



The Ambler

Amble's Community Newspaper

Issue 145 Apr/May 2024

Thanks for
saving lives
at sea



Linda Siney-Taylor, Nathan Purvis, Richard Bewley and Val Connell attended the RNLB thanksgiving service at Westminster Abbey. See page 3

Musical comedy inspired by Amble chippy heads to film festivals



Rosie Fox, Deborah Jameson, Alison Stanley and Lesley Saint-John star in *Bonny Chip*

A musical comedy film inspired by a chippy in Amble was well received by an enthusiastic audience at its premiere in Alnwick at the end of January, and will now be entered into international film festivals.

Writer/producer Rosie Fox told *The Ambler* she had been wanting to make a film about her home town for some time, so when the opportunity arose

to write a script, she jumped at the chance. "I wanted to make something about and for Amble" she said.

The ex Coquet High student is an actress and filmmaker, and has been making short films with her production company 'Fox & Cox' for a couple of years.

Bonny Chip is a short film inspired by Amble's own Harbour Fish Bar. Rosie said, "Growing up in Amble, I used

to visit the chippy with my pals after school for a nutritious early evening snack and would regularly leave in stitches after chatting with the staff members."

The film stars Rosie alongside well-known actors Lesley Saint-John (Auf Wedersehen Pet, Byker Grove), and Rishi Nair (Hollyoaks) as the evil Mr Green!

Crowdfunding helped kick-start the project, and the script

and music were taken from interviews with the Harbour chippy staff - old and new, then pre-production began.

Rosie said "Finding crew and cast in the North East was a challenge, and it is one of the main reasons I'd like to see more quality work being shot in our beautiful county."

The 15 minute film was shot over four days in Cramlington as they had to find a chip shop big enough to have 35 cast and crew members in it, and sadly the Harbour Fish Bar just didn't have enough room.

However, Amble folks will have no trouble identifying the opening shots, which sets the action firmly in the Friendliest Port.

Supporting artists came from all over Northumberland to play the chippy customers.

"*Bonny Chip* will now be entered into international film festivals - let's hope they can understand what everyone is saying!" said Rosie.

She added "It's exciting to know that right now this story all about Amble is currently being watched by film festival judges all over the world!"

Work starts on 'masterplan' for Amble schools

In the first phase of Northumberland County Council's £39m masterplan for the Coquet Partnership of schools, Amble First School will expand and relocate to become the 210 place primary school along with a 26 place nursery.

Barndale House School will open a new 50 place satellite site called Barndale-by-the-Sea for pupils with special educational needs including autism, social and emotional mental health, speech, language and communication, and moderate learning difficulties.

While the two schools will share the existing middle school buildings and site, they will operate independently with dedicated entrances, internal and external spaces and parking.

Contractors, Robertson Construction North East, have now started work on the site where the caretaker's cottage and existing outbuildings have been demolished and external alterations and extensions carried out to the existing buildings.

Cllr Jeff Watson, Cabinet member for Healthy Lives and who represents Amble West and Warkworth, said: "This exciting masterplan for the Coquet

Partnership will be a game-changer for the area, creating first-class teaching, learning and sports facilities that will transform the lives of young people and the whole community for generations to come."

Designs for the primary school include an early years wing, hall and library.

Barndale-by-the-Sea will be fitted out with bespoke SEND general classrooms, a life skills studio, home economics, STEM classroom and library.

The existing playgrounds and playing field areas surrounding the buildings will be maintained and enhanced as part of the development, with a focus on biodiversity including rich grassland and wildflower meadows.

Plans for the next steps include work commencing on expanding the partnerships' other first schools ready for them to become primary schools in September 2024 and on a new building for James Calvert Spence College due to open in April 2026.

Lizzie Jackson, headteacher of Amble First School, said: "We're so excited about our new school and are very happy with the plans. We're going to have new



An image of the new look Primary school at the former Middle school site

classrooms, a library and more outdoor space and playing fields which will be brilliant for the children.

"We decided a new school building needed a new name, and we'll be announcing that very soon. But apart from that, there won't be a lot of changes - other than having a fantastic new building. Our numbers will grow gradually and we're looking forward to having our children with us for that little bit longer."

Mark Phillips, headteacher of Barndale House School, said: "We're really looking forward to opening our new site in Amble

and becoming part of the local community where we can help to make sure more young people have their needs met as close to home as possible.

"I'm very proud of the positive, warm atmosphere staff and pupils have created at Barndale House and we are excited about expanding this to Barndale-by-the-Sea.

"We're also pleased to have the opportunity to work more closely with the other schools in the partnership to support one another and do the very best we can for all the young people in the partnership."

Housing development approved

Councillors have approved plans for 480 new homes on land next to JCSC, despite fears of future traffic issues.

The proposals, submitted by Tantallon Homes, were given the green light by Northumberland County Council's Strategic Planning Committee on Tuesday 5th March. An outline application had already been approved in 2022 and the plans were recommended for approval.

However, members of the committee were concerned about the single access to the estate and the impact this would have on Acklington Road.

Local resident Tom Lloyd told the meeting that he believes the development would have an unacceptable impact on highways safety and a severe impact on the Acklington Road which already serves other developments and provides access to the schools.

Of the 480 homes, 72 will be designated as affordable homes, including four of the four-bedroom homes. This equates to 15% as allocated in the Northumberland Local Plan.

67% of the affordable homes will be for rent, while 33% will be for affordable home ownership via shared ownership and discounted market value.

Councillors were concerned

about the impact on the highway network. However, due to the previous permission, they felt their "hands were tied".

Referring to the decision in 2022, Coun Richard Dodd said: "I did bring up at the time there was a relatively new roundabout that could have linked into all these development."

"It is a crying shame that we have been unable to do so. I feel sorry for whoever is councillor here in years to come when they get going, because the petitions will start - anyone can see there is problems".

But Coun Caroline Ball refused to support the application. She said: "I like the housing design I like the layout and I think it is good overall, but I just think whether we like it or not people have to live on this and there will be 1,000 cars going out on this road."

"It is kicking the ball down the road. I want it on record I think we should have addressed this issue."

Coun Ball abstained from the vote, but the rest of the committee voted to grant permission.

For a longer report see our website: www.theambler.co.uk

See also letters p6

National, local thanks given to RNLI crew and fundraisers



Front: Linda Siney-Taylor, Val Connell, Allan and Vivien Wade

Four volunteer fundraisers from Amble RNLI - Val Connell, Linda Siney-Taylor, Vivien Wade and Allan Wade recently received their Long Service Awards from the RNLI in recognition of their dedication and commitment to fundraising for saving lives at sea.

A spokesperson said "Val has volunteered at Amble Lifeboat Station for over 30 years and Linda, Vivien and Allan have volunteered for over 20 years and continue to raise funds to keep our lifeboats on call 24/7. Thank you to all of them for their loyal service to the RNLI."

Fundraisers and crew from Amble RNLI attended a national service of thanksgiving at Westminster Abbey, to mark the RNLI's 200th anniversary on 4 March. Members will also attend a second service at York Minster on 20 April.

Val Connell told The Ambler, "It was a fabulous experience with representatives from every station in the country and attended by The Duke of Kent and Vice Admiral Tim Laurence."

MOCHA MONDO COFFEE

Did you know we have two shops in Amble? Our second shop is located at our roastery at Unit 6D, Coquet Enterprise Park in Amble (Just around the corner from Morrisons). We're open 9AM - 3PM weekdays and it's FREE to park!

AT OUR ROASTERY SHOP YOU CAN FIND:

- Our entire range of over 25 bagged coffees (we can even prepare them to a specific grind or bag size as needed).
- Northumberland Fudge, homemade flapjacks, coffee makers and equipment, The Nut Roaster's range of nut butters, full range of Bari Tea, Northumbrian Bakehouse biscuits, shortbreads and more. Keep an eye out for limited edition Easter fudge and Easter blend coffee, as well as the return of the popular 'Puffin Poo' fudge!

You can even grab a takeaway coffee whilst you browse the shelves! When ordering with us online, why not choose to collect your order from our Roastery Shop and save on shipping?

MOCHAMONDO.CO.UK

OPEN WEEKDAYS 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

To recognise International Women's Day which is usually celebrated at the beginning of March, The Ambler is keen to shine a light on some of our local female entrepreneurs. Rebecca Phillips is a development specialist, consultant and coach who has recently moved to Amble. In this article, she takes a look at six creative women, each of whom lead and inspire in their own way.

