

# THE VILLAGE VOICE

Issue No 2 Volume 14

Lanchester, February 2013

For contact information, see page 2

## HEAVY SNOWFALLS IN LANCHESTER BRING HAVOC

After the rain came the snow with devastating affects for some, tremendous enjoyment for others. Travel by whatever method became difficult and delayed, with the climax being an Eddie Stobart lorry which jackknifed on the bypass near the Parish Church. Another large tanker failed to negotiate the turning into Broadoak Drive off Newbiggen Lane and had to reverse all the way down the hill. The snow also brought regional and national recognition to the village with St Bede's (interview with a young lad), All Saints and the EP School being featured on national and local BBC News programmes. Karen McKenna, Head Teacher of All Saints spoke at length on BBC Look North about school



*The jackknifed Eddie Stobart lorry on the junction near the Parish Church*

Photo Bob Gibbon

closures and the reasons why this happens. She praised parents and friends for the help they

gave clearing snow at the school. Jane Davis, Head of the EP School commented in a similar

vein on the same news programme the following day when the schools had re opened.

*Continued on pages 8 and 9 with more photos*



*A super snowman in Railway Street courtesy of the 'Bell' household*



*Council workers in action. They did a great job along with shopkeepers.*



## Dear Village....

The views expressed in letters to the editor are not necessarily those of the newspaper, the editor or persons working for the newspaper. The editor retains the right to cut or otherwise amend any letter published. Letters must contain your name, address and telephone no., all of which may be withheld at your request.

Dear all

After 6.5 years' service of which almost 5 years has been covering Lanchester and Burnhope, I am now being redeployed to The Grove/Moorside/Castleside area from February 2013.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working with you all and it will be a wrench to go. The move is due to operational reasons - for the rural area of Lanchester/Burnhope to be more quickly covered by a PCSO with driving skills (now a new core requirement of being a PCSO).

Your new PCSO will be PCSO 6780 Lisa Jackson.

## How to contact the Village Voice

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lanchestervillagevoice@yahoo.co.uk (please include Village Voice in the Subject line).

By post:

The Village Voice, c/o Lanchester Community Centre, Newbiggen Lane, Lanchester, DH7 0PB.

I hope the community has been happy with the service I have provided over the years. It has been a pleasure to be welcomed as part of your community and an absolute privilege to have been your PCSO. I have numerous happy and funny memories!!

I will still be, whilst on duty, using service buses and my police cycle when not doing foot patrol so please stop me for a chat when you see me.

Kind regards, Vanessa  
PCSO 6846 Vanessa Gray  
Police Community Support Officer

Dear Village Voice

With the weather being so bad recently, most of us will have had to dig our cars and possibly some of the road out to get out to the main roads. After doing that, we go shopping, only to come back and find some inconsiderate person has parked in the place we cleared.

When confronted, I was told "Well, I pay my road tax". I'm not on about what is paid or not, I'm just saying, have some consideration for other people, please.

Christine Eland

Dear Village Voice

On Saturday January 19th I was crossing Peth Bank between Burnhopeside Avenue and Deanery View. It was about 6.45 pm and dark. I fell down on the ice and sustained bruising and cuts to my face. This required a visit to A&E where staff treated the wounds with stitches. I would like to thank the gentleman who helped me up and took me back to my home in Holmeside Avenue.  
Angela Richardson

Dear Village Voice

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the library borrowers, work colleagues, family and friends who came to my 'surprise' leaving party - making my final day in Lanchester Library so memorable.

Special thanks are due to Joan, Christine and Clare who organised the party, to Richard Downs who painted the lovely picture of the library and to Terry Deary for his memorable speech!

I have enjoyed my career in the library service and feel privileged to have spent 37 very happy years

working in Lanchester Library.

I have been totally overwhelmed by the many cards and gifts from library borrowers and work colleagues. Your good wishes, love and support are greatly appreciated.

Thank You All!

Love and Best Wishes,  
Monica Murfin

Dear Village Voice

Many thanks to the gentlemen who located and returned my lost keys found on Kitswell Park football pitch. They were as good as new even after being buried under the snow for three weeks!

A Turner

Dear Village Voice

A big thank you to Santa's elves for the present you left outside our house in Humberhill Drive. It was much appreciated.  
From The Dougals

THANK YOU

A big thank you to the residents of Hollinside for their kind donation of £100 to Macmillan Cancer Support. The money was raised on a chilly day in January from snow clearing.

## IT'S ALL ABOUT PEOPLE

## THE VILLAGE VOICE

Dear Village Voice

As a former member of the Scout Movement in the district, I am researching the movement in County Durham from 1907-1960. I am looking for information on group leaders of all ranks, and scouting activities - camps, gang shows and jamborees including photos (which will be returned), the dates groups began and their memberships.

I am also looking for information about the group attached to Lanchester Parish Church (late 1940's/early 1950's) as I know of an award given to the late Harry P Thompson for a river rescue at Cotherstone in Teesdale.

I can be contacted on (01207) 284344.

Ian Finlayson

## COMMUNITY DRAW

The winning number in the Community Draw for January 2013 is 75. The draw was made by Ashleigh Legge of the GYM.



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# CHANGE AT LANCHESTER COMMUNITY CENTRE

After 16/17 years as Secretary of the Community Centre Harry Taylor has decided to retire.

As a boy Harry attended Stanley Grammar School and originally planned to become a teacher. However, in those days ex-servicemen were given priority so Harry made his career in banking. He began by working for TSB in Ferryhill, then on to Stanley in 1976 where he remained for 24 years as Pool Group Staff Controller covering six branches.

Harry will continue to devote his time to his

interests in golf, bridge and foreign travel.

Fortunately for the Chairman of the Community Centre, Arthur Maughan, he has been able to appoint Bob Gibbon, initially as Assistant Secretary, and Secretary designate.

The three men are good friends. Bob taught Maths and IT at Durham School before retiring in 2010. Bob is also a keen golfer and enjoys his allotment, conveniently situated at the back of his house.

We wish Harry well in his second retirement and success in his new role.



Bob Gibbon (left) and Harry Taylor take a look at the books

## LETTERS IN MEMORY

Dear Village Voice,

I would like to thank our family, especially Philip and Suzanne for their support during John's long illness leading up to his passing away on 24th January 2013. The funeral took place at All Saints Parish Church on 5th February.

