectifying issues. We will also be liaising with The Rivers Trust and Northumbrian Water and any other interested parties.

If you are interested in the project, whether it be as a recreational river user, a wildlife enthusiast or anything else, please get in touch. We'd love to hear from you.

Lynne Russell
warkworthgreenmatters@gmail.com

Jimmy Nickalls

The last edition of the Ambler contained a feature about Jimmy Nickalls and a photo of two children at his grave in Amble Cemetery (#143 p19).

I remember he and his wife had the busy fish and chip shop at the end of Broomhill Street with a little general shop and post office next door. This was pre-war.)

I don't know anything about his 1920s soccer career at Chelsea FC but I remember watching him score a lovely goal in a Northern Alliance football match for Amble in the mid-thirties.

They had four sons who all

did well. Jim who married Audrey Priest, was an accountant, who was also a member of Sunderland F.C. for a while. Rob was in finance and with Sir John Hall, was involved in the planning and building of the Metro Centre in Gateshead. Sadly, he died as a young man, but I believe there is a building named after him at the centre.

Alan worked for an engineering firm in Tyneside, he lives in Warkworth and his youngest son Derek has an accountancy business in Bridge Street, Amble.
George Young, Amble

Exciting environmental projects

I was interested to read in the last issue of the Ambler that, thanks to a new grant, the Northumberland Wildlife Trust is hoping to support up to eighty young people aged sixteen to seventeen in designing and delivering environmental projects to benefit their local communities. What a fantastic opportunity for those eligible to apply.

The scheme aims to help young people to improve their well-being and connection to nature, while building skills and friendships along the way. Projects could encompass helping to create new wildlife spaces or perhaps monitoring the wildlife which already exists in and around Amble.

Persimmons have just created a new wildlife space along Percy Drive in the form of a hedgerow with trees. Birds and insects are sure to make use of this new wildlife corridor which links the woodland around the sewage works with the gardens in Priory Park and Tynedale.

More such schemes are needed to offset the loss of habitat elsewhere.

Or how about designing a new mini wetland area around the flooded areas of the meadow near the Coquet Vets premises.

The NWT has plenty of experience in developing similar habitat. Perhaps the council could be persuaded to temporarily suspend grass mowing and allow the native flora which already exists to be surveyed and appreciated.

There are also many smaller areas which harbour wildlife. Wouldn't it be exciting to identify such places and encourage even more wildlife. Nestboxes for birds, bat boxes and hibernating boxes for butterflies would be excellent additions.

The opportunities to make a real difference within our community are endless. Well done and good luck to those who decide to get involved.

Hugh Tindle
via email

One of my university friends is from London (I don't hold it against him - mostly) and came up to Amble with me last year for the Puffin festival.

He's a city kid through and through and apparently had absolutely no idea how small towns worked, something that I only fully realised when we were on the X18 and he admitted that he assumed all little towns in Northumberland were going to be five wooden sheds in a field. He was joking, I think.

He absolutely loved visiting Amble, though. He loved going to the market and watching the bands play and going down to the beach and going in the sea

and immediately getting out again because it was way too cold. I have photos of him with Tommy Noddy and he has a plastic dinosaur he bought from a market stall as a souvenir.

Over Christmas, the same friend invited me down to London for a few days. I'm not a fan of big cities, the South and people who don't smile at each other in the street, so London isn't my ideal holiday destination, but I wasn't about to pass up on free accommodation in London. I was fully expecting to get stuck in horrible crowds and to be missing my phone and wallet by the time I got home, but luckily, I went anyway.

I ended up, shockingly, having a really lovely time. We looked around countless gorgeous Christmas markets and watched little bands perform next to monuments and admired all the Christmas lights (not as good as the Amble ones, obviously).

He has photos of me with red phone boxes, London Bridge and basically any landmark that I could name, and my phone and wallet are still intact.

Amble and London are definitely not the same, (for starters, you couldn't pay me to live in London), but it was nice to see that we were both a little bit wrong about the place where



the other lived. It turns out that small towns are quite nice after all, and London isn't the hellish concrete rat-maze that I maybe thought it was. Still, it's better up North.

Lily



Celebrating 30 years of regeneration

This year Amble Development Trust will celebrate 30 years of regeneration in the town.

The trust is unique in that it has been around for this length of time, so we wondered if you, the community, would like to contribute to the Amble story by offering your thoughts on how the town has changed, what it

was like before the regeneration programme began, is it better (or worse!) and what has changed that you value.

Your contributions will be documented and added to the many photographs we have collected over the years to create a 'This is Amble Life' story.

If you would like to be

included, please forward your thoughts and stories to Julia@ambledevelopmenttrust.org.uk

Photo: The Old Fourways building on Bridge Street, (originally the Station Hotel) in 1984. One of the first of the Development Trust's regeneration projects, it provides space for local businesses.

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Online safety

Being safe on the internet means you know exactly who you are talking to, for example a trusted adult or parent. You should not have a conversation with someone you have only met on the internet, because you don't really know who they are.

Why is it important to be careful what you send to other people?

Because it might get spread to other people. It may embarrass you if the person you send it to then sends it to other people who may send it on again. Even if it's something not too bad and you think they won't spread it, you might fall out with them in the future and they might want to make fun of you and embarrass you.

So be careful when you press send.

FUTURE LIONESSES



After my last article about getting more girls to play football, my school, James Calvert Spence College has started a girls football club for 9-11s (my age!).

I have been told that the school read my article and decided to start the club. It's on Wednesdays 3.15pm - 4.15pm.

I'm very happy about this since I have always wanted one to happen. So of course, My mam has signed me up to go.

By Eden

The future of our planet is at risk



Because of the effects it has on the environment, pollution is a serious issue that could possibly be the end of the world if it is not stopped soon enough.

Pollution can lead to global warming, climate change, habitat destruction and more. There are multiple types of pollution too - land, water and air.

What can cause land, water and air pollution?

Pollution on land can be caused by a few things:- litter, using unnecessarily large amounts of pesticides/insecticides in agriculture, and other reasons. Land pollution causes habitat destruction, which can lead to extinction of some animal species. Polluted areas are also more likely to become drier due to lack of biodiversity - without the right amount of predators, prey and plants ecosystems cannot thrive. This is called desertification.