Daring to be different: Women leading in Amble

So many local women are leading and running businesses in Amble, but they are doing things often quietly and in their own way.

I noticed this when I moved to Amble just over a year ago. I think some of the women don't

even see themselves as business leaders, but their actions prove otherwise.

They create an income, support others and boost the region.

As part of International Women's Day, I wanted to

shout about their talent. The Apprentice shows one way of leading, but these women show another!

There are too many to profile in The Ambler, and so I chose business women I met when I first arrived, who I would

call Creative Entrepreneurs.

What did I discover? They are all:

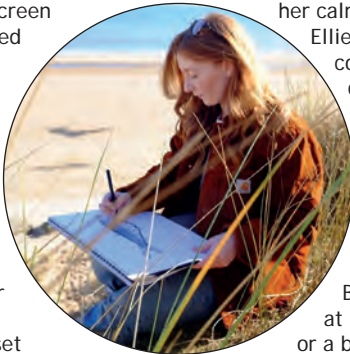
Courageous leading their way
Authentic leading with values
Talented continuously learning
Driven and always adapting
Generous lifting others up

Ellie Davison-Archer

Ellie, a local screen printer is recognised nationally, with her homeware featured in Vogue and Country Living Magazine.

But Ellie and her partner saw that there was a need to find and promote other local hand-makers products and has set up another business called Forage.

A new business takes lots of trial and error, but underneath



her calm, quiet energy, Ellie is a strong and committed leader, determined to work together with all artists to build and grow the business.

To relax, Ellie loves to walk at Druridge Bay, sit with a drink at Brewis Taproom, or a bowl of the Fish

Shack's langoustines, watching the sun setting.
foragelifestyle.com
elliedavisonarcher.co.uk

Gillian Lee Smith

A locally acclaimed artist, Gillian Lee Smith has run her successful art-school business for over 10 years both online and locally in Amble and the region.

Gillian is a pioneer in her field - building her business based on strong values, taking risks to experiment and grow as an artist, and then creating an inspiring space for



others to develop their own way. This personalised approach means that her courses, retreats and mentoring programmes sell-out fast, attracting local and global artists from USA, India and Australia.

For inspiration, you might find Gillian sketching in the harbour or popping into the Taj Mahal or Fish Shack for a fishfinger sandwich.
gillianleesmith.com
 Instagram @gillianleesmithartist

Norma Arthur

Norma brought together her diverse management and teaching experience to run the Amble Pin Cushion which she bought with her husband in 2015 and has since won multiple awards.

There is a lot to Norma's specialist business! She draws on her huge talent along with her team and local professionals to provide bridalwear, alterations, materials and courses for crafters to enjoy - to name just a very few.

Norma is always on the look-



out to develop new parts to the business, which attracts people from all over the North-East and Scotland. The next plan is to appoint a new apprentice who would love to learn the trade and help the business grow further.

When you don't find Norma in her shop on Queen Street, you might find her buying her favourite soup in the Farm Bakery or popping into Lawrence's for that thing you always need.
amblepincushion.co.uk

Helen Cutts

Helen and her husband run PEC, the long-established family run upholstery business on Amble Industrial Estate.

Helen learnt the trade from her mother-in-law and has kept learning with degrees and technical courses as well as from her highly skilled team.

It is clear that Helen is focussed and determined, even if she feels a bit flaky every now and then!

And her own creative talent is evident, trialling new things,



partnering with others in the showroom and holding Saturday rummage mornings for locals to buy ends of stock - a walk into an Aladdin's cave! Helen leads to make a living and to enjoy life, and so you may find her and trusted assistant Mabel the dog sneaking a

sausage at Kayleigh's Kitchen.
pecfurniture.co.uk

Paula Turner and Frances Anderson

Paula and Frances are successful international artists who work all over the world, but are probably more well known locally for running Dry Water Arts - an Arts and Cultural Hub which puts the community at the heart.

They lead a business that doesn't focus on profit, but on building a community that connects and touches people's lives.

Since 2018 they have used their base in Fender's Yard to not just exhibit artists work, but to help us experience a varied range of art forms and creative activities - from dance, visual arts, film to music and



much more.

They lead some of the major events in the town such as ReKindle, and help shape the likes of the Christmas procession. How they lead is inspiring - bringing people

together, seeing possibilities and making things happen.

A little downtime might include a quick dip in the sea and then a warm up at the Brewis Brewery Taproom - a popular spot with our female leaders!
drywaterarts.uk

If you are a female leader and would like to talk through how you lead, please contact rebecca@fluentconsulting.co.uk for a free taster session in collaboration with Dry Water Arts in April/May

Crisis in dog rescue centres

Dog rescue centres in the UK are overflowing with unwanted/ unloved dogs for many different reasons, one of the most common still being the result of the Covid pandemic.

Lockdown ended, owners went back to work, and these “companions” became superfluous and are ending up in the rescue centres, if they’re lucky! Twenty percent of new dog owners who bought a puppy during the Covid-19 pandemic said they didn’t know whether their dog would still suit their lifestyle after the lockdown.

Another reason is the cost-of-living crisis, indeed the RSPCA has reported a 24% increase in pets being handed over to rescue centres last year, and it’s only going to get worse.

As a result, rescue centres are currently under enormous pressure, and there’s no sign of the situation easing at any time.

At the Northumberland Dog Rescue Centre just outside Alnwick, we recently had four rehoming enquiries, all of which we had to decline; with 20 dogs already on our waiting list we could not take them in.

This is just an example where owners are trying to do the right thing, after a change in their

circumstances, wanting to find a new loving home for their dogs. I dread to think how many are just abandoned at a roadside and left to die or fend for themselves!

There is no short-term fix to this crisis within the dog world, while rescue centres are overflowing with unwanted dogs, dog breeders are continuing to bring more and more puppies into the population.

So how can this situation be eased long term?

Prospective dog owners should ask themselves the following questions when adding a four-legged member to their family:

- Can you afford it? Not just food and general care, but the inevitable vets bills over the lifetime of the dog.
 - Who will look after your dog when you go on holiday?
 - Can you care for the dog for the normal expected lifespan of the dog?
 - Are you prepared for the lifestyle changes that you will have to make to look after your dog properly?
- “A dog is for life” is not just a saying, it should become everyone’s mantra.

Lee Fraser
Northumberland Dog Rescue

Turner Street car park not finished



A pedestrian access to the Braid, realignment of a path, and planting have yet to be completed

The Amble has discovered that work still needs to be done to the Turner Street car park to complete the project.

The informal pedestrian access to the Braid has not been finished, the footpath has not been realigned, and promised planting has not taken place. These were all agreed conditions in the original planning application.

The car park is in Northumberland County Councillor Terry Clark’s ward.

He told The Amble: “The car park is a great asset to Amble helping with increased parking capacity within the town centre, but we still have a few outstanding issues to resolve:-

realigning the footpath next to the Marina to give improved visibility, and the small fence blocking access to the Braid, people should not have to jump a fence no matter the size to access the Braid.”

He added: “We have the right to pass on foot and be able to pass with mobility scooters, prams, and pushchairs along this route, it should be accessible and open to all walkers especially people with limited mobility, this obstacle can be a huge barrier.”

We contacted Northumberland County Council, who acknowledged the work that still needs to be done, and promised to notify the relevant department.



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***** NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

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Coquet Vets

Amble . Northumberland

MARCH

First Aid and Poisons evening

Thursday 28th March at 6pm. £15 per person and the evening will be about a hour long. There will be refreshments and you go home with your very own first aid kit.

APRIL

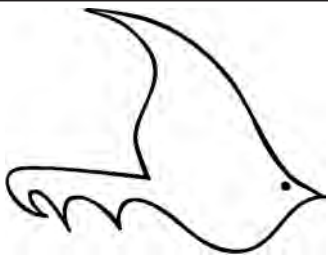
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www.coquetvets.co.uk info@coquetvets.co.uk

Tel: 01665 252250



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2024 Submissions dates:

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

Goodbye, hello and don't forget to vote

Big shocks as Queen Street sees the closure of The Galley, and Independent Food & Drink. It's like losing a friend when long-established businesses close their doors for good. Welcome to the new landlords at the Waterloo, and to new cafe Hithe (previously the Hummingbird). We hear other new businesses are looking to move in, so we look forward to them. As always, we encourage you to vote, so don't forget upcoming elections; 2 May for a new NE Mayor - there may be others on the horizon.