Rev Rupert Kalus was particularly helpful and kind especially during the last few weeks before John died and immediately afterwards. He conducted a moving funeral and delivered a wonderful address. Canon Peter Waterhouse, a long time family friend who has been a great source of comfort for many years read from the Gospel of St John. Our daughter Suzanne read a poem, and Philip our son coped extremely well with the very difficult task of the Eulogy. Other readings for which I am truly grateful were by Jackie Easton and Joan Anderson, both close family friends.

I would like to offer thanks to all my friends too numerous to mention for all the support I have



John Edmund Reed  
1940-2013

received in the form of cards, flowers, visits and phone calls. It is so much appreciated. Special thanks to my close friend Joan Osborne who has been alongside me constantly during the 13 years of John's illness. I am grateful too for the presence of so many people at the funeral and ladies from the Mothers' Union who helped with the buffet. Finally, my thanks are for the Durham Constabulary who provided John with a motorcycle escort and an officer outside the south door of the church. John would have been very proud.

Yours sincerely  
Phyllis Reed

Dear Village Voice

We are sad to announce that former long time resident of Lanchester, Ann Foulkes, died peacefully in a Darlington hospital, on 23rd January, aged 98.

Ann was a founder member of the Bridge Club and for many years a member of the Flower Club, a supporter of The Partnership and Save the Children Fund.

She moved from Mount Pleasant to Lynwood House where she remained for a few years until its closure. Her last three years were spent at North Park Care Home, Darlington. Ann was a good neighbour and friend to many people in the village.

Her funeral took place at Darlington Crematorium on February 18th. Donations may be sent to Save the Children Fund.

Yours sincerely  
Claire Burnett (now living at Abbots Langley) and Florence Stocker (Lanchester), both friends and neighbours of Ann.

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## TACKLING FLOODING RISK - UPDATE

Please do not think that last year's floods have been forgotten and nothing is being done.

### **The County Council**

The County Council is now the "Lead Local Flood Authority" for Lanchester.

It has investigated the causes of flooding and is now looking into potential preventative measures. It has awarded a contract to Aecom (a firm of consulting engineers) to carry out a feasibility study which, it is hoped, will identify and assess possible measures. This study is likely to focus on both rainwater flow down Newbiggen Lane and the culvert that carries Alderdene Burn under Front Street, and is due to be completed by mid-April. If it identifies one or more schemes that appear to be worth developing into actual projects then the County Council will try to obtain funding for detailed design, land acquisition and construction. However, the earliest that a scheme

could be delivered would be 2014/15.

The County Council has carried out a CCTV survey of the Smallhope Burn culvert, which it found to be in good condition. Also, it will soon carry out works to prevent surface water running down Ford Crescent from Ford Road. Unfortunately the display of house protection devices that it planned for January had to be cancelled and has not been rearranged.

### **Northumbrian Water Limited**

NWL has said that it does not have any operational issues with its drainage system. Nonetheless it has carried out some improvements - for example at Ford Crescent and Victoria Terrace.

### **Environment Agency**

The Environment Agency has removed an obstruction from the Smallhope Burn beneath the Valley Walk bridge. This work was done in two parts; the lower section was removed a few days after the flood using the EA's

emergency powers and the upper section was removed later, following consultations with the landowner.

### **Pat Glass MP**

Our MP and her staff are helping people who are having insurance problems following the flooding.

### **Front Street Shopowners**

Ged Peadon and other Front Street shop-owners are making sure that the most critical Front Street gullies are kept clear.

### **Village Residents**

The County Council is also reviewing with the Environment Agency the possibility of training members of the community as Community Flood Wardens. Wardens may be able to assist by monitoring flood levels, checking that gullies are clear and distributing sandbags.

### **Collection Boxes**

And finally, the collection boxes in Spar, the Post Office and Sweets & Treats have so far collected nearly £80. Thank you, everyone.

Mike Gladstone

## HOLIDAY CHALETs AT ORNSBY HILL?

The owner of the field behind Ornsby Hill has applied to build 8 holiday homes on it. If you want to know more about this proposal you can look it up electronically on the County Council website - Environment and Planning - Planning - View Planning Applications Online - Former Consett Area Office - Application Ref No 1/2012/0628 or ask Sally Laverick (Tel: 521 957) to let you look at a paper copy.

The Lanchester Partnership thinks that if the holiday homes were built then they would

provide one job, would probably bring a small amount of custom to the village shops, and might encourage some tourism, but set against that:

- \* residents of Ornsby Hill would be badly affected by the extra noise, light pollution and increased activity;
- \* road access off Howden Bank could not be made safe;
- \* the site is outside the Village Development Limit;
- \* the site is in rural countryside, in an area of high landscape value that forms the

rural setting for the village;

- \* the site lies across a major wildlife corridor that would already be damaged by the Maiden Law Hospital site housing; and
- \* a precedent would be set for building on this important hillside.

If you would like to comment on the proposals please write to:

Durham County Council,  
Planning Development  
(North), PO Box 255,  
Chester-le-Street,  
Durham, DH3 9EA,  
quoting **Application**  
**Ref No 1/2012/0628.**



## LANCHESTER SLIMMERS JOIN CAMPAIGN TO 'SLIM FOR GOOD'

A group of big-hearted slimmers from Lanchester are doing their bit for the local community and for their health by taking part in a sponsored slim to raise money for Willow Burn and Henry Dancer Days.

Members of the Lanchester Slimming World group are taking part in the weight loss club's national 'Slim for Good' campaign which aims to support

communities across the UK by improving the health of the local people and raising money for good causes at the same time.

We follow a healthy eating plan that encourages you to fill up on normal every day foods like pasta and potatoes, lean meat, fish and poultry, fruit and vegetables and much more - all without having to count, weigh or measure, so you're

never hungry or deprived. We know from experience that getting sponsored to lose weight is a great motivation booster. And when it's for a cause that's close to your heart, there's even more incentive to do well!

In their six week slimathon, Lanchester Slimming World are looking forward to making their loss Willow Burn and Henry Dancer Day's gain.