Water pollution can be caused by numerous factors too - including throwing litter into oceans, or any other body of water like a lake or river, oil spills, sewage being dumped into the ocean - mostly by big companies who want to get rid of their waste, and more. This can affect things like the health of our marine ecosystems, as well as the animals living in the polluted environments.

Finally, air pollution is caused by pollutants such as

greenhouse gases, which absorb heat from the sun and reflect it back at the Earth. This is called the greenhouse effect, it includes carbon dioxide, methane (yes, the fart gas) and water vapour, emissions from vehicles, coal powered power plants and others. Particulates - which are a mix of solid and liquid particles found in the air - can be inhaled by someone and can cause serious lung damage.

What can we do?

To help stop pollution, there are a few things we can do, including: instead of taking the car, walking/bike to places if they are close enough - and if possible - use public transportation like buses or trains, recycle and avoid plastic bags and if possible other things with a lot of unnecessary plastic packaging.

However, using something like metal straws or not using plastic bags won't immediately solve the issue. Ordinary people can do their bit but rich people need to do more to change their lifestyles. Private jets, mostly owned by celebrities, can emit two tonnes of carbon dioxide in only an hour. According to Greenpeace, "The global average energy-related carbon footprint is around 4.7 tonnes of CO2 per person per year." This means that a one hour long flight on a private jet could emit almost half as much carbon dioxide as one person does in a whole year.

By Grace

Favourite baby names of 2023



Are you popular? Do you have an unusual name?

The top 3 girls' names in the UK last year were Olivia, Amelia and Isla. The top 3 boys' names were Muhammad, Noah and Theo. Some of the Artograffi team have names on the list. Noah's name is second on the boys' list.



In our school year, the most common girls' names are Sophie, Eva, Lillie and Lucy(ie). The most common boys' names are Joe, Jack and Max.

If you want a famous influencer's name, here are some: Zendaya, Ozzie, Banks, Stomi, Wren

Social media influencer Taylor Humphrey can find you a baby name that fits your family's personal brand but it might cost you \$30,000!

Gender neutral names like Taylor are doubling in popularity. Also, there's now a trend for magical or witch themed names like Luna, Sage and Lyra, but royal names like William, Charles and Harry have dropped in popularity.

Names info from www.babycentre.co.uk

By Nina and Eden

Rubbish game wins 'Game of the Year'



The Game Awards is a ceremony held every year to celebrate the best video games of the year. It has been held every year since 2014 and is hosted by the video game journalist Geoff Keighley. It's important for game players (as games can be teased at the event), and the developers (as it may feature their game winning). The most recent event was held on 7 December.

How the nominating process works

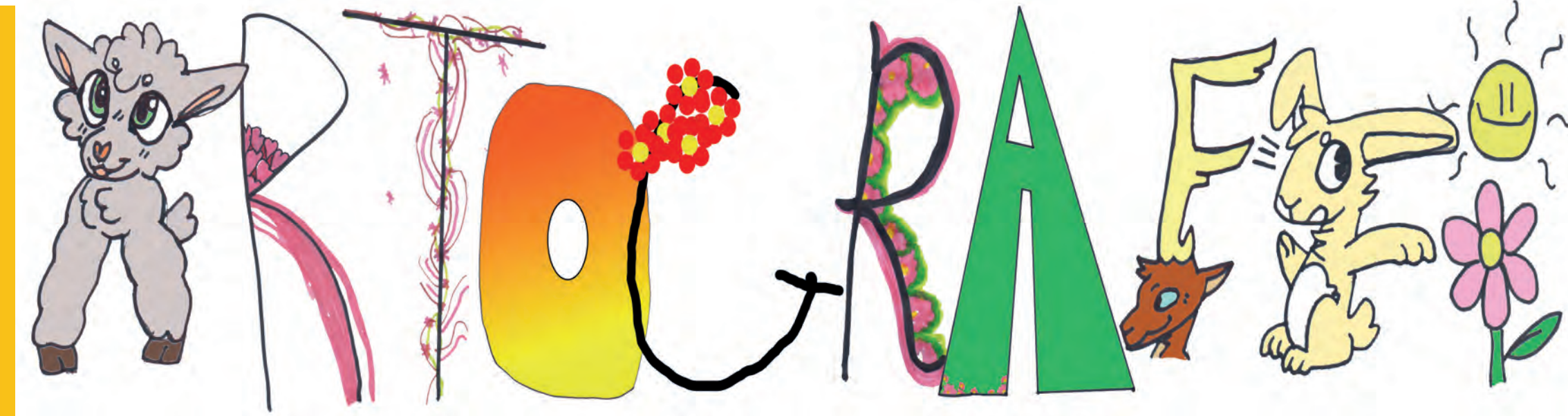
The players can vote online for 31 overall groups like Best Mobile Game and Best Narrative, but the main grand title is Game of the Year. The only downside to the game awards is that the players' vote only counts for 10% of the overall votes. You might be wondering where the rest of the 90% of votes go. Well, these are up to the Game Awards Jurors. There are 100 jurors altogether, made up from leading gaming media and influencers across the globe.

Some Subgenres

The nominees for Best Narrative were Marvels Spiderman 2, Baldurs Gate 3, Cyberpunk 2077: Phantom Liberty, Alan Wake 2 and Final Fantasy XVI. The winner of Best Narrative went to Alan Wake 2. The nominees for Best Mobile Game were Hello Kitty Adventure, Monster Hunter Now, Honkai: Star Rail, Final Fantasy VII: Ever Crisis and Terra Nil. The winner of best mobile game was Honkai: Star Rail. It's a free game, so maybe try it out?

And the winner is...

The nominees for the grand prize were Alan Wake 2 (a survival psychological horror game), Marvels Spiderman 2 (an action adventure game), Resident Evil 4 (a survival horror game),



Baldurs Gate 3 (a role playing, make your own story game) and finally The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom (an action adventure).