Puffin Festival dates

This year's festival will take place on Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 May. There will be the usual mix of fun and activities throughout the town, most with an environmental and creative vibe.

If you would like a stall, or if your organisation or business would like to put on an activity during the main festival or in the half term week following the festival, let us know and we can add it to the programme and website.

Could you spare a couple of hours to help out? Organisers are looking for volunteers to help with various tasks during the weekend, such as setting up and taking down gazebos, moving equipment, and helping out on some of the stalls.

Please contact Julia on 01665 712929 or email julia@ambledevelopmenttrust.org.uk

New services at Cromies

At Cromie Pharmacy we are extending our Pharmacy First service to allow us to treat seven new minor ailments including: sore throat, sinusitis, impetigo, shingles, UTIs, infected insect bites and children's ear infections. If you are concerned you may have one of these conditions, you can come into the pharmacy or ring up to book an appointment.

We offer walk-in and pre-booked appointments. The service will consist of a consultation with the pharmacist, and they will do any appropriate investigations, and then if needed we can prescribe medication. All prescriptions given on this service follow the usual prescription charges and exemptions, so if you don't usually pay for your prescription, you will be exempt from any charges for this service too.

All consultations are free, so if you have any concerns and wish to see a pharmacist, please come in.

WHAT YOU SAY...

Battlefields cycle tour for Help for Heroes

I am Carl Stewart. I grew up, and have lived in Amble all my life. While serving with the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, I did two operational tours - in Bosnia Herzegovina and Iraq. Therefore Help for Heroes is something that is close to me. I now work for SUEZ as a production supervisor.

Last year I cycled 400 miles through the battlefields of France and Belgium for Help for Heroes, taking in places like Flanders and a stop over at Ypres which included



the daily last post at Menin Gate. I eventually finished by cycling along the promenade of Dunkirk beach where the evacuation happened.

This year I am doing it all again although on a different

route starting at Sainte-Mere-Eglise in northern France. We'll cycle through Normandy, visiting the D-Day beaches, including Omaha, Gold and Juno. We'll also visit other key historical areas including Bayeux, Lisieux, Bernay and many more before ending under the Eiffel Tower in Paris.

I need to raise £3,000 through my just giving page.

Carl Stewart via email
Carl's fundraising page can be found here:
<https://bit.ly/3wHbKAo>

Councillors capitulate to developers again

Our county councillors grumbled about the congestion, but then capitulated to developers AGAIN on 5 March when their Strategic Planning Committee accepted layout proposals for 480 houses on Hope House Farm pouring traffic onto Acklington Road along with the 185 already being built opposite.

Not just future residents but at least 10 years of construction traffic and of course all the JCSC reconstruction traffic, to be followed by commuting First School children once Edwin Street closes. This is literally an Acklington Road accident waiting to happen, and so avoidable if they could just sit down with the

two developers and the school designers, and provide direct vehicle access from the A1068 Percy Drive roundabout and rear pedestrian access to the school.

Please NCC, listen to Amble Town Council who know the area much better, and think again before it's too late!
Tom Lloyd via email

Bord Waalkies



Thank you to Kim Johnson for sending us these wonderful photos of her Black Labradors; Lucie, Dave, Hollie and Jessie enjoying the Bord Waalk sculptures.

Hugh's views: Where are the frogs?

Towards the end of February while walking along the former railway line near Powburn, despite the traffic noise coming from the nearby A697, I was surprised and pleased to hear the heavy purring call of displaying frogs.

The old railway line at this point, was still wet after recent heavy rain and the overgrown drainage ditches on either side were flooded. However, there was no sign of any frogs. After a while, by following their calls, I finally located their spawning ground on the adjacent flooded woodland floor behind a screen of guelder rose and alders. Here I discovered quite a lot of spawn in shallow water sitting on a much deeper layer of mud. The frogs had obviously decided against spawning in the weed choked ditches, but a prolonged spell of drier weather could possibly spell disaster for the survival of these eggs.



No frogs at this flooded site near Hauxley

It set me wondering why it is that with so much suitable habitat around Amble that frogs seem to be non-existent.

Over the past few years, I have not come across a single frog anywhere in or around Amble. I thought that my allotment, greatly overgrown when I took it on, would perhaps reveal a frog or even a toad as I gradually cleared it but this was not the case.

Visits to the flashes in Amble Links in early spring have also drawn a blank, although the sight of common snipe, reed buntings, mallard and once even a water rail helped to compensate for the absence of any amphibians. Other areas including the small pools on the other side of the Links Road were similarly frog-free.

This Spring I have also checked the recently dredged stream and flooded ground behind Kirkwell Cottages but again no frogs. So, what has happened to them all?

Has disease reduced their numbers or have they all made their way to the nearby nature reserve at Hauxley? Perhaps if there is an abundance of spawn in other areas it would help the species to relocate some to suitable habitats around Amble. Relocation seems to have worked well for harvest mice at East Chevington and for several other species at a number of sites around the country.

Seeing a frog either in a garden setting or in the wider countryside was quite commonplace fifty or sixty years ago. How many local children I wonder have actually seen one in real-life?

Hugh Tindall
Are there frogs in Amble? Let us know: editor@theambler.co.uk

Marmalade Awards success

Sandy Higson aka The Mad Jam Woman has added to her growing list of successes at the World's Original Marmalade Awards in Dalemain, Cumbria.

Sandy won a total of six awards in this year's competition. They included a gold award for her Lime and Lemon marmalade with Gin and Chilli, plus silver for her Lemon, Gin and Pink Peppercorn. The Seville Orange with Vanilla and Cardamom took bronze and she has a total of three other commendations.

Sandy, who has been making jam for over 25 years said "I am delighted to have received these most prestigious awards once again."



Previous years have seen Sandy win big at the same awards, which are all blind tested.

In Amble, Sandy's marmalades can be purchased at the Old Fourways and the Northumberland Seafood Centre.

For online sales see www.madjamwoman.com

Increase in antisocial behaviour

Northumbria Police have had an increase in reports of vehicle antisocial behaviour in the Amble and surrounding areas.

Officers have increased patrols and targeted known offenders in the area.

One car was uplifted on 5 March 2024 which has been involved in ASB and driving offences.

Police have had reports and information from the public that a motorbike was being used and driven dangerously within the Amble area.

Officers located the motorbike and it was uplifted from Windsor Terrace, Amble.

Northumbria Police have been working with Northumberland County Council to source an ASB camera for Morrisons car park after reports of vehicle ASB. Officers and the Council are

hoping to deploy the camera in the near future. This will assist to identify and prosecute offenders.

There has been an increase in reports of speeding on the A1068, the main road through Amble. The Police and Council are monitoring the situation and we will look into traffic calming measures if necessary to deter offending.

Amble neighbourhood team take all reports of vehicle ASB seriously and we will target offenders, uplift offending vehicles and prosecute the drivers and riders involved.

Please report any issues via 101 or through our online reporting facility. In an emergency, always call 999.

PC 3835 Dan Richardson
CSO 4089 Fawcett
PC 8129 Bowl
Amble Neighbourhood Policing Team

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Eider duck research paper published

A much-anticipated long-term research study spanning 27 years has recently been published which features the Eider ducks of the Coquet Estuary and harbour.

Coquet Island is a nesting site for Common Eiders at the southern limit of their range on the east coast. This site is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is home to the sole UK colony of Roseate Terns, Britain's rarest nesting seabird, and an internationally important breeding site for some 80,000 nesting seabirds. Despite this, the island is considered by Natural England to be in an 'Unfavourable Condition' because of the decline in numbers of nesting female eiders over the last two decades.

The Coquet Estuary is a "reception nursery area", vital to the survival of Eider ducklings that leave the island between May and July each year.

Local ornithologist Hilary Brooker-Carey monitored the numbers of ducklings arriving within Coquet Estuary daily during the breeding season from 1995 to 2021 inclusive.

Hilary said "It all began

27 years ago when the local authority wanted to know which areas of the estuary were important to wildlife, in particular the Eider duck as it was considered a good indicator species."

Hilary added "it became clear quite early in the study that the Eider ducks on the Northumberland coast were in trouble, with numbers steadily falling year on year, and the study was helping to shed light on Eider duck behaviour and their needs for survival.