*The Lanchester slimmers with their 'Slim for Good' leaflets*

## FOOTBALL NEWS

With the football back up and running after games being affected by the weather it was important to get back to winning ways and climb the table for the football team.

First up in 2013 were Tantobie Commercial away in the league, Lanchester won 2-1 with goals from Stevie Smithson and a late winner from Stu McPhail. Next up was another away league game to Stanley Town, The lads recorded their 2nd victory over

Stanley Town running out 3-1 winners with goals from skipper Peter Edgell, Richard Pearce and Smithson. The Lads then played host to the Freemasons Arms who beat them 4-3 earlier in the season but Lanchester pulled off a deserved victory with a little help from veteran Steven 'Tadge' Bell winning 2-1, The Scorers were Pearce and Smithson again.

LCCFC are currently sitting 3rd and are pushing for a

promotion place and will need to keep up this good run of form if they wish to stay there come the end of the season. The lads are holding a race night to raise so much needed funds for next season on Friday 1st March - it starts at 7 pm at the Cricket Club. Tickets are £3 each, inc pie and peas. Horse ownership and race sponsorship are also available. Anybody interested in attending please contact Donny Crozier on 07432677155.

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# LANCHESTER PARISH COUNCIL

## Notes from the Ordinary Meeting held on Tuesday 12th February 2013

### Minutes

Ordinary meeting held on 8th January 2013 - approved.

Finance, Development & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 30th January 2013 - approved.

**Police Report** - Lisa Jackson, the new PCSO for Lanchester, attended the meeting and presented the police report which covered a 2 month period (see separate article). Congratulations were passed to John Henderson on his recent promotion to Sergeant. The Neighbourhood Warden report for December was also discussed.

**Correspondence**  
(1) Campaign to Protect

Rural England - over responsibility. Following discussion at a previous council meeting, information had been sought from the County Council on maintenance and liability issues particularly in relation to the burn, culvert and trees in this area.

### Grass Cutting Contract 2013

Press and public were excluded from this item.

**Grassed Area - Lanchester Valley Railway Path** - between Station Road and Newbiggen Lane

The Chair gave the background to this item in that the County Council have stopped cutting the grass in this area which they own and have approached the Parish Council to ask if the Parish Council would wish to take

The response from the County Council to these enquiries was reported and discussed. Residents attended the meeting and raised a number of concerns and issues.

It was agreed that the County Council be approached to consider whether a formal agreement could be put in place which would mean that the County Council

would retain ownership, management and liability for this area and which would allow the Parish Council to cut the grass.

**Area Action Partnership & Parish Councils Committee** - Members received an update on recent meetings.

**Parish Council Newsletter** - The quarterly newsletter was discussed and approved for distribution.

### General Power of Competence

Members discussed adoption of the power. Members resolved that they met the criteria and adopted the power.

**Financial report** - discussed and received.

**Accounts for Payment** - approved.

### Dog Fouling - Kitswell Park

Members were informed that there have been recent incidents of dogs fouling on the football field and of damage being done to the playing surface from dogs being exercised on this area. It was agreed to consider the signage and also to contact the Neighbourhood Warden to report the problem of dog fouling.

The next Ordinary meeting of the Council will be held on Tuesday 12th March 2013 at 7.15 pm.

## LANCHESTER PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPT

This article is to explain to residents the level of precept that the Parish Council has agreed for 2013/14 and the reasons behind this decision.

The Parish Council considered its precept requirement at a recent Council meeting and set the precept for 2013/14 at £50,624.00.

The Parish Council considered a number of factors which combined to reduce the income received by the Council.

\* The removal in 2012/13 of the annual £6,000 payment previously received from Derwentside District Council and then from Durham County Council.

\* The removal from 2013/14 of the annual £1645 double taxation payment previously received from Durham County Council.

\* The introduction from 2013/14 of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme managed by Durham County Council. The effect of this is that the council tax base will be reduced although the Parish Council will receive

a grant to partially cover the loss of income.

The net effect of these factors is to reduce the annual income received by the Parish Council by over £8300.

The agreed precept of £50,624 for 2013/14 is the same as the precept request for 2012/13. However the reduced council tax base will result in an increase in council tax per household. A property in band D will see an increase of £3.05 (9.3%) this year. This equates to less than 6p per week.

The Parish Council were reluctant to impose any increase in precept but realise that there was a need to partially bridge the gap caused by the reduction in income received. The Parish Council will continue to work hard to realise efficiencies and to develop projects for the community. Over the last 4 years almost £195,000 has been secured by the Parish Council and in partnership with other organisations to deliver projects in the Parish and improve services.

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# POLICE REPORT

## Reporting period:

28/11/2012 to 21/01/2013

## Number of calls for area:

104

## Number of community related calls:

18

Alcohol seizures 0;

Aggravated burglary 1

(Ford Road - two unknown

masked males entered

unlocked front door of

occupied dwelling and

were challenged by the

occupiers whereby the

offenders ran off without

the property they were

demanding); Burglary 2

(Hollinside Terrace - shed

broken into by unknown

person overnight; Farm -

secure barn broken into by

unknown person(s) who

decapitated circa 14 hens);

Distraction burglary 1

(elderly female subjected

to a 'distraction burglary'

where two males stated

they wanted to test the

water, whilst one male

distracted the female the

other searched the

premises and stole items);

Anti-social behaviour 9

(youths causing nuisance

mainly in The Garths, Percy

Place and Front Street -

area around takeaways is

subject to increased police

and warden patrols and is

part of the PACT priority);

Criminal damage 2 (rear

door of takeaway and

fencing at rear of Railway

Street damaged).

## Crime prevention advice

Please remember to look at

your own personal security

and that of your dwelling,

garage, shed etc. Keep a

light on and curtains drawn

when leaving your dwelling

in the dark evenings (and

leave a radio on?); make

sure all windows and doors

are locked (and don't leave

keys in lock on inside of

door).

Consider setting up or

joining a free

Neighbourhood Watch in

your area. They work! For

info please speak to PCSO

Vikki Ord at Consett Police

Station (via non-

emergency no 101).

Please report any

suspicious behaviour to

police via 101 or 999 if

believed a crime is being

committed.

Please attend Lanchester

PACT meetings to discuss

your issues and concerns,

see article below.