Place your bets now, who do you think won Game of the Year? Without further ado: "Game of the Year goes to.... Baldurs Gate 3." Baldurs Gate 3 costs £60 at time of writing, but with 60 hours of story it is a very good deal.

My rant

But, in comparison to The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom and Marvel's Spiderman 2 this game is terrible. First off, I find Baldurs Gate 3 to be more tailored towards PC. Secondly, the game has a very clunky control system. And thirdly, I think Tears of the Kingdom is just a better game

By Noah

We need to help these animals NOW!!!!



You might think that endangered animals are tigers, polar bears and pandas. But there are actually many endangered animals in the UK. In 2016, 165 species were endangered. These are the top 5.

1. Hedgehogs - Hedgehogs are the most endangered animal in the UK. Despite its prickly coat and sharp spines some species like the African Pygmy hedgehog have become a popular pet. (PLEASE DO NOT TRY TO MAKE ANY WILD ANIMAL A PET.) Since 2000, 50% of this species has decreased partly due to the

lack of farmland.

2. Water Voles - This species is under serious threat because of habitat loss and predation by American mink. Water voles have disappeared from 94% of their habitats in the UK since the 1960s.

3. Hazel Dormouse - The population of this dormouse has decreased by 75% in the UK. Some have been taken to a secret location in hope to bring them back.

4. Beavers - In the UK, Beavers were hunted to near extinction nearly 400 years ago. They have since been

successfully reintroduced and are protected in many other countries.

5. Scottish Wildcats - There are only 35 left in the wild according to a wild cat campaign. The main threat to Scottish Wildcats is that they are breeding with feral cats and domestic cats.

By Nina





Inside the Undertakers - come on in

Last year's BBC's documentary "Inside the Undertakers" with Stacey Dooley set about confronting the many myths and taboos associated with funerals.

William Purves (including Alistair Turner) has been serving Amble families for generations. We've witnessed trends come and go. And we understand that death is still one of the most uncomfortable subjects for people to contemplate.

Kara and Peter are here to support families managing awkward conversations and to break down the taboos one by one. It doesn't really matter what your views are about death, or what kind of funeral you choose. It matters that you can get exactly what you want, from a team who will care for you and your loved one throughout.

- *Monthly coffee mornings - first Fridays*
- *Take a virtual tour - williampurves.co.uk/reach-us*
- *Free resource downloads - williampurves.co.uk/thinking-ahead*
- *We'll come to you if that helps*

The UK's population is gradually coming to terms with the opportunities available to plan ahead – for themselves and those they love. And as funeral directors, we're encouraging this dialogue by creating (free) resources to assist people get their affairs in order and to showcase a full range of possibilities. Most importantly, we want to bring peace of mind that the burden of decision making has been lifted from the family left behind.

You don't need to be Stacey Dooley to meet the professionals who are the most equipped to answer questions or help tackle the many myths that surround death. We're here for you when, and however, you want to find out more.



18 Bede Street, Amble, NE65 0EA Tel: 01665 712277 williampurves.co.uk

Modern Slavery: Can you help a victim?

It is terrible that slavery, which was abolished in Britain nearly two centuries ago, still exists, even in our own country, surreptitiously but on a disturbingly large scale. People fall into it in various ways, for example, sometimes smuggled in from abroad, sometimes by false befriending.

When the Home Office hears of instances, they investigate and the victims will be released, but then they are in great difficulty, needing to rehabilitate and find their humanity again.

How do you overcome such an experience? The other day I received an email from the charity Hope at Home. They are the only hosting scheme for survivors of modern slavery in the UK. They train and support hosts across the UK who have a spare bedroom and the goodwill to welcome a survivor into their homes for a fixed period.

The charity are looking for hosts across the North East. The people they refer for help are those who are recognised as survivors of modern slavery by the Home Office. They are often facing homelessness, are at high risk of re-exploitation and need a safe place to stay for anywhere between about four weeks and six months. Many survivors referred to us are also seeking asylum or have been granted refugee status.

Are you interested? Of course, if you need to find out more, I can help and am happy to talk about it, although the key information is on Hope at Home's website: www.hopeathome.org.uk

Ben Hopkinson

benjamin.hopkinson@gmail.com 01665 714213

Vehicle related anti-social behaviour



The Lord Mayor's Field was damaged

Northumbria Police have had a number of reports of vehicle related anti-social behaviour and driving offences in the Amble area.

We have had reports of vehicles driving over the Lord Mayor's field and the Marina / Braid area, causing significant damage to the fields and grassed areas.

Amble neighbourhood team have been working closely with the local community to gather information and intelligence to identify offenders and their vehicles.

We would like to thank the local community for the information provided to the police.

Northumbria Police traffic department officers targeted offenders on Friday 12 January. They have uplifted and seized three vehicles and arrested one offender in the area.

Any person driving a vehicle without insurance or without a licence will have the vehicle uplifted and the driver prosecuted. Vehicles that are being driven

in an anti-social manner will be subject to a section 59 warning or uplift and seizure. The driver is responsible for the uplift cost and subsequent storage costs of the seized vehicle. Driving offences can result in fines, penalty points on your licence and disqualification from driving. All legal proceedings can increase your insurance premiums / renewals.

The neighbourhood team will be conducting speed watch events and the traffic teams will remain proactive in the Amble area.

The Amble neighbourhood team will be having a community engagement event at the Amble Library on 14 February from 1.30pm. If you wish to discuss any issues with the neighbourhood team, please feel free to attend.

You can provide information anonymously through Crime Stoppers.

Amble Neighbourhood Policing Team
PC 3835 Richardson, CSO 4089 Fawcett



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Reports from our *County Councillors*



This year is set to be exciting with the prospect of a change of government; almost certainly a General Election year.

Westminster rumours of a May poll are rife, but autumn remains the more likely option. We have a real chance for change in the UK and Northumberland which is desperately needed.

We have the opportunity to deliver our first North East Metro Mayor (Kim McGuinness, Labour) a position with powers that the North East has badly needed for so long.

In addition, we have new candidates for Police and Crime Commissioner seeking election (Susan Dungworth, Labour). Together we can change things, with your support we can win.