"I am delighted that this research has now been published so that it can be shared with other researchers as I believe it is our joint responsibility to help support our special seabird communities along the north east coast."

Dr Paul Morrison who was employed as Northumberland Coast Officer at the time, said: "This is a vital piece of research which helps us to understand the reasons behind the decline of our Cuddy ducks.

"Hilary has quietly undertaken this remarkable work for so many years. It is pleasing to have a genuine researcher in



Above: Hilary Brooker-Carey and Chris Redfern (wearing cap)

our Amble community offering a scientific insight into one of our iconic coastal birds."

Hilary recruited Prof Chris Redfern from Newcastle University to carry out an analysis. He said "Hilary has collected an incredible amount of data over a 27-year period and this gives us a unique and very detailed picture of the arrival and loss of Eider ducklings from the Coquet Estuary. Her data shows that by monitoring ducklings in the Estuary we can estimate

the breeding success of Eiders on Coquet Island and how this is affected by environmental changes.

"Her data provides a platform for promoting Eider conservation locally which will enable human and wildlife activities to exist together within the Coquet Estuary."

The paper is published in Bird Study: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00063657.2023.2286297>

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Amble AFC plans for the future



With the merging of 12 local football teams, leaders at Amble AFC feel that it is time to put plans in place to breathe some much needed life into the worn out clubhouse. There is a proud history of football in Amble and the club feels the town deserves to have facilities which can provide a great match day experience for all teams both now and in the future.

Gary Morrison, Amble Juniors coach, says "With the help of fundraising, local tradesman and volunteers we are hoping to transform the pavilion in to a warm, welcoming venue.

Both sets of supporters will be able to use the facility to grab a hot drink and elevate their match day experience.

"Everyone at Amble AFC would like to thank the community for their generosity and overall support in our project."

The club continues to expand and they hope to be in a position to welcome people into the newly renovated clubhouse before the start of the new season.

If you wish to support them, go to fundraising page: <https://bit.ly/4bWEs0h>

Lily Tibbitts' *Student Life*



It's no secret that I'm not a huge fan of cities. There's too much noise, too many people who you don't know, not enough beaches and fields and hills. Newcastle is a bit of an exception: it's full of Geordies so there's still plenty of small-town-esque friendliness, and being at university means I see a lot of the same faces, so it does feel like there's a bit of a community.

However, at the moment I'm doing some lectures for my

literature course all about books and films set in small towns - specifically small northern towns. I was excited to get to discuss something so (very literally) close to home, especially when we were told that the texts might challenge our preconceptions of people who live in these places, but instead what we got was stereotype after stereotype.

The characters were shown as backwards and unintelligent compared to the progressive city

characters, and even when they were presented empathetically it was all underpinned with the idea that they must be jealous of city living. What's worse is that, when discussing it with my classmates, lots of them seemed to think this really was a progressive view of small-town life. I can only imagine they were expecting to see a medieval peasant village.

It's frustrating that people still have these ideas about what small town people are like, but if they

haven't been to many northern villages and all they know are these terrible books and movies then I almost can't blame them. Hopefully they'll get to visit a small town and see for themselves how great the people are, but if not, at least we get to keep our Northumberland status as the UK's best kept secret!



Remembering Edna Donaldson

George V was on the throne and David Lloyd George was prime minister.

In 1940, at the age of 23, Edna was granted qualified teacher status, teaching at what is now Broomhill First School, which is where she met Walter Brown Donaldson, her future husband, who was headmaster at the school.

Edna and Walter were married on 31 July 1950 at Alnmouth Methodist Chapel. They spent their entire married life living at Eastgarth Avenue.

They both continued to teach at Broomhill school until July 1965, when they retired. Walter and Edna had no children, but were very close to their great-nephew John Alcock, and his wife, Jennifer and their daughters Allison and Annelise.

Sadly in January 1982 Walter passed away at home.

Edna filled her life with family and friends, and was also a faithful member of St Mark's URC. She cared about and was interested in others. She would walk for miles around Amble

each day and was often seen keeping her garden well tended.

By May 2019, she was starting to struggle because of her sight. She was persuaded to go into Heatherdale for respite care, which eventually became permanent care.

In January Edna caught Covid and was very ill, but seemed to recover. Sadly, she was admitted to hospital on February 13 and the amazing lady, with the beautiful smile, passed away peacefully on the morning of 16 February 2024.



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Are the school renovations on schedule?



The middle school should be ready for the new academic year in September. Work is ongoing, but we asked the head of Barndale House School (Mark Phillips) about what the plan was if the Middle School was not renovated on time.

He told us "Both myself and Mrs. Jackson (Amble First) are really excited and encouraged with the progress Robertson Developments are making on our new site. They have very tight deadlines and there is a team overseeing the work to ensure the schedule is tightly followed."

He also said that they are prepared for the renovations to not be on schedule but he did not disclose what plans they had. This is promising for development on the school.
By Noah

Should mobile phones be banned in schools?



The government wants to ban phones from school just like in China, France, Italy and Portugal.



They say that UN data shows mobile phones are used by many secondary school pupils during the day.

At JCSC we are allowed to bring mobile phones in, but we are not allowed to use them. Unless you have special permission, like sometimes the teacher lets us take photos for homework.

Issy: People still secretly use them

Eden: I don't think it's that bad using them in school if they're used to text a carer or parent.

We discussed why we shouldn't have phones in school

Issy: If people are going on Tik Tok and Snapchat they can get hyped up.

Eden: People get distracted

Then we thought about why we should have phones in school

Issy: So you can call if it's an emergency

What we think about mobile phones

Issy: I was 5 when I got my first phone but I could only play games, it wasn't a proper phone. I like phones because they are entertaining and I can text my friends, or my Grandma to tell her if I'm going to be late.

Eden: I was 9 when I got my first phone so I could text my Mam when I was playing out, or Facetime my Mam when I was at my Grandma's. I feel safe when I have my phone.

By Eden and Issy



Time travelling at the Middle School

We met Peter Proctor Cannon who went to Amble Secondary Modern School which we know now as Amble Middle School. Peter told us about a time capsule that he and his class and teacher buried at the school.

This all happened in 1959 because they were excited about the new decade ahead and the space race. His teacher at the school was Mr Tait in room 8, and the capsule was buried

between room 8 and the weather station. This was not the same room 8 as now.

In the time capsule they put records, newspapers, comics, toys, photos of the class and coins. Everything was put in a biscuit tin. At the time, they thought it would be dug up in the year 2000, but Peter says no one knows what happened to it.

Peter said "I would be excited for it to be dug up and would like to see it" but he thought there wouldn't be much of it left and it would be rotten now. Does anyone know whether the capsule was ever dug up? We would love to hear your memories.

Also - maybe we can do a time capsule for the new school when it is finished?

By Issy and Eden



Issy and Eden with Peter Proctor Cannon

What a hero! Thank you Owen's Mum



A couple of days ago, I was out with my friends (Owen and Seth) watching the waves by the Little Shore (they were massive).

Stupidly, I decided to run round a corner and the biggest wave I have ever seen came straight at me. I was drenched from head to toe! We messed around for a little while longer and I was so wet I was dripping. Then we walked

over to Owen's house. His Mum gave us all towels and told Owen to give us all dry socks and joggers. I told her I was late for Artograffi, and like a superhero, she ran upstairs looking for dry shoes for both me and Seth. This is probably one of the nicest things someone has done for me in a while. Thank you so much Owen's Mum!!!

By Noah



Turning hobbies into businesses



Have you ever thought of turning your hobby into a business? Do you want some ideas? Well we are here to help.

You can sell scrunchies, bracelets, old clothes and even your siblings (just kidding!)



Times can be hard so everyone needs a little money. Nina and I both have a hobby for arts and crafts and we love it. I make bracelets with my best friend Harleigh. I have been doing this since November 2023. We were not doing so well at the start but now we have been doing better and got two orders. If you are interested in buying off my site on Depop you can search up "Beadedbyedenandharls" and you will find it!

Nina used to make scrunchies during lockdown, and she says "I have always loved doing art and sewing. I don't have a business like Eden but wish I could sell, but sadly I don't have the time to do it." To make her scrunchies, Nina uses fabric, a sewing machine or needle and thread, iron, pins and elastic.

By Eden and Nina

How you can make your own music



Everyone likes music - pop music, classical music, whatever it is that you find yourself

listening to when you want to listen to something in the background as you do your homework. Now imagine if you could make your own music - completely for free!