From February 2013, there

will be a change in

Neighbourhood Policing

Team Officers for

Lanchester and Burnhope.

The replacement officers

will be PC Ian Bradley and

PCSO Lisa Jackson. PC

John Henderson has been

promoted to Sergeant. He

would like to thank

everyone - the residents

and Councillors, for their

assistance and their

support. PCSO Vanessa

Gray is to be redeployed to

The Grove, Moorside,

Castleside. Please see

Vanessa's letter on page 2.

# DURHAM PCC BUDGET

Ron Hogg, Durham's

Police and Crime

Commissioner, published

his plans and budget for

2013/14 on 9th February.

Following public

consultations, his top

priorities are:

\*tackling anti-social

behaviour;

\*tackling harm caused by

alcohol and drugs;

\*improving road safety by

tackling careless and

dangerous driving; and

\*making policing services

visible and accessible at

all times.

To achieve this, he

proposed a budget

increase of 2% which will

be a cost to households of

just under 4p per week (or

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## POLICE AND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER (PACT)

If you want to get involved in how your local area is policed, Durham Constabulary has the answer!

Along with our local councils we have developed PACT - Police and Communities Together - to ensure we're tackling the issues which matter to you in your community.

PACT meetings are held in local venues on a regular basis - in Lanchester Community Centre on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 7.15 pm. We also hold online PACT meetings, PACT meetings in schools and sometimes PACT meetings in public open spaces (weather permitting).

At every PACT meeting there's a discussion about PACT priorities.

These are the issues which local people tell us they want their local policing team to tackle. If an issue is made a PACT priority it will be tackled, and there will be an update at future meetings about what has been done about it. PACT priorities should change all the time, because we aim to sort out the issue and move on to something else.

But you don't have to attend a meeting. You can be part of PACT simply by contacting your local neighbourhood team. You may see one of them out and about in your area, you can ring them using the 101 number or you can follow them on Facebook and Twitter. PACT is your opportunity to influence what we focus on, where you live.



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# SNOWFALLS IN LANCHESTER

Continued from front page



*A super view of the village from Paste Egg Bank*

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TV cameras pictured children, sledging, snowballing, and building an igloo (see back page). The three schools closed for two days. Paste Egg Bank was also featured on TV and for a few days this area was full of youngsters and adults enjoying sledging and skiing. The first people up there went at night with torches on the first evening of heavy snow. Dr Brunt owner of this field should be thanked for allowing everyone to use it. There were many snowmen dotted around the village which were a delight to see and obviously brought great pleasure to the children.





*A blizzard in a near-deserted Front Street*



*A couple of posers - Hannah (left) and Emily. No way did they build this super snowman at the beginning of the path to Malton in Station Road, but well done to whoever did.*



*This tanker slewed across Newbiggen Lane at the entrance to Broadoak Drive then eventually reversed all the way down the hill.*

On most estates it was precarious for drivers and pedestrians. However, council workers and shopkeepers did clear the pavements in the village. It was all reminiscent of winter 2010 with endless shovelling of snow and worry about travelling to and from work. At least the thaw was quicker than three years ago. Let's hope the worst of the winter is now over.



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## CAN IT REALLY BE SPRINGTIME - FINALLY AFTER A LONG, COLD AND WET WINTER?



Snowdrops, like the ones shown in this picture, can be seen at this time of year in many gardens in the village and are often seen poking their white heads out of the freshly fallen snow. After such a long and cold winter they give a clear indication that Spring is on the way.

## Gardening in March

There is always something to be done in the garden even in these early months of the year. Some tips for next month are given below.

### In the Borders

If the soil is workable, March is a good month to dig in an inch (or more) layer of compost or well rotted manure into your borders to help with the growing in the months ahead. Any bulbs that have finished flowering indoors such as hyacinth and daffodils should now be planted in the garden and if you want to divide snowdrops that have finished flowering, now is the time to do this whilst the leaves are still green. Also it is

a good time to lift and divide herbaceous perennials to both improve their vigour and produce new plants. Prune winter flowering Jasmine and early Clematis that have finished flowering to encourage new growth for next year's flowers and trim winter flowering heathers as the flowers disappear. Deadhead Daffodils as they finish flowering and deadhead Hydrangeas before new growth appears.

### In the Vegetable Plot

Prepare vegetable seed beds by removing all weeds and forking in plenty of compost and cover the soil with plastic sheets to keep it drier and warmer ready

for planting. At the end of the month plant any early potatoes outside in the ground or in potato growing kits on a patio. Start to sow seeds of carrots, radishes and lettuce in sheltered borders directly or under cloches.

### General

Other jobs in the garden include top dressing containers by removing the top 2 inches of compost and replace it with new. Mulch fruit trees with well rotted manure or garden compost taking care not to mound up around the trunk and mulch rhubarb. Start sowing bedding plant seeds so that they are ready to plant out after the late frosts.



# HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND HELPS THE STUDENTS FROM ST BEDE'S

The Heritage Lottery Fund has helped students from St Bede's School to celebrate the history of the Lindisfarne Gospels.

St Bede's Catholic Cluster of Schools in Derwentside has received a grant of £9,600 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for their project 'The Lindisfarne Gospels: A Transition Journey'.

Inspired by the exhibition of the

Lindisfarne Gospels in Durham, the project will give the pupils in all nine of the Catholic schools the opportunity to explore, participate in and celebrate the heritage of this hugely significant manuscript throughout 2013.

Primarily, the activities will be focussed on Year 6 pupils making the transition to St Bede's. They will take part in a hands-on, creative project

supported by the Sixth Form volunteers and led by the professional artist, Vicky Holbrough. The pupils will use the intricate artwork and iconography of the Gospels to inform their own design ideas. They will learn skills in metal embossing and the application of ink in order to create a collaborative piece of art that will showcase their response to the Lindisfarne Gospels and its symbolism.

The creative element of the project will conclude in July 2013 when the resulting collective piece of art will be unveiled by local author and storyteller Adam Bushnell at a celebration event at St Bede's Catholic School.

The students will conclude the project in October by visiting Holy Island and seeing where the Lindisfarne Gospels originated for themselves. During

the visit the children will take part in the various activities based on the Gospels and the Northern Saints, bringing the project full circle.

