the Village Voice

Issue No 7, Volume 26

Lanchester, July 2026







Summer continues in Lanchester!



Top left: St Bede's Open Day page 22
Top centre: KoGs "Best of British" page 19
Above: Tennis Club Barbeque back page
Left: All Saints' School at the Youth Village page 7
Below: Boys' Brigade visit the Parish Church page 14



Below: EP School Silver Winners of Pearson National Teaching Awards for Primary School of the Year page 10
Below left: Willow Burn book launch page 17





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Communities in Focus - People of Lanchester

Kings Head

Mark Wilkinson

The village pub has always been at the heart of community life—but many have struggled in recent years. The Kings Head was one of them, until Rachel Simpson and Kelly Wardman stepped in and gave it a new lease of life. When I stopped by on a rainy morning, Rachel shared how they saw its potential and took the leap together—balancing family life while keeping the pub thriving. Now a welcoming, dog-friendly spot serving great food, real ales, and a much-loved Sunday lunch, it's become a go-to for locals and visitors alike. As Kelly put it: "Lanchester is a great community, and the pub is thriving."





Simon and Lauren Bourne, Estate Agents

George Ledger

Founded in 2023 by husband-and-wife team Simon and Lauren Bourne, Bourne & Co is a family-run agency built on local knowledge, honesty, and a passion for helping people move. Simon's journey has taken him from sports journalism and furniture sales to running a successful shoe company that even appeared on BBC Dragon's Den. Lauren, a proud County Durham local and qualified midwife, brings the practical thinking and people-first approach that helps keep the business grounded. Based in the heart of Lanchester, Bourne & Co combines creativity, professionalism, and community spirit. You'll even spot the company's famous duck mascot on sale boards across the region—a tribute to Simon's family history and the inspiration behind the popular "Duck Yourself" feature on the Bourne & Co website, which raises money for charity with every duck created. Today, Bourne & Co continues to provide a personal, professional service to buyers, sellers, landlords, and tenants across County Durham.



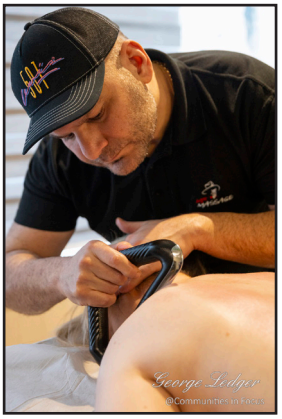


Sam N Jafari, Mr Massage

George Ledger

Sam moved to England in 2003 and proudly calls himself Persian-British. After first studying Agriculture in Iran, he followed his real passion — sport and lifelong learning. Injuries (and poor recovery advice!) inspired him to retrain at New College Durham as a sports massage therapist. Today, he's highly qualified in anatomy, acupuncture, osteopathic & chiropractic techniques, pregnancy massage and more. In 2019, Sam opened Mr Massage & Aesthetics Haus, building a loyal client base from across the North East. You'll also spot him volunteering and delivering gym inductions at Lanchester Community Centre — championing health, wellbeing and community every day.





Dennis Laycock, Lanchester Tennis Club

George Ledger

Dennis Laycock, a long-standing member of Lanchester Lawn Tennis Club, has served as Club Secretary since the turn of the millennium. Beyond his official roles, Dennis has been the driving force behind the scenes as the club's head groundsman and general handyman, helping to maintain the facilities and support almost every aspect of club life. In recognition of his dedication to tennis and the local community, Dennis was nominated by the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) to carry the Olympic Torch ahead of the London 2012 Olympic Games – a fitting tribute to his outstanding service.





Communities in Focus Exhibition

The team, as readers will know, are about half way through their project to document Lanchester in 2026. In the meantime they have installed an exhibition of their previous project in the beautiful Willow Burn Gardens; it will run until the end of August 2026. This exhibition is of their last project and was entitled “Sons and Daughters of Leadgate”. Some of those photographed were at the official opening. This is an example of one way in which the Lanchester project photographs will ultimately be exhibited. Do go and have a look – and take in the gardens and the view while you are there.





The four photographers: George Ledger, Juan Fitzgerald, Mark Wilkinson and Chris Bruce

Grandpa’s wins a national award

Grandpa’s fish and chip shop in the village won the Best Multi Site Operator at The English Fish & Chip Awards 2026.

This award recognises both the shop and van operation, with judging based on the quality and consistency of both businesses, as well as plans for future growth and development. “To be recognised on a national stage for what we’re building is something we’re incredibly proud of.”

Later Tommo took part in a live cook-off against 14 of the very best fish fryers in the country. His fish was judged by three highly respected figures within the industry, making the competition as tough as it gets.

“We’re unbelievably proud to say that Tommo came away as Runner-Up Best Fish Fryer of the Year! To us, he’s the winner every day of the week, but to achieve this on a national stage against such incredible competition is a huge accomplishment and one that is thoroughly deserved.

“A massive thank you to our amazing team, loyal customers, and everyone who continues to support us. These achievements wouldn’t be possible without you.”



The team at the award ceremony. L-r Aidan Weatherburn, “Tommo”, Rich Weatherburn.

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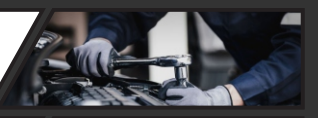

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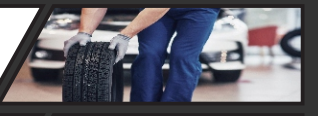

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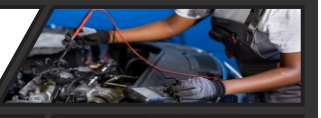

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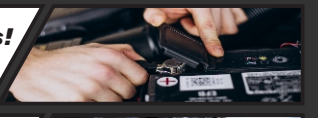

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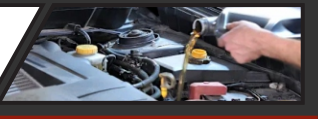

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From the House

A lot of my focus in the constituency in recent months has been on healthcare in the constituency. As well as supporting residents in Lanchester and working with Cllr Alison Gray and the Patient Reference Group, I have also had regular meetings with the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust which has been rated as 'Requires Improvement' by the Care Quality Commission.

I was horrified to learn of serious failings in County Durham and Darlington NHS Trust's former breast surgery service, which resulted in some women undergoing unnecessary surgery. I am working with the Pink Justice Network who are campaigning for a full public inquiry into the level of care provided to them at the Trust.

Planning has also been the cause of a lot of work after the Planning Inspectorate upheld the Appeal to build a solar farm at Burnhope, which I have been opposing. We have now also had the County Council publish the results of their call for development sites to include in the next iteration of the County Durham Plan. The Council have advised that they are currently assessing the viability and deliverability of sites and that they will publish their findings in Spring 2027.

My focus in Parliament in recent weeks has been arguing for the largest possible spend on the Defence Investment Plan. The very serious threats the country faces mean we have to invest properly in re-equipping our armed forces, and in North Durham we have many families who include veterans or have loved ones serving in the military who fully understand this priority.

At the time of writing, it has been almost two years since I was elected to Parliament. In that time, I have corresponded directly with 389 residents in Lanchester and Burnhope. Across the constituency, I have secured over £833,860 back for constituents in money owed back to them in utilities, pensions and tax.

Locally, I continue to hold regular advice surgeries at venues right across the constituency. Please contact me on luke.akehurst.mp@parliament.uk or call my office on 0191 371 8834 if you would like to arrange an appointment to discuss any issues or if there is anything I might be able to help with.

House of Commons



Councillor Update

Dear residents,

Many of you have contacted me about speeding / dangerous roads. Thank you to those who took time to comment on Facebook. I have a meeting with officers scheduled and will report back to you in the next edition of the Village Voice.

Residents have also been in touch about a lack of cutting of green spaces, overgrown grass verges and grass/ leaves being left on the ground. The budget for this was recently reduced, nevertheless I have passed on our concerns to the leader of the council and requested urgent cleaning in Lanchester.

I have asked again for the road markings on Front Street, notably the double yellow lines outside the Premier Shop, to be re-done. There has been some dreadful parking there recently which makes it difficult for people to exit the car park.

I continue to work closely with the Patient Participation Group, the Integrated Care Board and Luke Akehurst to try to increase options for resident choice and improve provision of GP care in the village.

I attended the open day at St Bede's for the 60th anniversary of the school. We are lucky to have such a good school in our ward. It really has played a huge part in the village, educating many children over the years, and attracting families to live here because of its excellent reputation. I am sure the school will continue to thrive.

I know many residents enjoy either playing or watching bowls. I am very happy to support the club in Lanchester with a grant towards accessible steps.