Making music digitally isn't as hard as you would imagine - all you need is a DAW (Digital audio workstation - the program you use to make the music), and some VSTs (Virtual sound technologies - basically the instruments that you can use in your DAW). There are a lot of different DAWs you could use depending on the device that you would be running them on. If you have an Apple device like an iPad or a MacBook, it should

already have something called GarageBand, which you can use to make music. It also comes with a bunch of instruments, but unless you're on a MacBook you can't use other VSTs (I think so... I haven't used GarageBand on MacBook myself).

Another DAW you could consider is called BandLab. Even though I had to use it in school up until year 9, I don't have much experience with this one at all but I know someone who manages to make some pretty cool music on there, so if they can do it so can you.

The DAW I use is called Cakewalk by BandLab. Although made by the same company, they are different - Cakewalk is for the PC, but BandLab can be used on pretty much anything.

To me, Cakewalk is the DAW I prefer to use - because I think it has a more professional feel to it than BandLab and it's pretty easy to use/navigate. As soon as I found out how to make it able to use my VSTs and use the piano scroll viewer, I was ready to start making some music!

Of course it might be a little confusing at first, but once you know what you're doing, it's quite fun - plus, Cakewalk can be used for more things other than just composition, such as recording or mastering songs.

Another good DAW I know is FL Studio, but you need to pay for that one. It can be used on mobile too though.

By Grace :)

Amble funeral director champions International Women's Day 2024



Local funeral director, Kim Ramshaw, has been sharing her experiences of working in a traditionally male dominated field as part of the 2024 celebrations for International Women's Day.

Caring for families at a difficult time is the most rewarding element of my job. Earning their trust to care for their loved one and arrange a funeral that's "just right" is a real privilege. Being a woman can be a real advantage as grieving families feel comfortable talking with me and creating strong bonds even in the earliest of meetings. I personally thrive on being able to multi-task given the administration required in arranging funerals today.

It's not without its challenges. The main one I face is the assumption that men are in charge. Often working in pairs when we bring someone into our care, families tend to direct their queries to the man first even though I am the lead. Or if it's two women, men would offer to assist us with lifting or other heavy work.

Female funeral directors is a changing picture in William Purves which has eight branches throughout Northumberland. Compared to a decade ago, the company has doubled the number of female FDs. My advice to anyone wanting to explore a career in this sector, apply if you've got a "I can do this job just as well as anyone" attitude. And look for a company like ours which sets the tone in managing equality, fairness and culture. Not every funeral director is the same.

- *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*

Winning image boosts Amble's creative reputation

Congratulations to Jim Donnelly, who you might see out around Amble or further afield, maybe with his iPhone or a cheap plastic camera, maybe with a really posh state-of-the-art photography kit.

He's a photographer for some of the coolest bands you may (or may not) have heard of, and someone whose imagination has helped him create otherworldly evocative images seen on album covers and used as illustrations all around the world. He helps organise arts and cultural events here in Amble and he also writes. But that's a conversation for another day.

And right now? Well, right now he's the Overall Winner of the 2024 Northumberland Open Arts competition at Woodhorn Museum. Jim is the first photographer to win the Overall category, and adds to the reputation of Amble as a creative hotspot.

The Ambler obviously had to find out more about Jim's creative process, and what makes him tick. And we found someone who seemed genuinely astonished at his success, but more interested in using his voice to encourage others to be creative.

Jim described his entry into the world of photography with typical humour. "When I realised

I wasn't going to be a rock and roll star, I got my Mum to buy me a camera. It was a Zenit, a huge cheap clunky Russian thing. And then I moved onto a Pentax, and I got access to a dark room - I realised that was a whole other skill."

But with a career in IT, and a large circle of friends in the artistic, literary and music world, the lure of creative digital photography was enormous. "By 2010 I had an iPhone3, it was probably the first good camera in a phone, and some of the images I took with that became album covers. The whole point of having digital facilities is you can do more. I'm always trying to encourage people to take photos. Photography is such a democratic medium."

Jim's own creative practise saw him set up a blog where he posted an image every day for two years. "I wanted to force myself, to create a habit to look for images continually. It was good discipline and forced me to think about what and why I was photographing. The great thing about photos is everyone can do it, especially with a phone."

Amble residents may recognise the location in the image that won Jim the Woodhorn prize. He took it in a friend's



*Northumbrian Floodplain
Autumn 2023: Jim Donnelly*

garden overlooking the flood plain between Amble and Warkworth.

"I wanted to photograph the floods on the Braid, and I got some shots, but I felt there was something missing, so I went up to Gloster Hill. As soon as I took that shot, I immediately knew it was a good photo. I also thought it would have more impact if it was in black and white. And I decided it needed to be big!"

Despite being sure of his creative decisions, Jim was hesitant about submitting the piece. The theme of the Open

exhibition is 'Northumberland Now' and is inspired by the Ashington Group, aka the Pitmen Painters, who in turn were inspired by their everyday surroundings.

"There's a selection process first, and I thought I'd be happy if I just got selected. So, when I got a phone call a few days later from Woodhorn, I thought oh... And then they said I was the Overall Winner! I felt I was floating on a cloud; I was so pleased."

Another local artist, Katherine Renton, won Highly Commended.

At the preview evening Jim described feeling somewhat overwhelmed. "When I saw the standard of entries, it was so high. To be even talked about with these people and past winners, people I consider to be really talented, I was flabbergasted! And to be at Woodhorn where the Ashington Group painted, they were so inspiring."

You can see Jim's winning photo alongside work from several other local artists at the 'Northumberland Now' exhibition at Woodhorn Museum until 6 May.

See Jim's work on Facebook: anaxaimages and Jim Donnelly and X (Twitter) @anaXalmages

Anna Williams

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Reports from our *County Councillors*



I secured funding through my small schemes

budget (capital) towards CCTV units within the town, placed at the Paddlers and Fourways helping upgrade the existing system.

I have also had permission to finance five grit bins through my revenue allocation (2024) in area's that do not meet the criteria for bins, within area's not adopted and too flat to qualify for grit bins.

Slip and trip accidents do increase in winter, especially when ice and snow build up on paths. To avoid these hazards five bins will be placed and filled on the understanding residents and parties receiving them will become responsible for them, they must maintain them, and refill them and be liable for them.

I am still chasing start dates for the anticipated zebra crossing on Percy Drive. The scheme aims to promote a safer environment and to reduce the

conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.

I am pleased to see the interactive speed sign has been erected in High Hauxley at the cost of £6K from my small schemes, helping to reduce speeding vehicles through the village. During high winds the solar panels turned in the wrong direction causing the unit to malfunction. Once these signs are installed they become the responsibility of the parish council, they do come with a five year warranty from the manufacturer who will fix the issue.

Fix My Street is still working well and is the easiest way to report problems directly to NCC using the app or website, but residents are still having issues reporting and receiving information. NCC officers state the system is still being fine-tuned, some responses need to be clearer and probably more training is needed in house. fix.northumberland.gov.uk

Terry Clark

Terry.Clark@northumberland.gov.uk 07779 983768

We don't have County Council elections this year, but on May 2 we elect a new mayor for the Northeast. The mayor will head up the new combined authority which will unlock £4.2 billion of investment to the region.

The Conservative candidate is Bamburgh County Councillor Guy Renner-Thompson who also heads up education in Northumberland. Under Guy's leadership Northumberland's Ofsted results have risen to a new high with 95% of our schools being rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' including James Calvert Spence College.

Work has begun to redevelop the Amble Middle school. Amble First School is moving there and is set to become a 210-place primary school with a 26 -place nursery attached. Barndale House School from Alnwick will also open a 50-place satellite location there, meaning children with special education needs won't need to travel so far.

I am pleased to see the work that has been carried out at my


jeffrey.watson@northumberland.gov.uk 07802385367

request on Woodbine Street and the Mason's corner. Further work is to be done to indicate the Woodbine Street bus stop and disabled access to the buses.

The plans for the large development surrounding JCSC are due to go to Planning Committee, the development already has outline planning permission. The application being considered is for the site layout and details of open spaces etc. and includes 70 plus affordable homes (a mixture of rentable and for sale properties.) There are several suggested contributions to Amble as a condition of the development and I will do my best to get them agreed.

Negotiations around various legal issues concerning the footpath etc on the Coble quay area are nearing completion and NCC lawyers are working to get a solution without further delay.