Register to vote

Remember you are responsible for registering yourself to vote. The electoral register is a list of people who are eligible to vote in Elections and Referendums in Northumberland. You cannot vote if your name does not appear on the register.

New ID requirements for in-person voting has been required since 2023. Voters will need to show an accredited form

of photographic identification in order to receive their ballot paper(s) to cast their vote at polling stations for local Mayor and Police Crime Commissioner 2024 elections, and the possible General Election.

Please note that these new requirements will not affect electors who vote by post. You can apply to vote by post for a particular election, for a set period of time or for all future elections postal votes will be sent to the registered address.

Contact Northumberland County Hall, Morpeth Northumberland NE61 2EF www.northumberland.gov.uk

Voting at a Polling Station

Electors who do not hold any accredited forms of photo ID will need to apply (if required) for it a free voter Authority Certificate.

For any queries please contact the NCC Election Officer on 01670 624811.

Local Electoral Registration Office - elections@northumberland.gov.uk
Information - GOV.UK
Exercise your Right to Vote

In our democracy, your voice matters. Do not let confusion about voting keep you from exercising your right to vote.
Terry Clark

Terry.Clark@northumberland.gov.uk 07779 983768

The area of woodland to the left of the entrance to the Braid has never been cleared since storm Arwen.

The area belongs to Northumberland Estates so I arranged a meeting with them and got agreement from them that they would tidy up the area. We will probably have to wait a while because of the condition of the ground but it will be done in the spring.

The troublesome streetlights on Acklington Road have all now been repaired and are working fine. It was a case of disputed responsibility that caused the delays.

I was pleased to assist Amble Youth Project with a grant from a charity of which I am a trustee. This project does a wonderful job in assisting and helping our young people in their formative years. I have long been a supporter of AYP, I attended a prize giving night recently and was very impressed with the way the staff related to our young people.

I have agreed to support Amble Town Council with new camera installations on jeffrey.watson@northumberland.gov.uk

Queen Street in the town centre with a grant from my members

small schemes allowances. I understand that the Council is upgrading its system throughout the town, and I am pleased that I can assist with this.

On-going discussions are taking place regarding the development of James Calvert Spence College and issues surrounding it. A meeting will be held in early January to discuss these, and I will report the outcome to readers of the Ambler.

A survey is taking place with residents of Acklington Road re parking issues and possible actions. Personally, I would wait and see what the outcome of discussions about parking on the new school site is before I would change the current arrangements. Once parking restrictions are imposed it is quite difficult to have them lifted. The Council will consider responses of the survey and act if the results meet the criteria to do so.

Jeff Watson

gov.uk 07802385367

Advertise with The Ambler

Over 3,400 copies are delivered FREE to houses and businesses in Amble and Hauxley, six times per year.
Contact editor@theambler.co.uk for more details

Shorebirds for beginners events to help you identify species

At this time of year, estuaries, muddy and rocky shores along the Northumberland coast are home to thousands of shorebirds. Each species has adapted to its preferred habitat in order for it to find food as easily as possible – for example, some have long legs and a long, pointed bill for probing for worms within the muddy sediment, and some have shorter bills for searching for crustaceans and other small marine creatures within seaweed. Conserving energy is what it is all about for the birds at this time of year, as they need every calorie they can find to survive the cold, short winter days.

Shorebirds can be a very tricky group of birds to identify, and while they are here with us, we run Shorebirds for Beginners

events at various locations along the coast to give tips on how to identify the different species and talk about the incredible lives they lead. One of our most popular guided walk routes is from Warkworth Beach car park along the edge of the Coquet Estuary, as the saltmarsh and mud flats provide feeding and roosting habitat for not just shorebirds, but ducks, geese and dune grassland birds too.

No prior knowledge is required for these events as we start right at the beginning of bird ID, pointing out what to look for when identifying shorebirds such as leg length and colour, bill shape and size. The events are free. However booking is essential as we like to keep the group sizes small to encourage a two-way



Oystercatcher with worm

conversation and ensure any questions you have about the birds and our work are answered.

If you are interested in joining us for a Shorebirds for Beginners event, please head over to our website for more information about upcoming

dates and locations, and you will also find a booking form to reserve your place – www.spaceforshorebirds.co.uk/event-listings

We look forward to seeing you on the coast soon!
Space for Shorebirds



Hello everyone, welcome to the first Ambler of 2024! Here at the Development Trust we hope you have had a wonderful Christmas and are looking forward to whatever the new year brings.

We certainly are: sadly Andrew Gooding left our employment at the end of December. Andrew had made some life changes that meant he had to move and wasn't able to travel. His job has been advertised and trustees held interviews with the result that from February we will have a new staff member who some of you will know or have come across in a different capacity already.

Matthew Connolly is chair of Amble Youth Project and a governor at JCSC, both in voluntary roles. Matthew has experience of asset management, operating a charity and funding applications, so he comes with the many skills we were looking for. We welcome him to the Trust fold.

There was also news from

the Town Council just before the Christmas break. They have had their application accepted to initiate a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the town. Once they have secured the funding for it, it will be over to you the community to participate in working with the town council to determine what it is you would like to happen in the town.

No longer will there be the need to remark on social media or complain about what does or doesn't happen – this is an opportunity to take part and help to make things happen. So please consider putting your name forward.

Some of you may be aware of an incident at the Welfare where a car was driven over the junior football field (see photo). This was done while the ground was soaking wet and covered in snow. It left deep ruts that will have to be filled and levelled out before it will be playable again. This is not only disappointing as it will cost money to repair, which could have been used to

do something positive but most importantly it stops the children being able to take part in a sport they love.

We are still waiting for dates for the Playzone work to



commence, but NCC have said they hoped to make an early start this year, fingers crossed!

We have also applied to the Community Foundation for additional funding to mark out tennis courts on the second MUGA as it was one of the highest scoring sports requested from the community.

And on another positive note; work to replace the flooring on the children's play area flooring is complete. And funding has been secured to

extend the compound fencing as we have more teams requiring storage.