Following communications with residents, I and other Parish Councillors are looking to make improvements to the village parks. If you have any ideas for play areas in the parks, please email them to me alison.gray2@durham.gov.uk or the Parish clerk, Laura Dodd on lanchesterparish@btopenworld.com [See separate article] Photographs of installations in other parks would be useful too.

If I can help with a council related matter, please email me on alison.gray2@durham.gov.uk or telephone 07469 105096 / 03000 260 683

WI News



At our meeting on Monday 1st June we welcomed 36 members and 2 new members. After hearing about all of our upcoming events and visits we listened to our speaker Xerxes Setna.

Xerxes told us a little of his heritage, faith and personal history. His parents arrived in England in the late 1940's and settled in Luton where he was born. He grew up eating his mother's wonderful cooking. As an adult, he moved to the north to study and existed on the typical food of students: fish fingers and baked beans.

He settled in the north, met his wife and started a family. He questioned how he could bring about change to his circumstances. Through hard work and perseverance he wrote and published a children's book, but this was not enough. Xerxes' wife had fallen in love with his mother's cooking, so he asked his mother to teach him how to cook and friends were always impressed with his efforts. He realised that there was always a lot of preparation; the couple then came up with the idea of producing readily prepared spices with instructions to create authentic, flavoursome Parsi meals. Mazzeh Spice was born!

Samples of the curries were available to try, and were very well received. Several purchases were made too.

The evening ended with a cuppa and a catch up with friends.

If you are looking for something new to do please come along and join us, you will be very welcome. Visitors can come along and join us for £4 per visit, you can visit for three times before deciding whether to join us. Check out our Facebook page; Lanchester WI, or email lanchesterwi@talktalk.net for further details. We look forward to seeing you!

Marie Murphy

Ladies who lunch

Last time out you would have found us at the Stables, an offshoot of Beamish Hall, just outside Stanley. Entry is through a courtyard which is full of flowers - an absolute delight for the senses. Staff are both informative and attentive - so very good service guaranteed and we were soon perusing an extensive lunch time menu of jacket potatoes, bloomer sandwiches, hot deli sandwiches, homemade soup and Stable favourites. Lunch could cost from as little as £7.95 for soup to £20 for a Stables favourite.

We sampled leek and feta quiche with house salad and coleslaw; Whitby scampi with fat chips, garden peas, tartare sauce and lemon; pie of the day with chips and peas.

Desserts were something else. As you go in you pass a glass counter with a wonderful selection of cakes - we chose, vanilla slice; sticky orange and chocolate cake; apple and almond slice; and caramel biscuit. Plus, they have a wine list which includes mocktails and on a supremely hot day in June, the elderflower spritz was delicious!

A first for ages - murmurs of absolute delight around the table as everyone ate their meals - 'perfection' was the verdict from everyone! What a lovely afternoon we had: good food with impeccable service and good company with lots of friendly banter. What more could one ask for?



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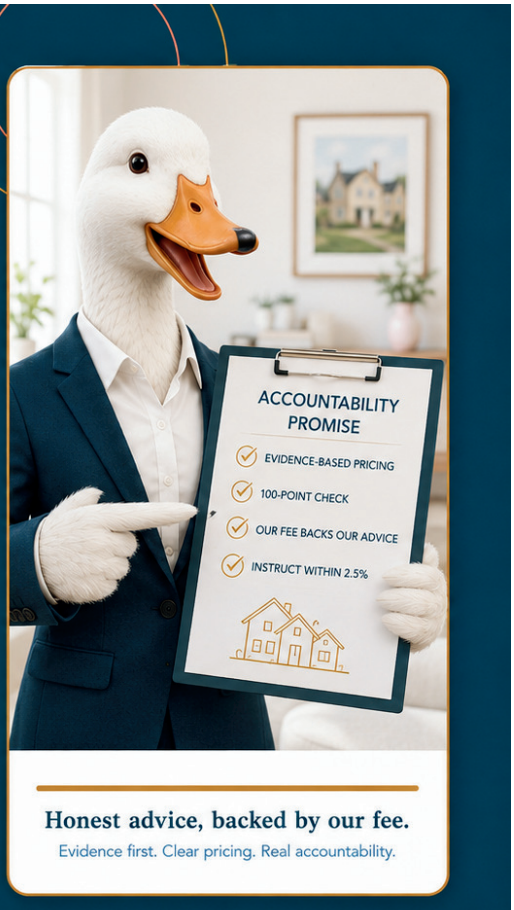

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Lanchester Parish Council

Notes from the Ordinary Meeting held in Lynwood House on
Tuesday 9th June 2026 at 7.00pm

Minutes – Annual Meeting 12th May, Ordinary Meeting 12th May – approved

Police Reports

Councillors were concerned with the lack of detail on the report – Clerk to ask for a more detailed report

Durham County Councillor

County Councillor Alison Gray provided an update on the areas she has recently been working on, these included

- Dropped kerbs have been installed near Valley Grove and The Kings Head
- A meeting with Durham Highways took place regarding speeding and parking issues in areas including
  - Newbiggen Lane, the road outside the Kings Head and Peth Bank. A public meeting will hopefully be arranged in the near future
- Local Networks are starting to meet, hopefully a meeting will be arranged in September for our area
- Helped residents with their Council Tax
- The Medical Centre has had another inspection, still waiting on the report
- Looking into installing bike racks in the Village

Lanchester Solar Planet Walk

Members were updated on the project. Clerk to contact the planning officer direct to receive an update on our planning application

Structural Testing of Lighting Columns

Members were updated that one of the columns failed the testing so no hanging baskets can be hung on this lighting column **–** Clerk to try and see if we can hang the remaining hanging baskets on the Christmas tree fence

Park House play area improvements

Councillor Gray met with a resident to discuss possible improvements to Park House play area – Clerk to organise a site visit

Planning Application

Members were updated on the following planning application: DM/24/02481/OUT - Outline application for tourism development of up to no.140 lodges, spa, ancillary food and retail offering, landscaping and associated infrastructure with all matters reserved except access – Councillors Keith Harrison and David Smith attended the Committee Meeting regarding this planning application. The application was deferred until a badger survey can be carried out which will take place in October/November time.

Oakwood Development

Councillors discussed the leaflet that had been received by some residents about the potential development – the Clerk to send a copy of previous responses the Parish Council has made regarding this development and a copy of the leaflet to Councillors.

Council Finances

Councillors were updated on the council's finances – information received

Financial Year 2025/26 End of Year Accounts – The Annual Governance Statement, accounting statement and the financial position for the end of the year were approved

Financial report – approved

Accounts for Payment – approved

Chairperson's Announcement

Councillors were informed that all Councillors have been invited to The Sons and Daughters of Leadgate Exhibition at Willow Burn Hospice on Thursday 2nd July at 6pm – the Clerk to remind Councillors of the event.

Meetings are every second Tuesday of the month, but we don't have a meeting in August so the next two meetings with be held on 14th July and 8th September

Have Your Say – Help Shape the Future of Park House Play Area and Bike Track

The Parish Council is looking at ways to improve Park House Play Area and the Bike Track and we'd love to hear from the people who use them most – our residents.

Do you have an idea for new play equipment? Would you like to see additional seating, landscaping, accessible features, or improvements to the bike track? Whether it's a small suggestion or a bigger vision, we want to know what would make these facilities even better for children, young people, families and the wider community.

Your views are important and will help the Parish Council plan future improvements that reflect the needs and wishes of Lanchester residents.

If you have any suggestions or ideas, please email the Clerk at **clerk@lanchesterparishcouncil.gov.uk**

We welcome all comments and ideas.

Together, we can help create outdoor spaces that everyone in Lanchester can enjoy for many years to come.

Margaret's 90th birthday party and early wake!

Margaret Brown's 90th birthday party and early wake (but not yet awhile) took place at Lanchester Social Club on Saturday 18th April with buffet and disco provided. It was attended by family and friends, and a lovely night was enjoyed by all.

A special surprise entertainment was provided by four of Margaret's friends who are now known as the "Four Degrees" with a special version of a well-known Abba song with new lyrics entitled "She is the Singing Queen" all limping onto stage wearing facemasks with Margaret's face on.



The four degrees and Margaret



Margaret with her family.

Everything was organised by some of Margaret's friends (you know who you are). Thank you everyone for cards, flowers, wine and chocolates etc. Guests were asked if they wished to give a donation to Willow Burn Hospice; many thanks for the donations totalling £485 which was taken to Willow Burn the following Monday.

Thank you everyone for a fantastic evening.

Margaret Brown

All Saints' Catholic Primary School

As another academic year draws to a close, we are incredibly proud of all of our pupils in school, not least our thirty-one Year Six pupils, as they prepare to leave All Saints' and begin the next stage of their educational journey.