Enjoy the Spring!
Jeff Watson



HAUXLEY PARISH COUNCIL

- Hauxley Neighbourhood Plan has now gone to the independent examiner, who will review the feedback and assess if the plan meets the various legal requirements. The final document should be available for Hauxley residents to vote on in the near future.
- The new speed sign next to Kirkwell Cottages was shifted off kilter by recent storm winds. We reported it to the installation company, hopefully it will be fixed by the time you read this.

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
northumberlandparishes.uk/hauxley

Written and paid for by Hauxley Parish Council

Amble Women's Institute

We ended 2023 with a trip to Newcastle Cathedral for the WI Carol Service, putting us in the mood for the forthcoming celebrations.

Our December meeting rounded off the year with a party and entertainment provided by a Skiffle Band. 2024 was welcomed in with a visit from the Amble Poet, who

had us all chuckling with some very apt observations!

In February we had another visit from 'All about the Bees' with a talk and a chance to snap up some quality products. Some ladies visited Woodhorn Museum, to look around the venue and attend a talk about local artists with lunch in the restaurant.

We had a lovely evening

meal at Warkworth House Hotel. Future events include a meal out and our AGM in March, a trip to Trinity House, Newcastle in April, and a Spring Craft Fair in the Parish Hall on Sunday 5 May. We are also running our coffee mornings and meetings.

We are hoping to invite other Local WI branches to visit us. All in all, a very busy start to 2024!

Food bank update

Ambles Food Bank (AFB) again thanks our wonderful communities for their generosity! We are the most generous part, as well as the friendliest! Thanks to our supermarkets, businesses, schools, care homes, charities and individuals for their support. We try to acknowledge everyone on our Facebook page.

Morrison's continue to organise the pick-up bags and the Co-op manage the food bins and the Sunday food share (clients benefit from food that would otherwise go to waste).

Did you see us on Tyne Tees

news? They did a feature on the Oswin Project that runs a farm shop based at HMP Northumberland. At the end of the week their surplus food is donated to AFB allowing us to add fresh produce to our parcels.

As the price of a Morrison's pickup bag has risen, you may prefer to buy your own items, you can leave them in our cage by the tills. Alternatively, there are food donation bins in the Co-op and Tesco. Please note we are unable to give out anything containing alcohol.

With increasing referrals, we

need to carry out additional food shops. So to make a financial donation of cash or cheque address an envelope to AFB and drop it off at Trinity Methodist Church. Use Amble Food Bank, sort code 77-20-04, account number 17925260 to make a bank transfer. We are registered with HMRC so tax payers can Gift Aid. (e-mail for a form amble.fb@gmail.com). To get a referral, go through an agency such as CAB or Northumberland Communities Together on 01670 620015,

Amble Food Bank



Hello to everyone, as we look to herald in spring with our new member of staff:- Matthew Connelly, who is working on the community orchard project. Trees will be arriving soon but we need equipment and storage, so we have submitted a funding application to progress the project. If successful, equipment will be stored in the compound at the Welfare which has just been extended.

The compound extension was originally done to accommodate the additional needs of the football teams who use the pavilion, but there is a little spare space we can use.

Work on the orchard will begin in March and while the trees need to be planted before the end of the month, we have other plans that will be ongoing. If you are interested and would like to know more, please get in touch with Matthew@ambledevelopmenttrust.org.uk

Some of you may be aware of an incident at the Welfare where a car was driven over the junior football field. This is still being

investigated by Northumbria Police and we hope to have an outcome soon.

The football teams using the Welfare have asked if they can carry out some refurbishment work on the pavilion. Permission



has been granted by trustees who are pleased to support the teams and their fundraising efforts.

The pavilion was refurbished several years ago and was paid for by the S106 received from the first Persimmon development. (See Issue #106 p17) Work carried out included: roof repairs, some building work, new doors and windows, new gas boiler, showers refurbished and lined with wet wall, floors

in changing room painted, new kitchen, lounge repainted and new tables and chairs provided as well as drainage work carried out to the pitches – everything that had been promised was done.

However, the requirements of the teams, now they have amalgamated and need greater usage has changed, and they are being very proactive in attaining those requirements.

They, quite correctly, came to trustees with a plan of what they would like to do which was discussed at a meeting and agreed.

A comment on social media appears to hint that a previous request was turned down. I would point out that no plans have ever been submitted other than from the football teams. While previous intentions may have been well meaning, no actual plans came forward.

As trustees are ultimately responsible as the landowners, they can only consider plans that are presented to them. I do hope this clears up the misrepresentation.

We are still waiting for dates for the playzone work to

commence. I am confident that at some point it will happen!

Amble Town Council held a preparatory meeting for the community to go through the various policies and actions for developing a Neighbourhood Plan. We understand approximately 30 people attended, which was a really good turnout. They now need to register that interest with ATC to sit on a steering group to drive it forward or perhaps liaising information with the community. There will be different options available to anyone interested.

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 and are still awaiting a date for a meeting.

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



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Amble Town

COUNCIL

Town: 11 April, 9 May (inc. AGM) at 6pm. Council Office

Amenities: 28 Mar, 30 May at 6pm. Council Office

Save the Day: Parish Meeting Thurs. 2 May 6pm

Sat. 8 June, 10am: Tour of West Cemetery WWII Commemorations Noon: D-Day 80th Commemoration - Picnic in the Town Square

EAST WARD:	Helen Lewis, lan.parks, 33 Warkworth Ave, Warkworth. NE65 0TP ian.parks. amble@gmail.com	Craig Weir (Chair/Mayor) 76 Priory Park, Amble NE65 0HY 01665 712342 craig.weir. amble@gmail.com	WEST WARD:	David Bewley 11 Brinkburn Place Amble NE65 0BJ 07525713086 david.bewley. amble@gmail.com	Vacancy	GEN. WARD:	Kate Morrison, 3 Island View, Amble NE65 0SE 01665 711191 kate.morrison. amble@gmail.com	Paul Dancer Wellbank Victoria Villas Amble NE65 0LQ paul.lewis. amble@gmail.com
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NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Around twenty people came to the public meeting about the Neighbourhood Plan. The detail and work involved on the three areas of Open Spaces, Conservation & Heritage was explained. Information about finance and assistance from NCC planning staff was also given.

The discussion then developed into a question and answer session. Attendees were asked to consider all they had heard and then contact the Clerk if they wanted any more information. They were asked to indicate their willingness to be a member of a Steering Group by 7 March. This would then be taken to full Council for a decision on whether to proceed.

COMMUNITY HUB

Discussions continue with NCC about the possibility of Amble First School becoming a Community Hub after pupils relocate to South Avenue. NCC do not foresee a need for their own departments to use the building so it could be available for a suitable community transfer. Council now have some details of the yearly running costs which although incomplete were much higher than anticipated. However an energy survey and possible changes could reduce these to a more manageable level. There is now also a condition survey which will need close scrutiny to assess how much work to the building may be required. Further discussions will be needed to break this information down before determining whether to move forward with a business plan - the next stage.

COUNCILLOR'S CORNER

{ Views expressed are those of the individual and not necessarily those of the council }

I joined the council last year as I wanted to get involved in keeping Amble a nice area to live.

Having been approached by one resident about the potholes in the road outside her house, I looked into using "Fix My Street" on the NCC website to report the issue. Once reported the Highways department is instructed to carry out the repairs.

Some people made me aware that NCC emails told them the pot holes had been repaired when no-one from NCC or the Highways department had been seen and the potholes were still there. NCC's reply to this always said that the job reported had been wrongly cancelled by mistake.

It concerns me that jobs are reported as 'complete' when this has not happened. NCC say they are looking into this but meanwhile we all need to keep checking to ensure the money from government for these works is being spent correctly.

As a community, residents need to keep sending in reports to "Fix My Street" and then chase up NCC if the repairs are not completed thus holding them accountable.

Cllr. Michael Joyce

D-DAY COMMEMORATION

Plans are now confirmed for the above event to be held in Amble on Saturday 8 June. In the morning there will be a tour of WWII Commemorations in the West Cemetery- contact the Clerk to book as places are limited. At noon there will be a brief service and wreath-laying at the town Memorials. This will be followed by a short performance from Northumberland Theatre Company to take us from commemoration to celebrating the deeds of all the forces that day which greatly helped to bring an end to the war. There will be a brass band and singing from a number of entertainers. You are all invited to 'picnic' in the Square either by bringing your own food along or buying from the food outlets there. Watch out for the posters!