While planning appears to be progressing for the new JCSC build we have asked for more information relating to the use of the Welfare for passage. However it seems that detailed design plans won't be emerging until NCC have their preferred developer. Hopefully we will meet up sometime this month to discuss what those plans entail.

Our job search facilities are now open from 9am – 5pm each week day.

If you would like to contact the Ambler or you require a CV, you can do so by ringing: 01665 712929 or emailing editor@theambler.co.uk or Julie@ambledevelopmenttrust.org.uk

All that remains is to say – come on 2024, we're ready for you!

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



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Amble Town

COUNCIL

Town: 8 Feb, 14 Mar 2024 at 6pm. Council Office

Amenities: 25 Jan., 28 Mar. 2024 at 6pm. Council Office

Sat. 8 June, Noon D-Day 80th Commemoration- Picnic in the Town Sq

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A NEW YEAR

Another year starts with everyone full of good intentions. Whether a pledge to eat or drink less or to exercise more- we all see the start of a year as a chance to change something about ourselves. Why not make this the year to do more to help your town or some of its people.

You will not need to look far to find something where you can volunteer your time, skills or expertise. In doing this you will also find opportunities to meet more people, expand your interests and generally feel better about yourself.

So...give yourself a shake, get busy by working those fingers or feet or ask around; there is always something or someone needing help.

CROSS STREET

Please remember that traffic flow on this street has changed. Vehicles can only enter from Queen Street and exit onto Church Street. There have been several incidents of misuse as some seem confused- even though there are 'No Entry' signs at the Church Street end, bicyclists can still enter from here. Also take care as there are plans for parking restrictions to be introduced in Acklington Road and Bisley Road soon.

COMMUNITY HUB

Council is still in discussion with County regarding the future use of Edwin Street School buildings after the pupils vacate. County have informed us that at present they do not perceive a need for the building for their own use and so it may be made available publically. We continue to press for details about the condition and running costs of the premises so we can determine if it is viable to ask for a community transfer of the building rather than see the site sold for other usage.

Whilst the town does have some buildings where groups can meet it is rapidly becoming obvious that with an expanding town, these are not enough now and so will not be adequate for future needs. This building may be the answer to that.

COUNCILLOR'S CORNER

January – The month that looks both ways. I am writing this at the time of year when we think about resolutions for the year to come. It is a time to contemplate and take stock of what has gone before and look forward to what is to come. Recently I, amongst many others, attended the Remembrance Sunday wreath laying ceremony at the Memorial Gardens. It was, as always, well attended. I was especially heartened to see representatives from younger generations paying their respects to those who have fallen. JCSC and Amble Youth Project, two organisations I have had the pleasure to work closely with this year were both present.

Once all the festivities of December are over, we start to look forward. June sees the 80th anniversary of D-Day, and I am particularly looking forward to the commemorative events we shall be sharing in the Town Square.

Cllr. Ian Parks.

DOG FOULING

Thank you to all those dog owners who regularly pick up on their walks. It's not pleasant to be out on those horrible wet windy, cold days but you still take the time to do this. If asked, all owners say they do this....so where do the piles left throughout the town come from?? Whether on footpaths or green areas, it is not pleasant and cannot always be avoided. No-one wants to unknowingly trail it home onto floors and carpets especially where there may be young children playing. No-one wants to have to scrape it out of shoe or trainer ridges.

Amble has over 70 litter bins, so you are never very far from one where you can deposit the waste. Please be a responsible owner, like so many already in the town, and clean up after your pet.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

County have accepted our application to develop a neighbourhood plan for Amble which will focus on conserving the town's heritage and open spaces as these are the two topics which have been brought forward as being of prime concern to our townspeople. If you would like to be involved, please look out for the initial meeting date. Whilst a small Steering Group will be formed to determine how to carry this out, there will also be a need for others to help with gathering the evidence needed to support the ideas. This can only come about with community support so please think about volunteering your help.

CCTV

The current system has been in use for eight years now. Technology is continually changing and improving. Helped by donations from our County Councillors Clarke and Watson, Council will soon be upgrading the system with the latest technology. Northumbria Police have found it a very useful tool in helping to identify those involved in various incidents particularly regarding assaults and anti-social behaviour.

JOY RIDING CONSEQUENCES

When someone receives a warning about what is generally known as 'joy riding', that warning is both for the person and the vehicle. People may realise that if the person commits the same offence again, the vehicle involved- even if a different one or not theirs- can be seized.

But did you know that if someone else commits an offence in that same vehicle, it can then be seized immediately. For example, a young person may borrow a parent or sibling's vehicle and receive a warning- unfortunately if the parent or sibling then is involved in another offence with that vehicle, a warning has already been given and the vehicle can be impounded.

Many people also do not realise that these warnings must be declared for insurance purposes and can result in higher costs. Impounded vehicles incur lifting and storage costs and need valid current documentation in order to be reclaimed.

Always take care to know who is using your vehicle and that they can be trusted to act sensibly and within the law- or you could find yourself with no vehicle!

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

Lease shows council are responsible for fixing walkway

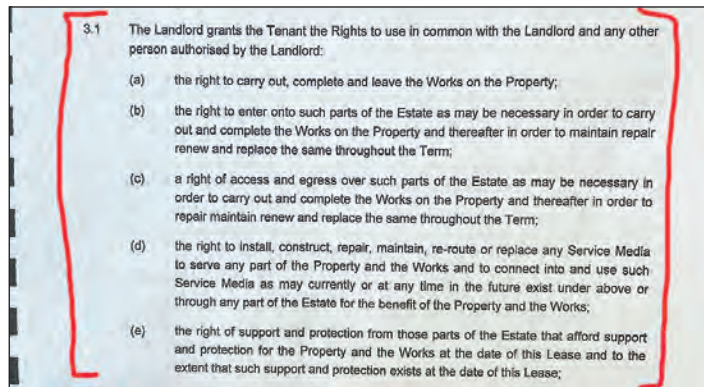
A twenty year lease taken out in 2014 between Northumberland County Council and Northumberland Estates, clearly shows the county council are responsible for maintaining and repairing the Coble Quay walkway.

Online readers may have seen this additional information about the status of the closed section of the Coble Quay walkway, which we posted on our website after the previous Ambler went to print.