They have enjoyed a truly exceptional final year, achieving excellent test results and demonstrating the hard work, resilience and determination that have characterised their time with us. Their recent camping residential and Youth Village concert was a highlight of the year, providing opportunities for adventure, teamwork and lasting memories with friends. (Photo below and cover.)



Our enterprise-themed school fair (photo right) was another tremendous success. Through their creativity, organisation and enthusiasm, the children helped raise an impressive £2,276 (from only 90 minutes), showing real entrepreneurial spirit while contributing to our school community. We received numerous compliments related to their helpfulness, manners, independence and confidence…what more could we hope for!

We plan to celebrate our leavers through a special Mass and Leavers' Assembly, where we will reflect on each child's unique talents, abilities and accomplishments. It will be a wonderful opportunity to recognise the many ways they have contributed to our rich school life, over the years, and to celebrate the remarkable young people they have become. Throughout the year, our Year Six pupils have been fantastic buddies to our EYFS children, showing kindness, patience and leadership. This deserves a particular mention because



they have been excellent role models and have helped our youngest pupils settle confidently into school life. As we say goodbye to this outstanding group, we thank them for the positive example they have set and wish them every success and happiness in the future. At the same time, we look forward to welcoming our new starters in September, confident that they too will flourish at All Saints', embrace the opportunities ahead of them and thrive within the same nurturing environment that has enabled this year's leavers to grow into such accomplished, caring and successful young people.

Frances Stephenson
Head Teacher

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What's Happening at the Methodist Church

Music at the Heart of Our Community

Music plays a big part in life in Lanchester. From choirs and choral societies to live performances in local pubs, there are plenty of opportunities for people to enjoy music together. Several members of the Lanchester Methodist Church Music Group are also active in the wider community.

Ian plays the piano and is involved in singing locally but when the church band originally started 32 years ago there was no one to play the drums. "I borrowed a drum kit and taught myself," he says. "I really enjoy playing for worship, adding to the dynamics with infills and crescendos." His drumming talent has since led to performances in local shows and productions at Durham Gala Theatre.



Paul is another familiar face in the Music Group, where he plays piano and sings. He has sung with the Methodist Circuit Choir for more than 30 years and, more recently, with Lanchester Choral Society. "I became involved with the Church Music Group during Covid when we started live-streaming services," he explains. "It's one of the ways I can serve the church community and give something back."

Paul's daughter, Bethany, is also in the Music Group and she sings as well as being a talented pianist. She is hoping to go to university locally next year and continue with this.

The youngest member of the group is thirteen-year-old Andrew. A family friend started teaching him drums when he was eight and he went on to have lessons. He smiled when he said he started playing drums because he didn't want to learn to read music but now, he's enjoying learning to read drum notation and plays in church on a regular basis.



The church's live-streamed services continue every week.



Simply search for Lanchester Methodist Church on YouTube. Next month we'll introduce more members of the Music Group and discover the dedicated technical team who help make it all happen.

Have You Been in the Church Porch Lately?

Saving Stamps to Save Lives

Did you know that your used postage stamps can help save lives? You can help simply by saving yours. Collection boxes for used British and foreign stamps can be found in the church porch.

Since 2021, I have been collecting used stamps from members of the Methodist Church to raise money for the Great North Air Ambulance. After discovering the scheme online, I sent my first parcel in 2022. The stamps are sorted by volunteers before being sold to dealers, raising an average of around £5 per kilogram. Foreign stamps are especially valuable and help generate even more income for this vital charity.

To make the most of each stamp, please trim it from the envelope, leaving about 5 millimetres of paper all the way around. Avoid tearing the stamp, as this can reduce its value.

Thanks to your generosity, I have now sent seven parcels, each weighing between 600 and 900 grams.

A huge thank you to everyone who has contributed so far. Every stamp really does make a difference, and together we're helping to support the life-saving work of the Great North Air Ambulance.

Rosemary Naylor

As well as Rosemary's stamp collection for the Great North Air Ambulance, the Boys' Brigade is collecting empty ink cartridges. All donations are gratefully received in the church porch. While you're there, why not take a look at the range of environmental products on sale at cost price?

The Troubadour returns to Lanchester

In June 2025 singer-songwriter Gareth Davies-Jones walked from Holy Island to Durham Cathedral via St Oswald's Way and the Way of Light (Northern Saints Trail). As he was walking he carried a small guitar on his back performing concerts for local communities where he stopped en-route; this included a concert in Lanchester last year. His journey provided inspiration and raw materials for a new album of songs.



Rev James Shelton

Gareth returned to Lanchester in June to perform some of this new material along with some of his previous songs. He wove the songs into a commentary on his pilgrimage through the north east.

The concert was opened by Revd Lesley Sutherland the vicar. The Revd James Shelton then spoke about his role as the first Director of the Cuthbert Centre for Pilgrimage and Prayer, where he will oversee the creation of new facilities around the Chapel of the Holy Cross and lead on setting up the Cuthbert Centre to resource pilgrimage and prayer across the region and beyond. This then led nicely into Gareth's concert. Gareth sang, accompanying his songs with the guitar and was ably supported by his daughter, Bronwen Davies-Jones, on vocals.



Bronwen and Gareth Davies-Jones

It was very well attended. Refreshments were provided and there were opportunities to talk to James, Gareth and Bronwen during the interval and afterwards – and to buy the CD of his album.

Keith Brown

Longovicium

Interpretation sign replaced

The Friends of Longovicium are delighted to announce that they have secured the final funding needed to replace the interpretation sign at Longovicium (Lanchester Roman Fort). The new interpretation panel has now been installed in the lay-by beside the remains of the fort.



The group would like to extend its sincere thanks to Victoria Cloutier for her generous donation, which made a significant contribution towards the production and installation of the new sign.

All members of the Friends of Longovicium are pleased to see interpretation restored at the site. We hope the new panel will help visitors appreciate the importance of Longovicium as a key part of Lanchester's history and its role within the Roman Empire's northern frontier.

Visitors are kindly reminded that the remains of the fort are a Scheduled Ancient Monument located on private land that is actively farmed, and there is no public access to the site. The best visible remains are the corner of the fort wall, which can be viewed safely from the field gate beside the lay-by and the interpretation panel.

Darin Smith

Lanchester Local History Society

May Talk

We met on Friday 1st May to hear what fascinating information Richard Pears had for us about “The Buildings of William Newton”.
William started work as a joiner working with his dad. The first job was on Fenham Hall and in those days, the mid 1700s, architecture wasn’t a job like today. Workers learnt through working on the job, doing things to gain practical experience and confidence in their own ability to construct a substantial building from a few sketchy ideas and wishes of a customer. Get it right and word of mouth got you more jobs.

His early jobs were on buildings designed by the Palladian architect Daniel Garrett. He clearly had a good eye and quickly built up a portfolio of evidence across the North. There was a lot of wealth in the North East in the eighteenth century amongst the hostmen and merchant adventurers and they all wished to display their wealth in their dwellings. This is why he built over 40 country houses, churches and civic buildings, often with great similarities and appearance. Many are still standing today.
Needless to say he became wealthy and probably had tendencies to self aggrandisement. Evidence of this is his personal seal which is in the Durham University archive and is a very striking Bewickian profile.





Two very similar buildings Newcastle Assembly Rooms (right) and Blagdon Hall home of the Ridley Family (left).



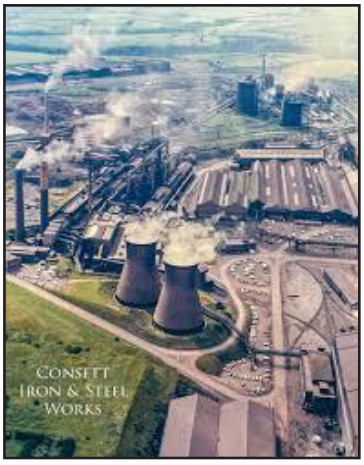
Charlotte Square Newcastle

June Talk

On 5th June Alan Swinburn entertained us with his reflections of work. His talk was called “Born in Blackhill, Christened in the steelworks.” He told us about his life up to retirement and his emotional attachment to his life’s work.
As a schoolboy he was very content and enthusiastic about his home-life in farming and agriculture. However, after leaving school, he headed into a working life at the Company. He recounted many stories about his time in various workshops and departments, but his key theme was about the life and vast wealth of interpersonal skills he gained from his many managers and work mates. His knowledge of the steelworks and all the various jobs across the site made for an exceptional trip down memory lane for many of our members and an insight to The Works for everyone else in the audience.

Marian Morrison

[Apologies, the May report should have appeared in last month’s edition.]