REFRESHMENT VENDORS

If you would like to be at the 'Picnic in the Square' contact the Clerk with your details as spaces well be limited to encourage a variety of offers.

TOILETS

By the time you read this, NCC should have agreed their budget for 2024-25 and included funds for the ongoing refurbishment of toilets. While there is no legal requirement for them to maintain toilets, it is acknowledged that with a strong reliance on tourism to maintain the county's economy, it is a good idea to do so. It appears that refurbishments already carried out have been successful but have proved much more costly than originally planned, mainly due to unforeseen high rises in materials. It has also been realised that perhaps not all toilet areas need to be so extensively renewed when a robust refurbishment is what is desperately required. Hopefully after two years of promises, our continued pushing will actually achieve those badly needed works for Amble.

PADDLERS PARK

We continue to monitor water usage to ascertain the possibility of a leak here which is increasing the bills considerably. We are looking at yet another repair to the water feature pump to get it working for the season. The last vandalism on this has resulted in almost a total refurbishment being needed. Wanton destruction on this scale each year cannot be sustained long term so PLEASE report anyone you see misusing equipment there.

PROTECTED TREES

Lots of calls recently regarding tree works along the A1068. Although all this avenue of trees has protected status, to keep them healthy and safe, work needs to be carried out. NCC send a qualified specialist to assess what is required; then they apply for permission to do the work. Only after it is agreed will the work be done. These trees are all in the Warkworth Parish area. To check for scheduled works, ring NCC or take a look on their planning portal. While Amble has many trees, few (those on West Avenue, a copse off Acklington Road and a couple in the town itself) are protected. Council have identified others and they are on a waiting list for assessment.

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

Rotary update



December Christmas collections proved to be very successful thanks to the generosity of local residents and visitors. We raised a total of £3,531.88, which will all be used to fund local good causes.

We had a very interesting presentation in January by Fiona Sample CEO of the Oswin Project in which she talked about the work carried out by the charity, working with prisoners at HMP Northumberland, and offenders who have completed their sentences.

Finally, the hard work of planting more crocus bulbs by local Rotarians as highlighted in the last edition of the Ambler is now showing results, with the riverside verge of Rotary Way, starting to become a blaze of purple and white flowers. The purple crocuses are a symbol of Rotary's worldwide effort to end polio via the Purple4Polio campaign.

Further details about the Amble and Warkworth Rotary club can be obtained via www.ambleandwarkworthrotary.org and Facebook.

Easter Services

Sacred Heart and St Cuthbert Catholic Church Amble NE65 OLE
 Good Friday 29 March 11.00 am
 Liturgy of the Cross
 Easter Day 31 March 12 noon
 Easter Mass

Coquet Churches Together -
 Witness in the Town Square (if wet at the Church) followed by hot cross buns/tea/coffee
 Easter Day 31 March 1030am
 Easter Day service

St Mark's URC Amble (Dry Water Arts Centre, NE65 OFG)
 Easter Day 31 March 10.00am
 Communion

St Cuthbert's Amble NE65 ODY
 Maundy Thursday 28 March 7pm
 Communion
 Good Friday 29 March 2pm At the foot of the Cross
 Easter Eve 30 March 7pm Service of Light
 Easter Day 31 March 9.30am
 Communion with Choir

Trinity Methodist Church Amble NE65 OAG
 Maundy Thursday 28 March 7 pm
 Communion Service
 Good Friday 29 March 1045am

'Fray' to premiere at Dry Water Arts

A truly inspirational sharing of art at its very best was held at Dry Water Arts Centre.

An original blend of music, words, images and textiles blended with cutting edge technology and family history. A definite first for Amble and made all the more resonant by the modesty and effortless skill of artists John Kefala Kerr and Denise Kerr.

In a world where everyone is shouting to be noticed it was beautiful and beguiling to dwell in the warp and weft of what it means to be creative.

We are proud to announce that we will be hosting the premiere of the finished piece in the near future.

Please check the Dry Water website for all our regular classes, workshops and exciting programme of exhibitions and live events. www.drywaterarts.uk

Warkworth Memorial Hall concerts

Saturday 20 April: The Wilson Family
 Powerhouse unaccompanied singing to raise the rafters. This family from Teesside started singing together some 50 years ago and are well known at folk festivals throughout the UK. Following their performance at the Albert Hall Proms, they collaborated with Sting on his album "The Last Ship" performing at sell out shows at New York City's Public Theatre. They are back at the Glasshouse (the Sage!) in July, but before then here's an opportunity to share their love of song more locally.

Saturday 18 May: Máire Ní Chathasaigh and Chris Newman
 The celebrated and pioneering partnership of "one of the UK's finest and most influential acoustic guitarists" with "the doyenne of Irish harpers" have performed in twenty-two countries on five continents including palaces in Kyoto and Istanbul, London's Barbican, Sydney Town Hall and the Philharmonie in Cologne. Expect a breathtaking blend of traditional Irish music, hot jazz, bluegrass and baroque, spiced with striking new compositions.

Booking information and further details, 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.



Celebrate Easter at HARBOUR LIGHTS CHURCH

Palm Sunday 24th March 10.30am
Good Friday 29th March 10.30am
Resurrection Celebration 31st March 10.30am

The Radcliffe Club. Charles Road, Amble. NE65 0RA

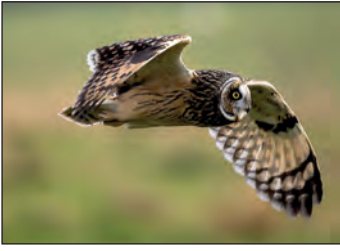
Everyone welcome! A friendly church with contemporary music and an inspiring message.



harbourlightschurch.com



Photographic group continues to thrive



During Covid membership declined, but things have really picked up in the past year. Since returning to our old venue in Trinity Methodist Church our numbers have increased and the

standard of photography has significantly improved, as we are regularly being told by external judges

This year started with a competition on wild birds for the Joe Robinson trophy. Amongst fierce competition this was won by Richard Booth for his stunning shot of a short eared owl in flight.

If you're interested in joining us see our website: amblephotogroup.com which gives our programme and activities. We meet every Friday at 10am. Why not come along for a free taster?

Craft and chatter

at Amble Pin Cushion

Thursday 18 April 1.30pm – 3.30pm £ 5.00

Craft and Chatter (Drop in crafting group)

See their website for other workshops: www.amblepincushion.co.uk
To book your place, please pay your deposit either in the shop or via the website: amblepincushion.co.uk/product-category/workshops/

Bowling Club open day

Shake off those winter blues by trying a new sport. Amble bowling Club will be holding Open Days on Saturday the 20 April and Saturday 27 April 12- 4pm and is inviting anyone young or old, new to the game or played before, to come along and give it a try.

Equipment and coaching will be provided by the club, all we ask is for you to wear flat bottomed shoes/trainers.

The club can be found on the High Street next to the dentist. For more information, please call Kev on 07768808038.

Two great shows at the Parish Hall

The Highlights Team here at St Cuthbert's have two fantastic shows lined up in April and June right here in the Parish Hall.

On **Sunday, 7 April** we welcome the Middle East to the North East! Idlib tells the story of Syrian refugees as they prepare bread to share with one another and the audience. Will you be able to imagine the sights and sounds of Syria as the smell of freshly-baked bread wafts around the Parish Hall? This will be a performance not to be missed.

Our second show is on **Saturday, 1 June** when we will be visited by glitz, glamour and showbiz in the form of Frogal and Fox with A Life in Song. Two aging performers reminisce about their careers and singing of songs from stage and screen by Cole Porter, the Gershwins, Stephen Sondheim and Noel Coward. An uplifting feelgood end to the season.

Both performances are at the Parish Hall on Dovecote Street here in Amble starting at 7.30pm, tickets are £12 or U18s £6 and are available at N and F Young, Queen Street Amble or online at www.highlightsnorth.co.uk

Highlights rural touring scheme is an organisation that brings professional theatre, music and dance groups to Northumberland, County Durham and Cumbria. We at St Cuthbert's, your Parish Church in Amble, seek to promote several of these groups each year by using the Parish Hall as a fantastic venue here in the heart of the town. We would love to see you there!