In the last issue of The Ambler (#143 p20) we called on Northumberland County Council (NCC) to explain why, after two years of talking with Amble Marina, they have still not fixed the walkway at Coble Quay. They replied that they were still in discussions.

Once again we pointed out that the walkway had been constructed with public money, and the public promised access. (See planning ref: 13/02307/FUL).

We said: *"Two years ago we called for transparency over the situation. We call again for it now. We consider two years to*



Section 3.1 of their lease says that NCC are responsible for maintaining and repairing the walkway.

be an extraordinary length of time to be still in discussions, and we continue to call on all parties to work together and restore the public's access to this footpath."

As if to underline their reluctance to reveal any information to the general public, NCC took 35 days (15 more than they are supposed to) to respond to The Ambler's FOI request to see the lease between themselves and

the owners of the closed section of the walkway. We had also asked to see other documents but those were refused. However, the lease clearly states NCC are responsible for maintaining and repairing the walkway. The lease was signed in 2014 and lasts for 20 years.

Amble Marina subsequently took over ownership of the Marina and the walkway from Northumberland Estates.
Anna Williams

Motorists be aware

I frequently cycle along Cross Street where the new one-way system does not apply to cyclists. Unfortunately, since the introduction of the new regulations I have experienced a number of frightening moments.

Not expecting cars, some motorists are travelling along the centre of the road, not leaving enough space for cyclists to turn in from Church Street.

Some motorists are not giving way to cyclists when travelling down Queen Street forcing the cyclist to take evasive action.

This stretch of road forms part of the National Cycle Route and may become busy as the weather improves. I hope motorists will become more aware of cyclists for the future.

Vivienne Dalglish

A real baby, in a manger



Wow, a real baby." A phrase heard numerous times during the Live Nativity production held outside the Radcliffe Club on Saturday 9 December.

Hosted by Harbour Lights Church, with participation from local community groups including Amble Youth Project and Amble First School Choir. The latter braving the rain to beautifully sing a selection of Christmas Songs. Children and adults alike enjoyed the atmosphere of a Bethlehem marketplace, with an authentic carpenter and potter, a real

fruit and vegetable cart, two donkeys and with a real baby playing the part of Jesus, who lay contentedly the whole time in the arms of 'Mary'!

All the participants dressed in authentic professional costumes to enhance the recreation.

The event was timed to link with the Radcliffe Club Children's Christmas Party, so together with the public attending, a wonderful Christmas experience was enjoyed by all.

A big thank you to everyone who made it possible.
Harbour Lights Church
harbourlightschurch.com

Amble Food Bank update

Amble Food Bank (AFB) would like to thank our wonderful local communities for their continued generosity, during such challenging times.

We were overwhelmed by the scale of food, seasonal treats, and financial donations in the lead up to Christmas 2023. We really do appreciate EVERY single item and penny donated! Thanks also go to our local supermarkets, businesses, schools, care homes and charities for their ongoing support, including Alexa's Canine Trust and Amble and Warkworth Women's Institutes.

Thank you to Morrisons for organising the pick-up bags, the Co-op for managing the food bin and the Sunday food share items (clients benefit from food that would otherwise go to waste) and the Oswin project for the Friday delivery of unsold baked goods, fruit, and vegetables from the farm shop at HMP Northumberland.

It is impossible to thank all our supporters, but we try to acknowledge most of you on our Facebook page.

We are conscious that, with food prices continually rising, the average price of a Morrisons pickup bag has risen significantly. If you would prefer to buy your own items, then you can do so

and simply leave them loose in our cage by the tills. We really do appreciate every single item donated! Alternatively, there are food donation bins near the front doors at the Co-op and Tesco stores on Queen Street.

How to Donate to us

We are experiencing significant increases in referrals and now have to carry out regular large food shops to supplement the food items we are donated. Should you wish to make a financial donation, cash and cheques can be addressed to us and posted through the letterbox at Trinity Methodist Church. A bank transfer can be made to Amble Food Bank, sort code 77-20-04, account number 17925260. We have registered with HMRC so if you pay tax, you can Gift Aid any donations (e-mail us for a form).

How to Contact us

If you are in need, you can get a referral through an agency such as CAB or contact Northumberland Communities Together on 01670 620015, 9am-5pm. e-mail: amble.fb@gmail.com

Many thanks again for your ongoing support.

Amble Food Bank

Panto fun with the Puffin Theatre Club

On Saturday 16 December, Puffin Theatre Club put on a magical show in Amble, performing 'Every Pantomime That Ever There Was'.

Yes, that's right - the children, aged between four and 12 years, showcased not one, not two, but many, many fairy tale stories for proud families and guests in the Parish Hall.

The drama club, which has been running since 2018, runs every Saturday morning under the supervision of teachers Rosie Bush and Sarah Price.

"It's a great panto," said Rosie. "The story took us from Jack and the Beanstalk to Aladdin and his magic lamp, cartwheeling via princesses and witches, beauties and beasts. The children put on two performances and they were both brilliant."

Sarah added, "It's down to the children for working so hard and their families for rehearsing lines with them and bringing them every week."

The performance included lots of tech, much to the delight of the children - a magic show, fog, snow, glitter explosions, custard pies and sweets thrown into the crowd.

"It had a real traditional pantomime feel," said Steven, one of the parents, "it was a lot of fun!"

The roles of Captain Hook and the Dame, both played by Ralph, were particularly funny, and Prince Charming, played by Ben, stole our hearts with his charisma.

Sarah told us, "We'd like to say a big thank you to the children, and to the good-natured audiences for joining in with 'Baby Shark' and all of the 'cheers' and 'boos'. A panto is only as good as the people who see it, and this one was dazzling!"

Puffin Theatre Club are able to accommodate new members. Please contact puffintheatreclub@gmail.com or find them on Facebook.

Rotary: 2023 was a busy year



The last few months of 2023 proved to be a remarkably busy but productive time for the Amble and Warkworth Rotary club.

Members have been involved in planting additional crocus bulbs along Rotary Way. Hopefully, their efforts will be rewarded in springtime when the road between Warkworth and Amble should again become a blaze of purple and white crocuses.