Music for a Summer Evening





A concert by the St Andrew’s Operatic Society was held at All Saints’ Parish Church on Friday 3rd July. It was very well attended.
The concert started with “Comedy Tonight” by Stephen Sondheim followed by a wide range of music including religious music and folk music, with the first half concluding with a My Fair Lady medley. After the interval was a selection of popular music including from Burt Bacharach, “Bring me Sunshine” (made popular by Morecambe and Wise of course), Abba, a selection of Gilbert and Sullivan songs and concluding with “Rhythm of Life” from the musical Sweet Charity. Something for everyone.
There were some solo items and, a first for the society, a duet sung by a mother and daughter; it was 'For Good' from the show "Wicked" and was performed by mother and daughter Bernadette and Hannah Trotter.

The evening was compered and conducted by Ken Matthews and accompanied by Pam Bell who received a well earned round of applause.
They may come again next year, if so make sure you put it in your diary and come!

Keith Brown

Top left: The choir and some of the audience.
Above: mother and daughter Bernadette and Hannah Trotter.
Right: Conductor Ken Matthews.



Lanchester Endowed Parochial School

Travels, Triumphs and Treasured Memories
As another busy and successful year draws to a close, it is wonderful to reflect on just how much our children have experienced and achieved. From memorable educational visits (4 residentials in June alone!) to national recognition for the quality of education we provide, there is much for our whole community to celebrate.

Year 6 in Northern Ireland
For many of our oldest pupils, the highlight of the year was undoubtedly their residential visit to Northern Ireland. Throughout the week, the children embraced every opportunity with enthusiasm, resilience and an infectious sense of adventure.

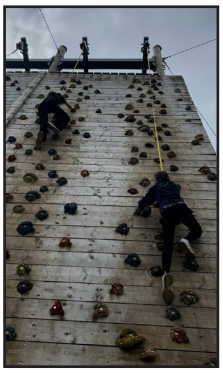


They stood in awe at the Giant's Causeway, exploring one of the world's most spectacular natural wonders and discovering the fascinating geology and myths behind its unique landscape. They stepped back in time at Crumlin Road Gaol, learning about Belfast's complex history and gaining an understanding of how the past continues to shape the present. They also visited W5 Science Centre and outdoor adventure at The Jungle with a visit to Splash too (a huge aqua park) as well as Portrush Beach. They represented our school superbly and returned home with greater confidence, stronger friendships and a deeper appreciation of the world beyond Lanchester.

Turing Trips to Paris and Madrid
Some of our older children who should have travelled to Dubai, Shanghai and Istanbul, eventually had their moment and travelled to our partner schools in Paris and Madrid instead. 24 pupils enjoyed time in schools where they were welcomed like celebrities! They also enjoyed some of the culture of the two cities. Children in Paris went all the way to the top of the Eiffel Tower and visited Notre Dame Cathedral. Meanwhile, the children in Madrid stayed right in the centre of the city where they enjoyed the sights, smells and sounds of Madrid. Truly memorable weeks for them all. These trips are funded by the Turing scheme which has allowed some of our children to travel far and wide over the last four years!



Year 5 Residential to PGL, Northallerton
Meanwhile, our Year 5 children enjoyed a wonderful four days at the outdoor adventure centre in Northallerton. Here, they were challenged to abseiling, rock climbing, zip wire, giant swing and many other outdoor activities which were all a real test of their character! However, in true EP style, our children cheered each other on, supporting each other as they overcame some real fears! Truly character building for them all.



Water Day
We decided to make the most of the recent heatwave and enjoyed another traditional water day for the whole school. This is a highly anticipated event which the children love! It was also lovely to receive messages from our neighbours stating how it is also their favourite day of the year, listening to the children's squeals and shouts of delight! We have our water slide which the children (and adults) thoroughly enjoy which is then followed by a huge water fight on the school field. Great fun is had by all. However, my favourite part of the day is surprising the children in their classrooms with my super soaker! Some were lying in wait for me this year though and I think I was definitely the wettest I have been!



Educational Visits
Different year groups have also experienced a wealth of enrichment activities to supplement their work in the classroom. Reception enjoyed a wonderful Rockpool day in school. Year 1 have been to Raby Castle whilst Year 2 have been to St Mary's Lighthouse. Year 3 visited Jarrow Hall and Year 4 enjoyed Tynemouth Aquarium. Year 5 enjoyed experiencing what life down the coalmines was like at Beamish Museum. These all help to bring the topics alive and are wonderful experiences for the children!
In addition to the educational visits to support topics Year 6 also enjoyed their 16-mile bike ride along the railway line to Bearpark while our Shakespeare Club performed 'The Tempest' at Bishop Auckland Town Hall. We were proud to have 7 children confirmed at a service with the Bishop in Leadgate too.
Finally, we were delighted to welcome our partner school from India in Delhi to our school. They stayed in the tranquillity of Hamsteels, spent two days in our school and visited Durham and Newcastle. It was a real honour to welcome them and show them what our education system is like as well as show our country off to them all!



TES National Teaching Awards Runners Up
We are incredibly proud that Lanchester EP Primary School were announced runners up for the TES Primary School of the Year Award and has also been named a Silver Winner in the Pearson National Teaching Awards' Primary School of the Year category. Some senior leaders, parents, governors and an ex-pupil all travelled for a wonderful awards ceremony at the Grosvenor Hotel in Park Lane in the middle of June.



This was only two days after we received the wonderful news

Lanchester Endowed Parochial School

that we won the Silver (the highest accolade possible at the moment) for the Pearson Award.
These accolades are a tremendous honour and recognise far more than academic success. They celebrate a school where children are encouraged to be curious, compassionate and courageous; where every child is known, valued and supported to flourish; and where learning extends well beyond the classroom through experiences that inspire and enrich.
Such recognition belongs to everyone. It reflects the unwavering commitment of our talented staff, the encouragement and partnership of our families, the guidance of our governors and, above all, the enthusiasm, determination and character of our wonderful children. Every day they remind us why education is such a privilege.



Year 6 leavers service

As a village school, we are incredibly proud of our place within the Lanchester community. These achievements are not simply milestones for our school; they are successes that the whole village can celebrate. We look forward to building on them in the year ahead, continuing to provide the exceptional opportunities and experiences that help every child to grow, succeed and thrive.
Mrs J Davis, Head Teacher

Thursday Club

They say that the sun shines on the righteous. Well, we can try to believe that, as our outing to Weardale railway was sunny and warm and went very well. The Dales Centre gave some retail therapy and a coffee. Then we went on the coach to the railway station in Stanhope where the staff met us and made us feel welcome.



After a look into the craft shop on the platform the staff directed us into the VIP luxury carriage for our journey and afternoon tea. We shared pink wine, non-alcoholic Prosecco and 'full fat' Prosecco as we set off from Stanhope towards Wolsingham. The train stopped at a very picturesque stop for our actual tea party and slowly moved towards the furthest part of the journey. The return was fun too. Nigel, one of the staff on board, gave us a tea quiz with questions like "Which countries drink the most tea in the world?" We were surprised to find that it was Turkey and Ireland. The other tricky one was "what do the letters P and G stand for in PG tips. I leave that one for the reader to think about! We were back to the village about school time and have very good memories of a lovely day out together.

Jan Vasey
Photo – stock image

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WHAT'S ON - August

WI

August meeting, Monday 3rd – Lesley Anderson and Kate Lawrie, Behind the scenes at the City Theatre.

September meeting, Monday 7th – 'Daft as a Brush', cancer patient care.

Coffee Morning, Saturday 12th September, Methodist Church, 10am to 12noon.

Library

Library Book Clubs are on the 4th Monday and 3rd Thursday monthly. Books are supplied by the library. If you would like to participate in either of these friendly and informal group chats, pop into the library and speak to the librarians.

Thursday Book Club will meet on 20th August from 4-5pm.This group will be reviewing 'Girl, Woman, Other' by Bernadine Evaristo, a book about 'the interconnected stories of a group of black British women (which raises) timeless questions about feminism and race'. (The Guardian)

Monday Book Club will meet on 24th August from 2.30-3.30 to discuss 'The List of Suspicious Things' by Jennie Godfrey, 'a quietly moving and intimate tale about family mysteries in a small town' (Google books).

Pins and Needles meet on 1st Thursday monthly. The next meeting is 6th August from 10-11.30am. If you like knitting or crocheting, bring along wool, thread, needles and patterns and get friendly advice and support.

Scrabble Group meets 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 1.30-3.30 pm. Build words and add points according to the letter tiles value.

Rummikub Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month from 1.30-3.30pm. A strategic, yet simple game with tiles that are constantly changing.