The Lindisfarne Gospels book is one of the greatest landmarks of human cultural achievement. Created by the community of St Cuthbert on Lindisfarne it is one of the best examples of creativity and craftsmanship from Medieval times.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE ...

Hansard tells us that the work of the cross-party select Committees involved in scrutinising the legislature is improving public perceptions of Parliament. It points to the work of the Public Accounts Committee in naming and shaming big companies who are avoiding paying tax, the Culture & Media Committee in phone hacking and the establishment of the Leveson Inquiry and lately the Education Select Committee's influential role in a governmental change of heart on scrapping GCSEs.

I was part of that Committee and heard overwhelming evidence from schools, head teachers, universities, and learned bodies, employers, exam boards and even from the independent regulator that whilst reform is needed the GCSE brand still delivers what is required of it. There is evidence of grade creep and equivalences and incessant re-sits but we were told loudly and

repeatedly that those are issues that can be addressed within the brand. We also heard evidence of concerns that wholesale education market reform and competition and franchising with examinations could result in problems similar to those we now see in the energy and rail industries. I do not take full credit for the Secretary of State for Education's change of heart on GCSEs and market reform but I do think that the Select Committee report was probably just the last straw and I am proud to have been part of that inquiry and delighted at what I think is the best possible outcome for our young people.

If you would like to contact me or need my help with any issue of concern, please write to me at Pat Glass MP, Gledstone House, 26 Newmarket Street, Consett, DH8 5LQ, email me at pat.glass.mp@parliament.uk, or phone my office on 01207 501 782.

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## JACK AND JILL PANTO AT THE METHODIST CHURCH



*Members of the cast of the Panto 'Jack and Jill' at the Methodist Church with Marjorie Hughes (who was the Scriptwriter, the Director, and the Producer) in the centre of the photo. There was also a special surprise guest appearance by Dennis Laycock with the Olympic Torch.*



*The children are allowed to hold the Olympic Torch*

## LANCHESTER LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The first meeting of the year, on Friday, 1st February, saw a speaker new to the Society, Dennis Jones, Architect, from Durham. Mr Jones gave a Powerpoint presentation entitled 'Brancepeth Castle. Medieval Castle to Victorian Mansion'. This was extremely interesting, as most of the members know of the castle but do not know much about it. Not much is known about the early history of the castle and Mr Jones concentrated on its

reformation, showing members many photographs and plans of the layout and interior and exterior over the years, beginning with the changes made by the Russell family in the nineteenth century to the present day. The present owner, Mrs Margaret Dobson, uses the building commercially, for events such as Craft Fairs, and Mr Jones has been instrumental in advising her in this and other matters relating to the maintenance and restoration of the

building; everything is in keeping with the original style. Photographs showing its use before, during and after the First and Second World Wars were shown. Members asked several questions and Mr Jones was thanked by President John Gall, who also made some informative comments about the castle.

The next meeting will be on Friday 1st March and the subject is 'The Great North Road, by George Nairn. Everyone welcome.



# ALL SAINTS CELEBRATE CHINESE NEW YEAR

To celebrate Chinese New Year pupils at All Saints spent a day doing everything Chinese. Children have become accustomed to and fond of Durham University student Zoe, who visits the school each Wednesday afternoon under an international student scheme.

Zoe teaches children of all ages throughout the school handcrafts, how to write numbers, how to count, write their names and how to say

hello in her language. Today the classrooms looked exciting and colourful as children were writing their names in Chinese, making lanterns, takeaway boxes, listening to a story of the Zodiac and learning interesting facts about China. It was a lucky day too as Chinese food was provided for the children who chose it from a menu earlier in the week. It was cooked on the premises by the

usual cook and it certainly looked very appetizing.

It was a fun lunch as Zoe taught the junior children how to use chopsticks. It was thought that the younger children may have found this skill a more difficult challenge which would have kept the cleaners rather busy. A lucky day as well for The Village Voice reporter who was given a Chinese fortune cookie!



*All Saints children enjoying making Chinese lanterns*



*Chinese student, Zoe, from Durham University, enjoying her lunch with the younger children at All Saints School*



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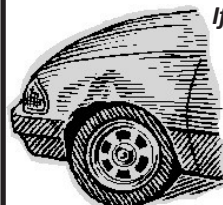
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## NEW COMENIUS PROJECT

A new Comenius Project has begun at the Lanchester EP School. This time the countries that were involved in the project were representatives of the three countries of Italy, France and Germany.



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*The twelve delegates who are teachers from the countries of Italy, France and Germany pose for a photograph in the school hall along with Lanchester EP School Head Teacher, Jane Davis, who is in the centre of the back row of the group.*

A lovely warm and friendly 'Welcome Assembly' was organised for the

twelve delegates from these three countries. The largest contingent of five Italian teachers, who flew into Edinburgh airport, were from Pisa, which has a population of around 88,000. The four from Germany reside at Unna, with a population, 66,500. They arrived at Newcastle along with the three teachers from France who are from Palaiseau, which has a smaller population of around 30,000.

All were greeted at the assembly in their own languages by pupils of varying ages. The children did extremely well speaking in a foreign language in front of the whole school. The responses from the visitors were spoken in equally good English. A Powerpoint presentation was shown of the village, the school, events at school, and the many educational visits that the EP school makes

during a school year. Each delegate was given a CD of this excellent presentation to take home.

This is the second Comenius project undertaken by the Lanchester EP School and will incorporate experiences of some English board games, a good selection of playground games and team games, as well as the general education which takes place in the classrooms of the EP School. Some

representatives of the EP School have already made a visit to Pisa and it has been planned that some reciprocal visits will be made to both the countries of Germany and France later in the year. Dinner took place for the delegates and school staff at Crinnions before the European teachers headed off to stay at the Premier Inn in Durham. The school visit lasted for two days.



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## LADIES WHO LUNCH

In response to comments asking why we don't report on Village eateries, it's not because we don't use them - we do - but not as the Gourmet Girls as such. We've been going out together now for over 20 years, long before the Village Voice came into existence and the thing is - we like to go out out - that is somewhere different, somewhere away from our everyday routine. So, just for you, we stayed in the village for our January get together and we'll endeavour to stay in some more during the coming year.