In November, Rotarians enjoyed a fascinating talk by Lee Rankin from Northumberland Wildlife Trust on its Wilding West Chevington project. Lee gave an honest appraisal of some of the issues that the term re-wilding can stir up, whilst outlining the aims of the NWT project on this 325-hectare site, which not that long ago was

a vast open cast mining site. The project aims to restore and enlarge the woodland to increase carbon capture, as well as the creation of meadows and grasslands with the aim of increasing the biodiversity on this site.

Later Rotarians and guests had a guided tour led by Lee around the West Chevington reserve to see how the re-wilding works is progressing. We were fortunate to observe a range of interesting wildlife including a sparrow hawk, a hen harrier, as well as a marsh harrier. These sightings illustrate the potential this site holds for wildlife. The reserve is set to open to the public in springtime next year.

Following the charity golf tournament run by the Amble and Warkworth Rotary club in October at the Alnmouth

Foxton golf club which raised over £5,000, members recently attended the HQ of the North Northumberland Hospice to formally hand over a cheque for £1,666. The money raised by the tournament will also be shared with the Great North Air Ambulance Service and The Bobby Robson Foundation.

The Rotary Christmas sleigh underwent a major renovation thanks to HMP Northumberland. It has been repainted and equipped with new lights and sound system and made its first debut at the Amble Christmas light show.

The sleigh, as well as bringing Christmas cheer and joy to some of the younger local residents, is also one of the main means of charity fund raising used by the Amble and Warkworth Rotary club. This year the sleigh was also based outside Morrisons and raised a total of over £3,000, money which will all go to supporting local groups and worthy causes over the coming months.

Local Rotarians would like to extend a special thankyou to the team from HMP Northumberland who renovated the sleigh, and to the management, staff and customers of Morrisons in Amble who so generously supported the club's fund-raising efforts.

Further details about your local Rotary club and how to apply for grants are to be found on the Rotary Amble and Warkworth website and its Facebook page.

Dry Water Arts: new classes for 2024

- Balancing Acts** - a unique, enjoyable and highly effective class to improve balance and confidence.
- Sunday Dance Jams** - An open to all dance improvisation class in a nurturing and non-judgmental space.
- Creative writing** - Great for creative ponderings and a boost for your wellbeing. Enjoy the creative response within
- Lost Wax Carved Silver Rings** - Be on trend by being traditional, as ever Frances uses her creative skills to offer something new and exciting. A must for those interested in the delights of creating by hand.
- Chine Colle Lino Printing** - A unique and beautiful approach to printing which went down a storm when we road tested it!
- Creative Arts, Textiles and printmaking workshop** - Free tea coffee included and a chance to socialise after the session.
- Yoga Retreat Day** - a day of integrating easeful movement with breathwork, meditation and deep relaxation. Live music to add to the sensory delights and Paula's unique somatic approach. Suitable for everyone no previous yoga experience required, Feel good, be embodied, be your full self. More info at www.drywaterarts.uk

Amble and District Education

This non-profit making association runs for two eight week terms (autumn and spring) per academic year. We meet on Wednesday mornings at the Amble Masonic Lodge from 10:00 am until 12 noon. We all enjoy learning in a social setting with tea/coffee breaks providing opportunities to meet and chat to lecturers and other members.

February and March

Eight weeks, starting Feb 7
Exploring Northumberland with Richard Booth, local historian, accomplished photographer, deep sea diver and Northumbrian walks leader.
Feb. 7 More hidden gems of

Northumberland
Feb. 14 Coastal gems
Feb. 21 Wrecks off the Farnes and Northumberland coast
Feb. 28 Wildlife photographs from Scotland and Northumberland

Dip into Literature
March 6 and March 13: Dr. Peter Regan: Milton's 'Paradise Lost'
March 20 and March 27: Local author, Annabella Baker, tells of her extraordinary journey to becoming a published writer and shares her multilingual background and extensive travel links, by introducing us to some French and Hungarian literature.

Amble Pin Cushion workshops

Thursday 15 February 1.30pm – 3.30pm £ 5.00

Craft and Chatter (Drop-in crafting group)

Saturday 17 February 10am – 4pm £40.00

Learn to knit Fairisle

Wednesday 21 February 1.30pm – 3.30pm £25.00

Learn to crochet

Thursday 21 March 1.30pm – 3.30pm £ 5.00

Craft and Chatter (Drop-in crafting group)

For further details or to book your place, please pay your deposit in the shop or via amblepincushion.co.uk/product-category/workshops/

Amble Women's Institute

Firstly can we wish everyone a happy and healthy 2024. Our group had a lively few months to end 2023.

Coffee mornings carried on, an enjoyable trip to Howick Hall, an evening meal at a local Inn and our Craft Fair, which we hope will become an annual event. We are also taking part in a local Seeds2trees campaign, the first stage has been completed and hopefully some of our members will be growing saplings to be planted on.

We revamped our Poppy Display on the Nets in the Memorial Garden for November as part of Remembrance Month, which everyone agreed was well worth the effort.

Some of our ladies joined other local groups for an entertaining trip to Harrogate to the Crafting Exhibition, which was a very worthwhile trip for some bargains!

Our final meeting of the year was a very lively Christmas Party with a buffet, fizz, music from a local Skiffle Band and a game of bingo, to close the year on a high note!

For our first meeting of 2024, we will be amused by the local Amble Poet. Some events are being planned so keep an eye out for something that may be of interest. Warm wishes to all, let's look forward to Spring!

Amble Local History Group

Meetings at 7pm in Dry Water Arts, Wellwood St.
Thursday 15 February - Transatlantic Blues: music and race relations in the North East during the 50s and 60s, Speaker Brian Ward.

Thursday 21 March - Aln Valley Railway, Speaker Tom Lloyd

Concerts in Warkworth Memorial Hall



Emma Fisk's Hot Club du Nord will be performing in Warkworth

Music concerts recommence on 24 February with Janice Burns and Jon Doran. An Anglo-Scottish duo providing tight vocal harmonies and sensitive interplay between mandolin, bouzouki and guitar. Previous performances include the Sage, Cambridge Folk Festival and Edinburgh Tradfest.