Linda, Hugh, Meg, Mike, Richard and Nicole, *The Highlights Team*
highlights@stcuthbertonline.com

Coquet Concert Band

The Coquet Concert Band has recently resumed rehearsing for its 2024 season of concerts, including Swarland Village Hall in April, South Shields Amphitheatre in June and Paxton House, the Borders in July.

It attracts experienced musicians who enjoy collective music-making to a high standard (Grade 5 and above), under the leadership of Andy Taylor and it rehearses on Wednesday evenings in Swarland Village Hall. If you are a woodwind, brass or percussion player and are interested in joining us or would like to engage us, please contact via Facebook or email coquetconcertband@gmail.com

Lifeboat Fundraising events

Coffee Mornings upstairs in the Lifeboat Station 10am to 1pm
Sunday 17 March Easter coffee morning with raffle and tombola
Sunday 14 April; Sunday 19 May; Sunday 16 June; Sunday 21 July
Sunday 18 August Lifeboat Day/200 Anniversary
Sunday 15 September; Sunday 20 October; Sunday 17 November
Sunday 8 December Christmas Coffee Morning, raffle and tombola

We look forward to seeing you all to support Amble Lifeboat Station Saving Lives at Sea. Follow us on FB Amble Lifeboat Fundraisers and RNLI-Amble Lifeboat Station.

Easter market at Rigg & Furrow

Friday 29 March Saturday 30 March

Forage Lifestyle presents their first event of 2024 as part of a series of carefully curated makers markets taking place throughout the year at the newly refurbished events barn at the Rigg & Furrow brewery and taproom, Acklington.

After a successful market in winter of 2023, Forage founders Ellie Davison-Archer (homeware designer and resident artist at The Old Bath House Studios) and Steven Eyles (graphic designer) wanted to continue growing the events as a space for like-minded creatives and talented makers to show case their products to an engaged audience and as part of a supportive creative community.

Featuring around 30 makers,

artists and small businesses, the Easter Market will fill the End Hemmel Barn at Rigg & Furrow with stalls full of handmade products from makers, artists and small businesses from the North East and further afield. The Rigg & Furrow taproom will be open for artisan brewed drinks and non-alcoholic beverages which can be enjoyed alongside some local street food in their rustic indoor seating area or out in the paddock.

Location: The End Hemmel, Rigg & Furrow, Acklington Park Farm, NE65 9AA.

Times: Friday 1pm -7pm
Saturday 1pm -7pm.

For more information follow @foragelifestyle on Instagram, like the Forage Lifestyle Facebook page or simply visit www.foragelifestyle.com.

Variety Show

Saturday 18 May at 7.00pm at the Masonic Hall on The Wynd.
A show for all the family.

Free entry; donations for Christian Aid taken on the night. Raffle. Refreshments. Fun. All welcome.

Amble Living History Group

Venue: Dry Water Arts, <https://www.drywaterarts.uk>
Talks at 7pm on Thursdays

18 April: The Blackett Family, Speaker; Al Kirtley

6 May: Seaton Delaval Hall, Speaker; Liz Finch

20 June: Four Amazing Historic Structures, Speaker; Ian Hume

18 July: The Greys of Howick, Speaker; Peter Regan

Awards success for local kickboxing club



Adam White with coaches and pupils with the award

On Feb 6 local kickboxing club Hybrid Kickboxing Amble won the Alnwick and District Sports club of the year award.

Hybrid has been running for eight years and operates on evenings Monday to Thursday; and also an after school club on Tuesday at JCSC.

Hybrid is run by head coach, Adam White. He said, "This is a major achievement for the club and I would like to thank all the amazing coaches, staff, students and all parents who have supported us over the year.

"Thank you to Alnwick [Town] Council for the award and to Blackshaws for sponsoring the award"

He added that the Hybrid Kickboxing Club would not be in existence without all the support they receive, especially from longstanding club sponsors: Trudy and Trevor Long of TDM Autos of Hadston Mark of Grayscale Tattoo Studio Amble Macauley of Macauley Cullen Photography Justin at Hotspur Residential.

Covid remembrance service

As we are all only too well aware, many people died during the Covid pandemic, some of Covid and some from other causes. Those who died during the pandemic, sadly, could only be remembered at a funeral service attended by two or three relatives or friends when in normal circumstances many more would have attended.

On **Tuesday 16 April at 7pm** at Trinity Methodist Church in Percy Street, we are planning to hold a remembrance and thanksgiving service for those who died during the pandemic. All will be welcome to attend this service whether you lost a relative or friend at the time or if you just wish to be part of the service remembering those countless numbers who died during that awful time. If you would like your relative or friend to be mentioned by name either ring Ian Hume on 07881 922 462 before the service or add it to a list as you are welcomed to the service.

Ian Hume (Church Secretary)

Northern Soul night



with the Odels
at Acklington Village Hall.
Sat 6 April. 7pm start.
Bar and Pizza van.
DJ and band until 11.45pm
Tickets £10 in advance:
<https://bit.ly/3SVixhm>

AA PIANO TUNERS UK

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My jaw dropped: Amble PO caught up in Horizon scandal

Amble sub postmaster Bryan Hewson was one of those caught up in the Post Office Horizon scandal, telling *The Amble* that when he realised what had happened, “my jaw dropped”.

Readers may have seen the photo of Paula Vennells in the last issue of *The Amble*, but the story goes deeper than her visit to Amble back in 2016. Then CEO of the Post Office, Ms Vennells visited Amble to congratulate Bryan and his team on achieving ‘Best Improved Branch in the UK’. She even described Amble as “England’s best kept secret”.

Subsequently it emerged that over 900 sub postmasters across the country had been wrongfully convicted of fraud, theft or false accounting between 1999 and 2015, when the Post Office’s own accounting system (called Horizon) had actually been at fault.

And it transpires that Bryan was one of the sub postmasters who had fallen foul of the Horizon software six years before Paula Vennells’ visit.

Bryan told us “When I took on the Post Office in 2002, the Horizon system was already installed. My contract was couched in pretty archaic language, but basically it said I was liable for any financial shortfalls. All was going fine until Friday 20 August 2010 when the system said I had a shortfall of nearly £5,000.”

Bryan rang the helpline and told them he was closing the branch until he found the discrepancy. “I said I wasn’t asking their permission. That’s a big brick of money to lose. I got a phone call from my Contract Manager (who I’d never heard of before) who said I wasn’t allowed to close the office. I told him I had no alternative. I assumed I would find it somewhere. But after two days I couldn’t find it, so I was obliged to send a cheque.

“I did suspect there was something up with the software. I looked closely and I could see there were gaps in some of the transaction numbers, but the helpline couldn’t give me an explanation; they said they couldn’t help me or put me through to anyone from the Horizon system. So I had to pay because of my contractual obligations.”



Amble sub postmaster Bryan Hewson. Photo: Anna Williams

Bryan says he put the whole thing down to experience “My attitude is I can’t fix the past, so I’ve got to get on with it.” The years that followed saw the Amble Post Office team push hard to provide their customers

in London with the Post Office management including CEO Paula Vennells. “I did tell them how much the sub postmasters I had trained hated them. They seemed surprised.” Then came the three year trial,

the Post Office, after being wrongly accused. Bryan followed the trial proceedings carefully, reading the days’ transcripts each evening. “Now they put the public inquiry on YouTube, and I watch that every day. It was during one of those sessions there was a reference to a massive system update of the Horizon software on Thursday 19 August 2010. My jaw dropped. That was the day before my loss – that date is burned in my mind.”

He submitted a claim to the Post Office’s Historical Shortfall Scheme, and within five weeks received his money back, plus interest.

Despite his experience Bryan harbours no ill feeling. “They are not evil people, they’re not crooks. They may be lacking in competence. People in big organisations, some know how to duck and dive and tell the boss what they want to hear. I am not bitter.”

But he acknowledges he didn’t lose a huge amount compared to others, “I didn’t lose my job or house. If I had lost more, perhaps I would feel different.

“I admit there’s a lack of trust now between me and the Post Office, and it’ll be interesting to watch the next phase of the public inquiry. I believe the truth always comes out - hopefully in one’s lifetime.”

Anna Williams



Paula Vennells visited Amble Post Office in 2016. Photo: Andrew Mounsey

with a good service, culminating in their ‘Best Improved Branch’ award in 2016. Bryan also trained other sub postmasters and took part in regular meetings

now made famous by the ITV series ‘Mr Bates vs the Post Office’ which saw hundreds of sub postmasters fight and ultimately win their case against