Bridge Club meets every Monday, 2.30-4pm (except 4th Monday). Learn to play Bridge.

Lego Club meets every Saturday from 10-11.30.

Toddler Time group is on Tuesdays from 2.30-3.00 (term time only) and includes stories and nursery rhymes for your child/ren to enjoy.

Children's crafts are available every afternoon and Saturdays. A variety of craft ideas and materials are provided, so come along and enjoy some creative fun!

And remember, a book opens the doors to many different worlds, experiences and cultures. Come and explore new and exciting genres of books and join in the activities on offer. Your library is waiting for you to step inside.

Musical Memories

Celebrates The Greatest Hits of All Time. Join us for music, refreshments and fun activities, 5th August 2026at 2pm, Lynwood House, Durham Road, Lanchester. Musical Memories is a fun, friendly and stimulating music group using the ability of music to improve your brain activity, wellbeing and mood. We welcome people living with conditions that affect memory. For further information email lanchesterdfc@gmail.com.

Lanchester Local History Society

We will be meeting at 6.45 for 7.00 on Friday 7th August to hear David Griffiths talking about Lord Gort. This will involve hearing about the family estate at Hamsterley Mill. Our September meeting, which is Friday the 4th, will involve our AGM before the speaker. David Smith has volunteered to tell us of the history of the Valley line which passes through the village. Do come and join us in Room 3 at the community centre, however we need to negotiate the security system and ask you to arrive in plenty of time to get settled for our 7.00 start. Everyone is welcome and don't be put off if you are on your own, we are a chatty group.

City Theatre

'The Female of the Species' a comedy by Joanna Murray-Smith is on at The City Theatre, Back Silver St, Fowlers Yard, Durham, DH1 3 RA, from Wed 12th August to Sat 15th. Performance times, Wed- Fri 7.30pm, Sat 2.30 pm. Tickets £9.50 from Durham Gala or www.durhamcitytheatre.co.uk."Thirty years ago Margaret Mason wrote a best selling Woman's Lib book 'The Cerebral Vagina' with others of a similar theme following, but now, faced with writer's block, her success takes an unexpected turn when a stranger turns up."

Lunch Club - cuppa and a chat

The next lunch held at Lynwood House will be Tuesday 11th August, 12pm start, all welcome.

Thursday Club

There will be no meeting in August. The next meeting will be on 17th September.

Paradiso Club

The club is closed for the summer but we look forward to seeing you for our 2026/27 programme on 13th September.

Ballet Classes at Croft View Halls

Adult Ballet on Mondays 8pm - 9pm

Silver Swans Adult Ballet (aimed at over 55s but all ages welcome) on Thursdays 9.30am - 10.30am

Contact Joyce, 07932 008400 or info@jjtds.com

PPG "Let's Talk"

Let's Talk. Open to all patients of Lanchester Medical Centre.

Last Friday of the month, 12pm - 2pm, Lanchester Cricket Club.

Friends of Longovicium Group (Lanchester Roman Fort)

Visitors and new members are always welcome at our meetings. Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month (excluding December), 7.30pm at Lanchester Community Centre. For further information about membership please contact: Rodney Hawkins Tel: 0191 4103472 - Email: hawkins_15@sky.com or Mrs M Williams Tel: 01207 520063. Follow us on **Facebook** (Friends of Longovicium). Please have a look at the group's website which is the culmination of decades of research and contains a wealth of information about Longovicium Roman Fort: https://longoviciumcouk.wordpress.com. Friends of Longovicium is part of the Lanchester Partnership.

Lanchester Male Voice Choir

Meets every Monday evening 7.00 - 9.00pm in Croft View Hall. We are a small, friendly, supportive group who would like to welcome new members. There is no requirement to have sung before or to be able to read music. For further details email Peter Bridgewater, tootspeteb@live.co.uk

Sewing Group

Every Wednesday, 1-3pm at Lanchester Community Centre. We are a small friendly group with space to grow into. We enjoy sewing, knitting, crochet, embroidery and cross stitch - as well as having a cuppa and a biscuit and sometimes cake! There is chatting and a laugh. For more information ring Elaine 01207 520063. No reply, please leave your name and number and Elaine will get back to you. Looking forward to meeting you and for you to join us.

Acappella Choir
(singing without musical accompaniment)

This is held in the Chapter House of All Saints church every Monday between 10.30 and 12. New members are always welcome. No previous choir experience necessary. We sing a wide variety of songs, lead by Sheila Trow, and are open to both men and women.

Methodist Church Coffee Mornings

Coffee mornings are held every Saturday at the Methodist Church between 10 and 12. If you would like to organise a coffee morning for your organisation, please contact Judith Brown on 521898.

Wellbeing Walk

Every Monday at 1pm on the village green next to the war memorial. Walk lasts up to 90 minutes, all welcome. Please note that it is no longer necessary to book on to the walk.

Playgroup

Every Friday at 9:30 at Croft View Halls. Find us on Facebook, 'Lanchester's new playgroup'.



The Lanchester Community Orchard Work Sessions

We meet regularly to maintain and care for the orchard. Come and join us to find out more and help look after the trees. There are jobs for all ages and we always stop for coffee! New members are always welcome. For all our work session dates please visit the What's On page of our website lanchesterorchard.org

Lanchester Hiking Group

Meets fortnightly on a Wednesday at 10am. Walks are between 5-6 miles long within a 30 minute radius of Lanchester – lifts provided. For further details please call Helen Thomas on 07712425623 (or email hdbthomas@live.com).

Monday Art Group

We are a small friendly group who enjoy painting and drawing, and come together to learn, and give each other support in making art. We meet each Monday in the Community Centre from 10.00am to 12pm with an occasional demonstration by visiting artists or our own members. New members are most welcome. Contact mwalters5346@gmail.com if you would like further information.

Scottish Dance

Scottish dancing takes place every Friday 7.30 to 9.30 in the community centre and complete beginners are very welcome, contact Elizabeth Grayson on 0191 384 4836 for more information.

Vintage Tractor Club

Meets on the first Wednesday of the month in the Social Club.



Poppy's walks

Good day readers and this month's walk is a touch different to my usual offerings, because it takes place in and around Beamish Museum which, if I may say so, we are lucky to have on our doorsteps. The Humans were each given an annual pass for the museum by their daughter (my big sister) as a Christmas present and have taken every opportunity available to use it. Naturally they take me along too, because Beamish is mainly dog friendly with some restrictions.

As you will know by now, I am Poppy, a Patterdale terrier who enjoys sharing my walks with Village Voice readers.

One Sunday last month (June) the male Human announced he would take me to Beamish. The fact that there was a display of sports cars on the show field no doubt swayed his decision to go.

We entered through a gate to the left of the main entrance by showing his pass to the staff there and then walked to the right in the direction of Pockerley.

After walking for a hundred yards or so we came to a tram stop, and the Human decided he fancied a tram ride. So, we clambered on board a vintage single deck tram with wooden seats and ornate lighting. He told me the tram originated in Portugal. We clattered along with other passengers and another dog on board before alighting in the old town. From there we walked back past the town houses and an ice cream stall to the fairground.

This has old fashioned amusements such as a Helter Skelter and a carousel, but we kept on walking until we came to the display of cars. There were a few dozen on display and the male Human looked at them admiringly, but I was unimpressed. They all seemed to have very small interiors which would not enable them to transport dogs very comfortably. I prefer our sensible Ford.

From the cars we walked back through the old town - 1920s I was told - and along to the latest addition to Beamish, which is a 1950s town. It contains a fish and chip shop which had a long queue, a cafe, a cinema, shops, houses, a bowling green, a village hall and a play area.

But after a walk around the 50s town we exited at the rear of the village hall and crossed the tram line to follow a footpath marked Pockerley. By doing so we came to another path to our left with a public footpath arrow marked. We followed that and crossed a couple of stiles which took us out of the museum and into fields with a stream running to our left. I was allowed off my lead at this stage and we continued walking, following the arrows, through some lovely countryside.

By following the arrows, we joined what looked like an old wagon way and turned left along it. We eventually came out opposite the entrance to Beamish Hall Hotel.,

We then turned around and retraced our footsteps until we crossed the stile back into Beamish Museum.

This walk is of course discretionary, but it allowed me off my lead for a decent spell.

As I hinted before, there are certain areas in Beamish which are out of bound to dogs, such as many shops, the houses, cinema, cafe etc. But to the male Human's delight there is one building in which we are welcome, and that is the Sun Inn, a former Bishop Auckland pub rebuilt in Beamish.

Since I had had a good walk I could not complain about him stopping for a refreshing drink, but then I insisted we walk - and NOT get a tram or bus - back uphill to the museum exit.