On 16 March we have Hot Club jazz with a swing - Emma Fisk's Hot Club du Nord taking their inspiration from the swinging, musically

inventive approach of Reinhardt and Grappelli. Music from the Hot Club de France with jazz standards from the 1920s and 30s.

Booking information and further details, along with the guest list for the rest of 2024, are available at www.wwmh.uk/concerts.html or contact Peter Burnham Tel: 01665 711388. Tickets for our concerts are limited and must be booked in advance.

Want to sing more in 2024?

Want to sing more in 2024. Come along and try out with Harbour Lights Community Choir.

We meet weekly on a Thursday evening during term time at 'The Bede' Bede Street, Amble NE65 0EA

Sessions start at 7pm. No experience necessary, ability to read music not essential, you can learn by ear. Choir leader Sarah Gray guides us through a variety of genres. You've nothing to lose, your first session is free!

For more information contact hello@harbourlightscommunitychoir.org, look us up on the web at www.harbourlightscommunitychoir.org, or just turn up, you can be sure of a warm welcome.

Amble Youth Project

Monday: Closed

Tuesday: Social Action Group 5:00-7:00pm (13+ year old).

Wednesday: After School Club 3:30-5:30pm (7 to 13 years) Various fun and developmental activities Arts and Crafts

Thursday: Closed

Friday After School Club: 3:30-5:30pm and Youth Cafe Drop-in 6:00-8:30pm (13+ year olds).

Look out for more.... We are always developing new projects. Contact us for more information, or to tell us your views and ideas. www.ambleyouthproject.org. Find us also on Facebook.



Can you volunteer to help on Coquet Island?



Stephen Westerberg

Preparations for the new breeding season on Coquet Island will begin soon, with wardens starting the necessary maintenance tasks.

Coquet Island is an important RSPB reserve which is home to puffins, eiders, fulmar, kittiwake and the UK's only colony of Roseate terns, Britain's rarest nesting seabird.

The Ambler spoke to Stephen Westerberg, RSPB site

manager for the island.

He told us, "We're getting the island ready for the next breeding season, which includes doing any ground work needed, and managing the terraces for the Roseate terns. We're really interested to know if there are any volunteers who would like to help - they would be very welcome."

Volunteers would be asked to help with the maintenance, doing things like cutting the grass, moving nesting boxes and setting up hides. In addition, the RSPB would like to hear from anyone with any boat qualifications.

They are also hoping to be able to improve sanitary provision in the cottages, with the use of bottled gas power and improvements to the solar panels. Water will run through a UV filter to kill viruses.

The island sanctuary is popular with between 60,000 - 80,000 sea birds, who return

year after year.

"Coquet Island has more breeding birds per square metre than any other RSPB reserve," said Stephen.

The Ambler understands that popularity could have a double edge, as sadly it is possible that those species which nest close to one another may have experienced the worst of the impact of the Avian Flu.

Avian Flu is not far from the minds of the wardens. Two years of the deadly HPAI virus caused devastation on the bird sanctuary, and meant staff were unable to remain on the island, having instead to rely on day trips to monitor the birds.

Stephen told us he was hopeful the staff would be able to remain on the island full time once again during the breeding season. "Staff will be monitoring for bird flu, and if it is detected, we may have to do day visits," he said.

To maintain the island as

a sanctuary, security is very important and the RSPB hope to improve the CCTV coverage in order to protect the birds and their eggs. Landing is not permitted on the island, and anyone disturbing the birds causing them to fly up during the breeding season is committing an offence.

However, the staff are well aware of how popular the birds are, especially the puffins. The bird cameras on the island have been in place for several years, some of them are situated inside the nests of the Roseate terns and puffins.

"I was at the Puffin Festival last year and I know how much people want to see the puffins," said Stephen, "so we'll make sure that the coverage continues."

If you would like to volunteer with the wardens on Coquet Island, contact Stephen Westerberg directly: Stephen.Westerberg@rspb.org.uk
Anna Williams

Highs and lows for Northumberland marine life in 2023

The Wildlife Trusts charity has produced a round-up of life in UK seas over the last year, and for the Northumberland coast, there's a mix of hope and concern, and a call for faster action to protect the UK's seas.

One of the good news stories saw new legal protection introduced, which has offered some hope for our seas. In 2023, the first ever Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMAs) were designated in English waters. Three areas were designated HPMAs including north-east of Farnes Deep which is now protected from damaging activities such as trawling.

The worldwide pandemic of Avian Flu continued to devastate our seabirds and, whilst there are signs that some birds are showing immunity, vast numbers were lost.

Pollution from sewage, plastic and industry continues to challenge marine wildlife on shore and at sea. With this in mind, the wildlife charity has been actively promoting marine conservation through its National Marine Week events. This includes the Eco Influencer project in Amble (see also page 7,) which has seen members of the Amble Youth Project collecting litter to create



Seal pup. Image by Laura Howe

a sculpture of a dolphin to display in the local area as part of a campaign to raise awareness of the negative impact waste pollution has on the marine environment.

Duncan Hutt, Northumberland Wildlife Trust Director of Conservation said, "2023 has been an historic year for marine conservation with the creation of the first Highly Protected Marine Areas in English waters.

"This is a huge milestone which was achieved thanks to

years of campaigning by our sea-loving supporters. This new gold-standard of protection will stop all damaging activities such as trawling and enables marine wildlife to recover, benefiting fishers and carbon storing habitats. These special places cover less than half a percent of English seas - so it's a tiny first step towards more designations.

"Regulation is vital for protecting the natural world and reversing wildlife declines. The end of commercial whaling has brought humpbacks and fin

whales back to UK waters, and measures to protect bluefin tuna has led to a spike in sightings. This fantastic fish has returned from the brink of extinction and the risk of decimating the population for a second time remains high - so it is vital that commercial fishing quotas are set realistically and rigorously enforced."

He added "When we give nature space, wildlife can recover - it's as simple as that. We must act faster to protect the UK target of 30% of seas by 2030."