It was really cold and wintry for our first outing of 2013 and nowhere could have been nicer, more cosy, nearer and totally picturesque as the snowflakes were falling outside the window onto the village green - we were of course in our very own King's Head

which is always very popular with villagers and the wider public alike. Lovely and warm and very welcoming the King's Head is always on hand.

They have a lovely pensioners' special, an extensive *ala carte* with chefs regularly changing specials + themed nights - one was coming up when we were there which was the Burns Night - 2 courses for £9.95/3 courses for £12.95 - and the piping in of the Haggis.

We decided to try out the pensioners' special (it seemed like a sound idea) and we sampled the battered haddock fish and chips with mushy/garden peas, scampi and chips - and one of us had the battered cod and chips off the main menu - it was HUGE - the rest of us were extremely happy with our pensioners' portions. It was all superbly

cooked, crispy batter, people sized chips and all very enjoyable. Not sure whether he knew we were coming, but we were served by the chef himself. Meals are really nicely presented on oblong plates with vegetables and their various sauces in individual containers which allows for personal choice of how much to add. We were quite full but - they had treacle sponge and it was a very cold day and it is practically impossible to resist such an item - with custard/cream totally scrumptious, some had sherry trifle which was also very nice.

So, we had a most enjoyable lunch and we would highly recommend you popping down to see the lovely Leanne at the King's Head Lanchester. Maybe we'll see you there someday.

**The Gourmet Girls**

## PUNS

The fattest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.

I thought I saw an eye doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian.

She was only a whisky maker, but he loved her still.

A rubber band pistol was confiscated from an algebra class because it was a weapon of maths destruction.

A dog gave birth near a road and was cited for littering.

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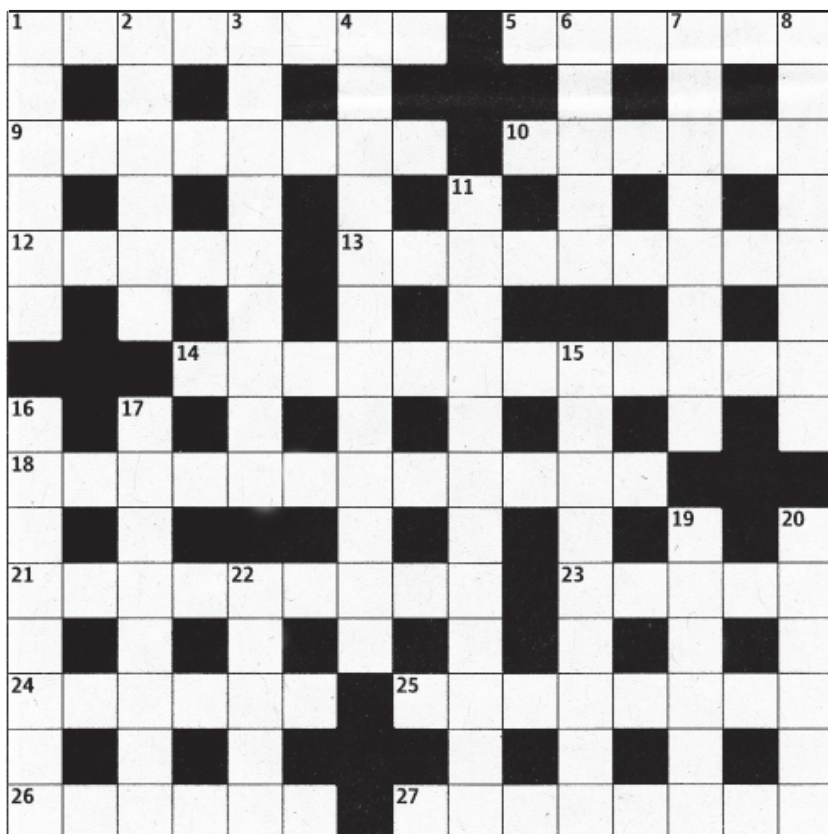
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14. Military trial (5,7)
18. In harmony (5,7)
21. Excited gaucho's missile forms a curve (9)
23. Speak slowly (5)
24. Gurn (5)
25. Lose vigour (2,2,4)
26. Irritate right joint (6)
27. Rio's mate is asthmatic's friend (8)

## DOWN

1. Gatherer (could be grim) (6)
- 2,19. Meaty kickers produce teasers (6,6)
3. Fuel for beach bonfire? (9)
4. Football manager (4,8)
6. Language found within Dickens' novels (5)
7. Mediterranean island (8)
8. Without warning (8)
11. Re: BUPA Mascot (gambol) (7,5)
15. Intestinal parasite (9)
16. Hew scree and reveal abstainer (8)
17. Glue used with broken piton makes sense (8)
19. See 2
20. Soarer (6)
22. Large noble (5)

## ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD 81

### ACROSS

1. fragrance
6. sauce
9. Sir Patrick Moore
10. yobs
11. grilling
14. pictogram
15. sense
16. one up
18. confide in
20. in rushes
21. epic
25. in this day and age
26. Yemen
27. godparent

### DOWN

1. fishy
2. aerobic
3. roam
4. nark
5. escarpment
6. simplistic
7. utopian
8. evergreen
12. compassion
13. tracker dog
14. proximity
17. erratum
19. expiate
22. chest
23. eyed
24. Inca

## CROSSWORD 81

There were 17 entries in last month's crossword competition.

Congratulations to B Whittingham of Greenwell Park who was the winner in the draw and will receive the £10 prize.

## SUDOKU

There is just one simple rule in Sudoku. Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9, and so must each 3 x 3 box. See next month for answers.

		3	7			8		
			8				7	
5					2			6
1	6		2					
					1	2		9
			4			5		
					9			4
			6		5	1		
	7	8						5



## WI NEWS

President Jennifer Macdonald welcomed members and visitors then Ann Carr gave the reading. Lists were out for a behind the scenes visit to the Theatre Royal, wine tastings at Lanchester Wines and a three day trip for Thursford Christmas Spectacular. Ladies interested in the darts are to contact Angela. Betty Walton won the raffle and the competition winners were Ann Carr and Jennifer Macdonald. Our first speaker was Jane Pegram on the art of jam making and the history of the WI markets. Jane started helping her grand parents make jam when

she was only three, then jam was made in a jam pan hooked over the fire. When making jam now she makes sure she uses the right size pan and very fresh fruit. When making jelly Jane found filling the leg of a pair of tights filled with the fruit makes the best jelly. When making some marmalade Jane uses her Grandma's mincer to prepare the fruit.