On a housekeeping note, there is an ample supply of litter bins in case we are caught short. We must be kept on a short lead within the confines of the museum, and there are lots of drinking bowls for dogs around the site.

To conclude, Beamish Museum is a very enjoyable outing on our doorstep - for humans and canines alike. There were several areas, such as the colliery village, the farm or Pockerley Manor, which we did not visit, but there is always next time.

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Acapalla Group concert and coffee morning

I've been running a mainly Acapella singing group in the Chapter House of All Saints' Parish Church for the last nine years, and due to an expanding choir and a very full audience over this time, we feel that we need to move the concert part of our coffee morning into the Church itself. On Monday 17th August the doors to the Church will be open from 10.30am and soon after we'll sing a varied range of music, for approximately thirty minutes before inviting you all to join us in the Chapter House for tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits.

Any donations towards Church funds would be greatly appreciated. The Parish Church very generously provides us with a rehearsal space for our lovely group of singers, every Monday morning.

Sheila Trow





Christian Aid Concert

A date for your diary. On 15th December 2026 at 7pm the Glendale Choir and the Argos Singers have kindly offered to do a concert of Christmas music at Lanchester Methodist Church. It will include some carols for you to join in with.

Come and get in the festive spirit!

There will be refreshments at the end of the event and donations invited for Christian Aid.

Judith Brown



Crinnions' Open Mic Night

Sunday 28th June marked the launch of Crinnions' brand new open mic night - an opportunity for musicians and singers in the area to showcase their talents and build an audience for the hard work they've been putting in at home.

Hosted by local duo 'The Buskers', who include local resident, Barrie McDermid, the evening started at 6:00pm and ran until 9:00pm. The earlier start meant that the youngest performer, Maven Moralee was only 11 years old, could perform. Despite his youth, he had a bar full of people singing and clapping along - definitely one to watch.

The audience were treated to fantastic performances by experienced performers like Ruby McDermid and Lee Harrison who are veterans to Crinnions, as well as introducing some newcomers to the stage.

There was even an international twist to the evening, with musicians from Holland and Poland!

Crinnions have been doing everything they can to put Lanchester on the North East musical map, by hosting live acts every Saturday night and even their own Festival in May, which was a huge success and another one planned for August. The open mic night proved a wonderful addition to this.

The success of an entertainment evening like this is gauged by the enjoyment of the audience and there was no mistaking how well received it was from the reaction. Consequently, proprietors, Mark and Carolanne will be scheduling the event on the last Sunday of the month, so ensure that date is marked firmly in your diaries.

If you're interested in performing, you can just turn up with your instrument or voice and have a great evening.

For further information, contact Barrie by email info@thebuskers.co.uk.

Barrie McDermid



Boys' Brigade

We have been out and about after half term with a visit, firstly to Lanchester All Saints' Parish Church and then the Lanchester Orchard. At the church we learned about the one piece pillars recovered from the Roman Fort and used in the church's construction down one side and how the other pillars were made in sections. The boys had fun trying to find the many church mice carved on the wooden furniture in the building, the signature of Robert "Mouseman" Thompson who made the items. We viewed the Roman altar and other artefacts from the Roman fort and tried on some of the robes worn by the resident vicar on special occasions.

Our thanks must go to the people who gave their time to help the boys learn more about the church building and the many historical items held there and Lesley the vicar who called in to see us.

We were due to go to the Orchard the next week but due to the forecast being thunder and lightning (which ended up being wrong) we postponed it for a fortnight. At the Orchard the weather was wonderful, and we helped with some weeding, watering and erected a marquee. The lads played games and ended by toasting marshmallows on the campfire in a fire pit. Again, our thanks go to Sony and the many people who helped us have such a wonderful evening.

We baked tray bakes for a coffee morning we had at the Methodist Church with the money helping to purchase the many badges we would need at the end of session. Company and Senior section are now looking forward to their annual camp at Broomley Grange at Stocksfield which is also hosting an open day on the 22nd August 2026 when children can take part, completely free, in many of the activities they have on offer. It will be a great day and if you want to go, we suggest that you take a change of clothes as they will probably get wet.

Eric Hepplewhite







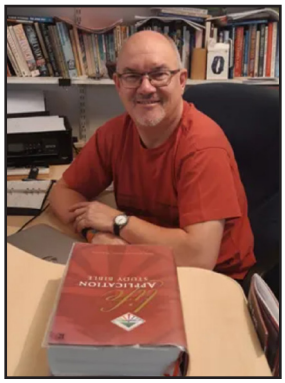
Above: at the Parish Church. Below right: Tray Bakes for the coffee morning
Rest of photographs at the orchard







Farewell to Revd. Stuart Earl



After 12 years as minister of Lanchester Methodist Church, the Revd. Stuart Earl will retire from local ministry at the end of July. Stuart was originally due to finish his appointment last summer but generously agreed to remain for an additional year when no successor was available. The church is now looking forward to welcoming the Revd. Rick Ormrod and his wife, Susan. Rick's welcome service is scheduled for 1 September.

During Stuart's ministry, many new people from a wide variety of backgrounds have joined the church. Inclusivity has become one of the key priorities identified in the Church Mission Plan. Stuart's modern and informal style of worship has been appreciated by many. Worship services began to be livestreamed during the pandemic and continue to attract people from near and far including Maua Methodist Hospital in Kenya where two church members were working. The photo [right] shows Stuart preaching in the chapel there during a recent sabbatical.



Stuart's arrival also marked the beginning of the popular **Summer Special Holiday Club,** led by his wife, Claire. Stuart's holiday club character was known as "Grumpy", and some of the village children still greet him by that name today. [Photo right]



The appointment of Kath Jones as Children, Youth and Families Worker has further broadened the church's outreach. Rick will inherit a healthy and growing church, supported by a strong and capable leadership team that will provide continuity during the summer transition.

Stuart and Claire have purchased a house in Lanchester and will therefore not be disappearing from village life. Stuart will continue to serve across the North East as Assistant Chair of District on a part-time basis, and is looking forward to having more free time.

Residents will no doubt continue to see him on his daily walks along the Lanchester Valley Walk, wearing his distinctive Batman jumper. If you do, be sure to say hello.

The church thanks Stuart and Claire for their years of dedicated service and wishes them every blessing for the future, while looking forward with excitement to the next chapter under Rick's leadership.

Inclusivity

Inclusivity plays an important part in the life of the church, where people of all ages, backgrounds, cultures and ethnicity are welcomed.

During the First World War centenary commemorations, Helen and Helen, a married same-sex couple, visited the church's poppy display. They received such a warm welcome that they decided to stay and have now been members of the congregation for many years.

In 2021, the Methodist Church of Great Britain voted to permit same-sex marriages on Methodist premises. The Church adopted what it describes as a "permissive" approach, allowing individual churches to decide whether to conduct such marriages.

Following a vote by church leaders shortly afterwards, Lanchester Methodist Church chose to register its premises and now offers marriage services to same-sex couples as part of its ministry and witness to the community.

Youth Work

Seven years ago, Kath Jones was appointed as Children's, Youth and Families Worker for the Methodist churches in the area. Although the appointment was originally intended to last for five years, its success led to it being extended for a further three years.

Kath's appointment enabled children's and youth work to become a greater focus within the local community, building on the strong relationships established through Summer Special and its contact with primary-aged children.

We also recognise the long-standing contribution of the Boys' Brigade, which has served young people successfully for many years and continues to flourish. The same can be said for KoGS, our church youth group, which celebrates its 20th anniversary next year.

Kath works closely with both these groups and also has the privilege of leading 'Open the Book' assemblies, alongside a team of volunteers, in both village primary schools.

This has led to further opportunities, including curriculum-related visits to the church and invitations for the team to participate in school activities.

Summer Special continues to thrive, albeit sadly without Grumpy's familiar presence. This year marks its tenth anniversary, and we look forward to welcoming many local children in August as they become Heroes in Training.

The church is also home to a thriving toddler group, which meets every Thursday during term time from 11.00am to 1.00pm, providing a warm and welcoming space for young children and their carers.

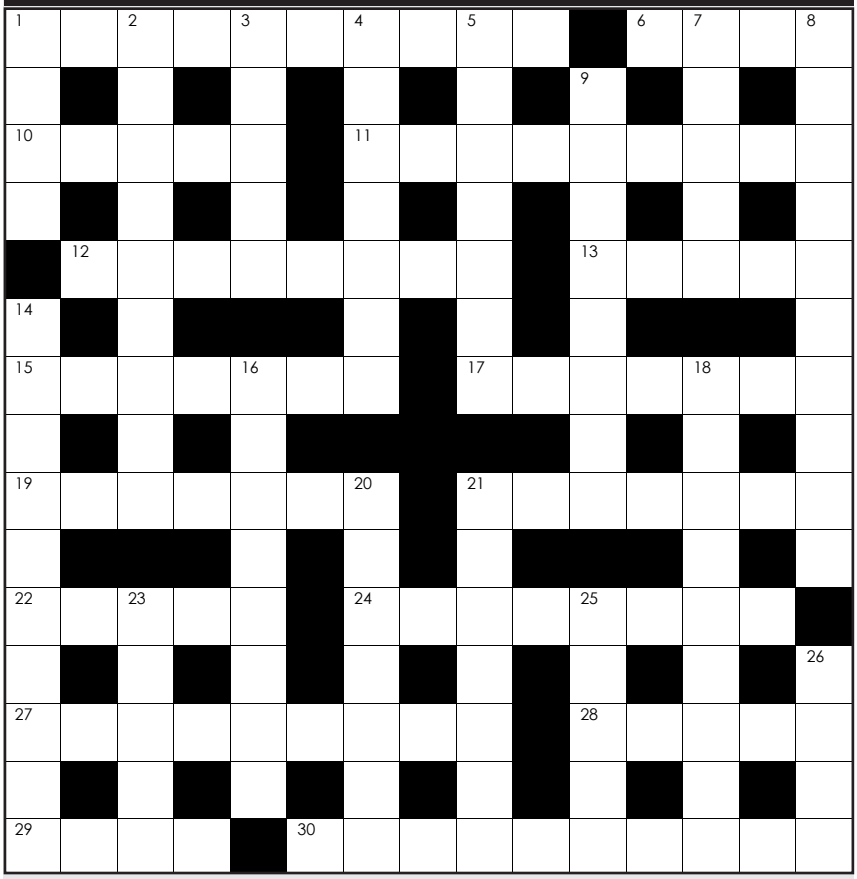


Summer Special Holiday Club is back!!

Now in our 10th year, Lanchester Methodist's Summer Special Holiday Club has proved to be a favourite with so many families over the last decade. Many of those who attended in the early years are now leaders, helpers and even upfront dancers, such is the excitement of continuing to be a part of such a fun event. If you're wondering how to entertain your children in that last week of the holidays, when most of the other great activities have finished, then look no further. It's guaranteed to be a blast! Get in touch to book your place.

Claire Earl

CROSSWORD 219



Clues

Across

1. Local hospice emblem (6,4)
6. Relating to the ear (4)
10. Thing of value (5)
11. Reparation (9)
12. Notice about a ring road? (8)
13. Loud metallic noise (5)
15. Noisy musician (7)
17. Unnecessarily elaborate procedure (7)
19. Relating to the area of Spain and Portugal (7)
21. Declare free from blame (7)
22. Lifeless or not moving (5)
24. Caledonia (8)
27. Failing to take proper care (9)
28. Sound (5)
29. Welsh emblem (4)
30. Method used to assess cardiac efficiency (6,4)

Down

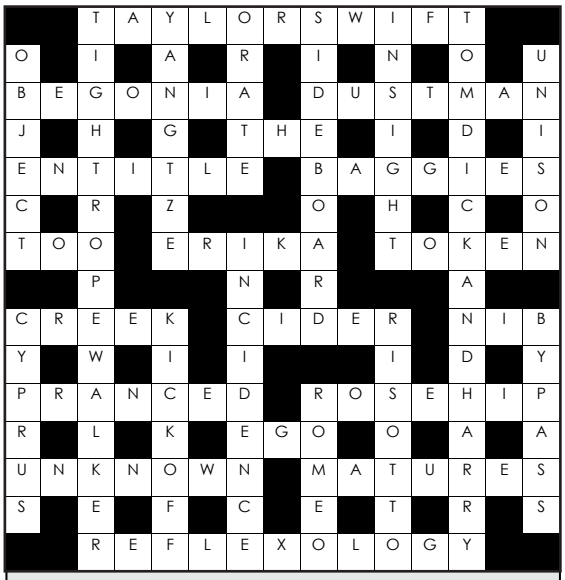
1. Enfold (4)
2. Weariness (9)
3. Relating to the eye (5)
4. Marketing tool used in cinema (7)
5. Display of self-importance (3,4)
7. Greek letter (5)
8. Groups or classes of common things (10)
9. Superbeing, like the Steptoes' horse (8)
14. Extra (10)
16. Keep in good condition (8)
18. Saint associated with love (9)
20. Easy, aim of anti-perspirant (2-5)
21. One of twelve messengers (7)
23. Bird of prey (5)
25. Old style of golf course (5)
26. 'Plates of Meat' around the Bow Bells area (4)

Name:_____

Address: _____

_____

Please send your completed entries for the £10 prize draw by **Monday 3rd August 2026** to the Village Voice, c/o Lanchester Community Centre, Newbiggen Lane, Lanchester, DH7 0HY



Solution crossword 220
There were 20 entries of which only 8 were correct! Main errors: it's Erika Roe, not Erica and Yangtze river spelt with a Z not S. Winner pulled out of the hat is Stephen Ramsay.

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Water, drinks and hydration

Find out which drinks are healthier choices, and how to get enough fluids every day to stay hydrated.

Water is a healthy and cheap choice to keep you hydrated, but other drinks can also count towards your fluid intake. We also get some fluids from the foods we eat.

Not getting enough fluids can lead to dehydration. (www.nhs.uk/conditions/dehydration)

Daily fluid intake

Most people should aim to drink enough during the day so their pee is a clear pale yellow colour.

In the Eatwell Guide, the government recommends that people should aim to drink 6 to 8 cups or glasses of fluid a day. This is just a guide, and you may need to drink more fluids if you're:

- pregnant or breastfeeding
- in a hot environment
- physically active for long periods
- ill or recovering from illness

Water, lower-fat milk and sugar-free drinks, including tea and coffee, all count as part of your daily intake.

Children

The best drinks to give children are water and milk. Children can have pasteurised whole or semi-skimmed cows' milk, or goats' or sheep's milk, as a main drink from the age of 1.

Children should avoid sugary fizzy drinks, squash and juice drinks completely. Children who drink a lot of sugary drinks are more likely to become overweight. The added sugar in these drinks can also damage teeth. For more information about drinks for babies, see link at end of article.

- drink regularly throughout the day
- swap sugary drinks for diet, sugar-free or no added sugar drinks
- adults can choose lower fat milk, such as semi-skimmed, 1% fat or skimmed milk and unsweetened plant-based drinks
- limit fruit juice and smoothies to a maximum of one small glass (150ml) a day and drink with a meal, as they're high in sugar
- check nutrition labels on drinks – look for drinks with green or amber colour-coded labels
- drink extra fluids if you've been sweating from physical activity, or if you're unwell – water is the best way to replace lost fluids
- dilute squash drinks or cordials well to reduce the sugar content
- drink caffeine in moderation – some people are more sensitive to caffeine than others, depending on how much they drink and how often. Check the label for drinks that are high in caffeine.
- if you don't like the taste of water, try sparkling water, no added sugar squash, or add a slice of lemon or lime

Don't

- do not have drinks that are high in sugar too often – they're higher in calories and the sugar can damage your teeth
- do not have more than 200mg of caffeine a day if you're pregnant – this could increase the risk of miscarriage or low birth weight

Ref https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/food-guidelines-and-food-labels/water-drinks-nutrition/

Willow Burn launches new children's book

to help families open up about bereavement

An illustrated book encouraging children to speak openly about bereavement has been produced by the hospice and launched on June 18th. The event was chaired by Anna Foster of Radio Newcastle, who also led the game of heads or tails which required participation from everyone!!

Local author Victoria Downes and illustrator Helen Turner have joined forces to create Will O'Burn and the Friends Who Remember, a gentle, hopeful story designed to help young people and their families talk about loss, love and remembering those who have died.

The story follows mascot Will O'Burn as he learns about how his animal friends deal differently with the grief of losing someone they love.

Following the death of her best friend, Victoria wanted to write a book to support young families when faced with grief: "The purpose of this book is to bring comfort to young people struggling and feeling sad, and for adults who don't know what to say to their children. It can be read together and some of the interactions Will O'Burn has with the other animals can be used as a way of understanding their own grief and to prompt conversations that might otherwise be tricky."

Helen's mother spent the last days of her life in Willow Burn Hospice, and her family were appreciative of the care she received during her hardest days: "When my mum died, there was a build-up to the time where we knew we were going to lose her and it was such a busy time. It wasn't until everything quietened down that it hit me that we had lost a massive part of our lives. That's when the grief set in.

"As a family, we experienced a range of emotions including being sad and angry at different times, and that is a big message we wanted to get across in the book, that grief hits everyone differently.