Jane then told us how WI markets were first set up in Wales after the war to give jobs to men returning home and became very successful but is now a Country Market with 10% of profits going to the WI.

Jane finished this very interesting and informative talk by handing out recipes for gooseberry and blackcurrant jams.

Our second speaker was Nutritional Therapist Lynn Howarth Dip NNT who spoke about looking at the body as a whole as one part of the body affects another and how we can help ourselves to keep well by drinking enough, eating colourful food and how important the right fats and oils are. Another interesting talk.

Jennifer and Ann gave the votes of thanks and the evening ended with refreshments.



Carol Troy, Pam Hasler, Christine Gibson, Jennifer Macdonald and Maureen Barker buying Jane's delicious jams which can also be bought at the Country Market.

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### Date and Walnut Loaf

- |                             |  |   |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| 8 ozs SR flour              | 1. Stone and chop the dates  | then add the sugar and nuts.                              |
| 8 ozs Dates - chopped       | 2. In a bowl add Bi carb soda to dates and cover with boiling water. | 4. Add the dates and water and the egg. Beat well.        |
| 1 tsp Bi carb soda          |  | 5. Place in a greased 1lb loaf tin.                       |
| 1/3 pint boiling water      |  | 6. Bake in a cool oven for 1¼ to 1½ hours, gas 5, 300 °C. |
| Half teaspoon baking powder |  |   |
| Pinch of salt               |  |   |
| 2 ozs margarine             |  |   |
| 6 ozs castor sugar          |  |   |
| 2 ozs walnuts               |  |   |
| 1 egg                       |  |   |

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### ANSWER TO LAST MONTH'S SUDOKU

4	1	7	8	5	9	6	2	3
3	9	8	6	4	2	1	5	7
6	5	2	3	7	1	9	4	8
1	7	4	5	2	8	3	6	9
5	8	9	1	6	3	4	7	2
2	6	3	7	9	4	8	1	5
8	2	5	4	3	6	7	9	1
9	4	1	2	8	7	5	3	6
7	3	6	9	1	5	2	8	4

# WHAT'S ON?

## Messy Church

The next 'Messy Church' at the Parish Church is at 3.45 pm - 5.45 pm on Sunday February 24th. All children and parents are very welcome.

## Women's World Day of Prayer

This will take place in the Roman Catholic Church, on Friday March 1st, beginning at 2.00 pm.

## History Society

Friday 1st March, at 7.30 pm in the Dining Hall of the Community Centre. George Nairn will present 'The Great North Road' in postcards. Everyone welcome.

## Country Market

On Saturday 2nd March, 10 am - 12 noon, come along to the Country Market in the Community Centre for your fresh produce, cakes, pies, jams, chutneys, eggs, plants, etc.

## Sunday Bridge

Come and enjoy a relaxed afternoon playing Bridge in the Community Centre on March 3rd from 2.00 pm. Only £3. Everyone welcome.

## WI

Our next meeting will be held in the small hall of the Community Centre on Monday 4th March starting at 7.00 pm. The speaker will be David Peacock MBE from Whickham Hermitage Community Garden and the competition will be a gardening hint. If you would like to come along as a visitor please do, you will be sure of a warm welcome.

## Paradiso Club

The next Social will be on Sunday March 3rd, 7.00 pm - 9.15 pm in the Main Hall of the Community Centre. There will be a Raffle, Refreshments and the opportunity to see the film 'BOTTLESHOCK'. The film stars Alan Rickman, Chris Pine, Rachel Taylor and Bill Pullman. Based on a true inspiring story Bottleshock is an intelligent, affectionate and beautifully acted movie with lots of laughs! 'A connoisseur who believes there's no finer art than French wine making challenges a small Napa valley winery (USA) to a blind tasting and in so doing discovers his publicity stunt may change the history of wine forever!' All welcome. Entry £2.50 members, £3.50 occasional visitors, £2 for young persons. This entry covers the raffle, refreshments and film.

## WI Coffee Morning

The WI are holding their spring coffee morning on Wednesday 6th March in the Community Centre, from 10.00 am until 11.30 am. Tickets are £1 each and include a delicious home made scone. There will be a sales and cake table and raffle so could members please bring items for the stalls to the March meeting or on the morning, thank you. This coffee morning is an opportunity to meet up with friends old and new so do come along and enjoy this friendly, social event. Everyone is welcome.

## Traidcraft Coffee Morning

Olga Walker, fundraiser for Traidcraft, at All Saints Parish Church, has organised a 'Big Brew Coffee Morning' at the Chapter House on Wednesday, 6th March, so please put this in your diary for a pleasant morning socialising with friends. There will be a raffle and a 'Mug Hug' competition to keep everyone busy and amused. The event is on from 9.30 am - 11.00 am and entrance is just £1.

## Open House

The next Open House will be on Thursday 7th March, from 11.30 am - 1.00 pm when a light lunch will be served.

## Bowling at Stanley

In March the cream of Bowlers from the British Isles will be coming to Stanley Indoor Bowls Centre (above Asda). This is the chance for local people to see top-class sport on their doorstep. Anyone who attended the last series of these competitions in Stanley will long remember the excitement and quality bowling of the events. Bowling is a dull boring sport for old people? Forget it. If you like what you see and want to take up the sport give Ken Raper, Secretary of Lanchester Bowling Club, a ring on 01207 521673.

## British Isles Women's Indoor Bowling Championship

March 8th to 10th 2013

## British Isles Championship

March 11th to 13th 2013

## British Isles Men's Indoor Bowling Championship

March 14th to 16th 2013 To buy tickets go to stanleyibc.co.uk or call in at the centre.

## Short Circuit Walks

March 9th, 10.30 am, Seaton Delaval/Seghill Circle, 5 miles. Park at Keel Row on A192, NZ292766. March 23rd, 10/30 am, Castle Eden Dene, The Yew Tree Walk, 5 miles. Park at Oakside Dene Lodge, NZ428393.

## For Music Lovers

Jim Morgan, village resident and three time soloist in village Messiah performances recommends 'The Mastersingers in Concert' at 7.30 pm on Saturday 9th March in Witton Gilbert Community Centre, admission £8. Jim is a member of this Huddersfield based close harmony group of singers and hopes you will come and enjoy a great programme including music of Cole Porter, Duke Ellington, Gershwin, Jerome Kern, the Carpenters, Queen and much more. Reservation advised. Talk to Pam Bygate or Jim, tel 01207 528292. Hope to see you there!

## Wildlife Group

On 12th March at 7.30 pm in the small hall of the Community Centre, Julia Brown will give a talk on Bats.

## Junior/Family Wildlife

On 17th March there will be a visit to Gainford Woods. Meet at 9.30 am in the Community Centre car park.

## Mothers' Union

Jenny Stoddart of the Bible Society is the speaker at the meeting on Wednesday 13th March - 7.30 pm in Chapter House.

## PACT Meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 27th March at 7.15 pm in the Community Centre. All welcome.

## Red Cross Coffee Morning

The Coffee Morning to be held on Thursday 21st March will be held in the Methodist Church Hall from 9.30-11.30, providing tea, coffee and home made cakes.

The room upstairs at the Red Cross shop will now be permanently open with goods for sale, including toys and household items along with an extensive range of books. A belated thank you to everyone who supported our Christmas raffle - we made over £240 - and thanks to all who donated prizes.

## Thursday Club

The Thursday Club thoroughly enjoyed their New Year lunch at Deanos, good food, great company, entertaining quiz and to cap it all an inspirational visit from Dennis Laycock who enthralled us all with his reminiscences of the London Olympics, and of course, he brought along THE TORCH so that we could all have a hold and feel part of a very special occasion.

On 21st March we shall be celebrating our 33rd birthday with a visit from Ian Jones with a talk entitled 'Curiously Wicked' - a chocoholics delight! - see you there.

## Flower Club

On Wednesday 27th March at 2.00 pm in the Community Centre, Kathleen Gibson of Blaydon will give a demonstration entitled 'Let's Celebrate'.

## Art Exhibition

Castleside Art Club's next exhibition will be in The Village Hall, Castleside, on Easter Sunday and Monday. Around 200 original works by local artists will be on show and for sale between 10 am and 5 pm and home made refreshments will be available. Admission 20p.



## Spring is coming!

The Lanchester Partnership, with the support of the Parish and County Councils, will be holding the 8th Annual Village Litter Pick on Saturday 23rd March, between 10.00 and 1.00. If you can, please come to the tent on the Green for litter-pickers, gloves and plastic bags, and then spend ½ hour (or more) getting our village ready for Spring. As usual, there will be thank-you certificates for young helpers and refreshments for everyone.

## Amigos and Friends Reunited

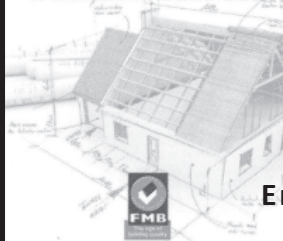
The weather wasn't totally amazing but 5 of us made it to the King's Head for the first reunion in January and surely we can do better than that, folks. If we don't see you in February, just remember the last Friday in the month and we hope to see you there some time this year.

## THE LATEST NEWS FROM THE CRICKET CLUB

We have tried out the new net facilities at the Louisa Centre and we greatly approve of them. There are four new lanes, with flat mats together with some excellent lighting facilities. Despite the timing, we had a good turn out with the juniors and several seniors. We have the nets booked for 12 noon - 2 pm, with the juniors starting and then there is an overlap for the seniors. We do ask for a £2 contribution from everyone who attends the facilities. Of course some miss out due to junior football which is also played on a Sunday. We would also suggest that any newcomers who would like to come along and join us are most welcome to attend. There are a couple of events that are coming up shortly at the club that we would like to invite you to attend.

There is a race night for the football team on 1st March, with a 7 pm start, costing £3.00 per head. If you want to sponsor a horse you can contact Donny Crozier and he will take the details from you. But, if you wish to sponsor a race that would be even better. March 29th is the date for the popular eat and drink night. It is held from 8.00 until 11.00 pm and it costs £22. This sounds expensive but as the title goes, you get to eat and drink all you can during those times of the evening. Additionally, there will also be a karaoke disco during the evening to keep you entertained. The club is available free of charge for events and, if you wish to make a booking you can contact either Jim Potts on 07973249760 or Neil Graham on 07717516759 to book the use of the facilities.

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# LANCHESTER IGLOO

A group of boys from Lanchester had a really proper Artic experience over the weekend of the big freeze in Lanchester. A group of over 8 boys spent most of the weekend and Monday building a series of Igloos that were joined together by a mesh of tunnels. It was a great engineering achievement with branches being used to support the walls and roof and big plant pots used to make the ice 'bricks'.

The igloo looked so good that three of the older boys fancied to complete the experience by camping out for the night in their construction. They settled in with flasks of tea, mats and sleeping bags and a couple of big bags of crisps. The boys made it to 5 am when they came back home so that Harry could be home in time to celebrate his sister's birthday with his



*Intrepid explorers Harry Carson, Joe Hume and George Grimes with some of the additional building team: Jacob Lloyd, Tom Bartles-Smith and Sam Hume.*

family. The boys all agreed that Eskimos must be very hardy as they had found it a very chilly experience.

## RAPUNZEL SNOW TOWER FUN!!!



*Sunday 7am request ... mummy mummy mummy...  
Please can you build an igloo tower for  
Rapunzel, Pascal and Flynn Ryder (from the  
Disney film 'Tangled') ... Erm ... ok then!  
Ava Lily and Matthew with Rapunzel,  
Pascal and Flynn Ryder.*

## SLEDGING



*Kieron Bell, Jacob Rainer, Adam Butler, and Josh Tilney having a great time in the snow with their sledges at Paste Egg Bank*

## NEXT DEADLINE

Please send any **articles** for the next Village Voice by Tuesday 19th March. The deadline for **adverts** is 17th March.

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