"I always wanted to give something back to Willow Burn Hospice for the amazing care my mum received, but I never thought I could ever return. As it turns out, I've been back so many times since we lost my mum because it's this amazing place that helps make the worst times more bearable."

Rachel Quince, Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Fundraising and Marketing at Willow Burn Hospice, said about the intention of the book: "We know we can't reach every child across County Durham who may need bereavement counselling, but what we can do is provide a resource like this that helps children and young people begin to understand and express their feelings. This book gives families something accessible and practical that they can use together, whether a child is experiencing loss themselves or supporting someone close to them."

Will O'Burn and the Friends Who Remember is currently on sale at the hospice, in its shops in Stanley, Consett and Lanchester and on the charity's website. The book has been funded by Amethyst Homes, Conside Masonic Lodge, Consett Rotary, Durham Freemasons, Wolsingham School and Willow Burn Hospice.



Anna Foster directs the head and tail game.



Anna Foster looks on as Victoria Downes reads some excerpts from the book.



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KoGs

We are almost finished for another school year and boy has it flown over fast!

We have packed so much into this year, most recently with our Best of British session where we had a full English breakfast and learnt some facts and information about the Royal Family and Trooping The Colour. There are still more exciting sessions to come, including a visit from one of Laura's old youth workers Andy who now works for Youth For Christ North East. He will be joining us on Monday 6th July to teach us some MAD (and we really mean mad!) games.

We have our paddleboarding trip taking place on Sunday 5th July.

Our end of year party (only open to current members only – sorry) which this year is themed to The Pirates of the Caribbean which will include a visit from KoG's FAVOURITE ice cream man – Kevin from Iced Dreams!

Laura and Pete's visit to the Royal Garden Party at Holyrood Palace will be on June 30th (see next month's edition!)

Next year we will be heading back to Seahouses once again 30th April – 3rd May 2027 and will see the return of our festive PJ film night, Christmas party night and new exciting crafts, workshops and much more including our Christmas Fundraiser.

One of our leaders Pete will be taking part in his first Great North Run this year for Henry Dancer Days. We were very privileged to have had Henry as a member of KoGs before he sadly lost his fight. Pete has a sponsor form up on our KoGs board in the Methodist Church, please consider sponsoring him, every penny counts!

We are pleased to let you know our books will be opening up to new (and old) members on our return on Monday 7th September so please come along and give it a try!

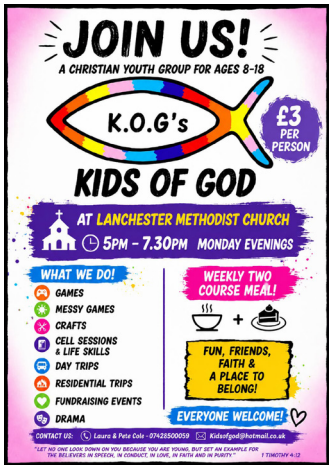
We offer a range of activities including: 2 course meals, games, messy games, day trips, evening trips, residential weekend trips, crafts, drama, cell sessions and much much more!

We start at 5pm to 7.30pm, Mondays during school terms (and some half terms) at Lanchester Methodist Church for all ages 8 – 18 years! The cost of the sessions is £3 per person weekly or £30 per person a term but your first week is free! All activities (excluding additional trips) and your weekly meal is included. For more information contact Laura & Peter Cole on 07428500059 / 01207 654291 or email kidsofgod@hotmail.co.uk

We also have a Facebook page if you'd like to see more or get in touch with us that way, www.facebook.com/kidsofgodlanchester

We hope to see you soon!

KoGs Leaders.

















Suggested sites for development around Lanchester

Between 30 June and 6 September 2025, the County Council invited landowners, developers and the wider community to submit sites for a range of potential uses as part of early evidence gathering for the new Local Plan.

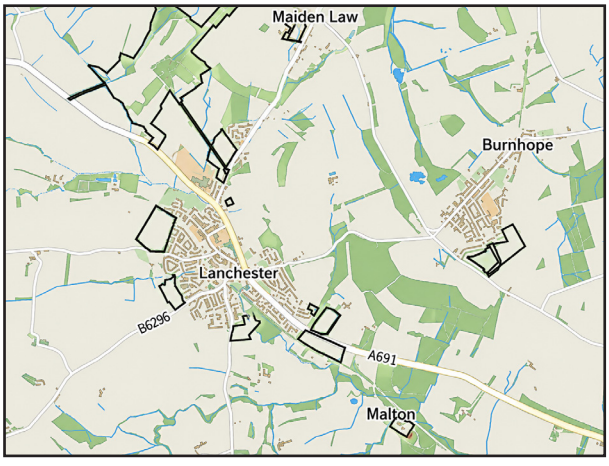
Sites submitted through the "Call for Sites" are now available to view on an interactive map. https://placemaker.durham.urbanintelligence.co.uk/p/document/10/ The map provides limited details, including the site ID, site area, and proposed use.

The council website stresses:

"Please note that these sites are shown for information purposes only at this stage. We are not inviting or accepting comments on these submissions as they are currently being assessed to determine their suitability, availability, and deliverability. The findings will be published in Spring 2027, alongside consultation on the proposed Local Plan and supporting evidence. The inclusion of a site does not mean it will be allocated in the Local Plan or supported for the proposed development."

So we will need to wait until next year to see which, if any, of these sites will be put forward in the County Plan.

Keith Brown



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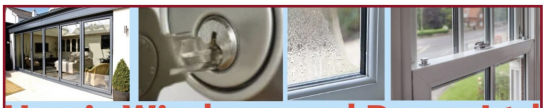
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Remembering Martin Durkin



Martin Durkin was born in Tantobie on 30 June 1947. After studying English Literature at Newcastle University and Warwick University, he joined HMRC, where he would spend his working life, eventually settling in London. It was while working for HMRC that he met his wife Jane in 2001.

In his spare time Martin enjoyed travelling, visiting his brother in Australia, university friends in New Zealand, and walking holidays with his scout friends. He was active in the Scouting movement and had several lasting friendships from his time spent volunteering.

Martin returned to the North East, settling in Lanchester and spending the last couple of years of his career at HMRC in Long Benton, before retiring. Retirement was never a quiet time for him, and he spent mornings swimming and became involved in village life, volunteering for the Lanchester Lions amongst others.

In recent years, Parkinson's disease gradually made life more difficult for Martin, though he never lost his sense of humour!

Martin was a beloved husband, brother, brother-in-law, uncle and great uncle and will be greatly missed by all his family.

The family of Martin Durkin

Martin volunteered as an emergency deliverer for the Voice over many years, never refusing to deliver wherever and whenever making my life far easier as a distributor. He could often be seen litter picking around the village. I once spotted him washing the Lanchester signs at the entrance to the village, so they looked "clean and tidy" to visitors. A member of the Bowls club and a member of the Lanchester Lions, he enjoyed a drink in the village hostelries where he could keep you amused for hours with tales on most subjects you cared to mention. Truly a character and a big miss to many.

Mike Stoddart, Chairman of the Village Voice

Community Centre News

Here is the latest from your Community Centre.

VERY IMPORTANT NEWS:
Please note that we no longer have a land line; our new mobile number is 07776 953016 - please use this number to contact us.

Recent Events:
We held a lovely quilting workshop in May hosted by Kim Suleman.
Kim will be returning to run two more workshops later this year.

- Saturday September 19th where she will be teaching how to make a small quilted bag.
- Saturday 10th October which will be hand sewing a square, which could be used as a heat mat, or a pan rest.

If you are interested in either of these fabulous sessions, please get in touch.
Another great event is also taking place on Saturday September 19th, our De-Stash craft and haberdashery sale. Why not come along and get your supplies for all of your crafting projects.

Café:
Bee's community café has been with us for over three months and is very popular.
If you haven't called in you are missing out! Becky and her team are there Wednesday to Saturday 9am to 2.30pm and on Sunday from 11.30am to 3pm for Sunday lunches only.

Need to book a venue?
We have great facilities, such as 2 large halls and 3 meeting rooms. Your booking will include the use of an allocated refreshment area with tea, coffee and sugar included. We have a large projector screen, overhead projector, colour changing lights, surround sound, large car park, tables, chairs and crockery all available for your use.
The office is staffed Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am-1.15pm. On Tuesday and Thursdays, it's 9am-3pm. If you have any enquiries about any of the brilliant activities or clubs available please get in touch on 07776 953016.
To keep up to date with what's going on check out our Information Point; follow us on Facebook 'Lanchester Community Centre' or check out our website https://lanchestercc.co.uk/

Alison Densham Smith
Community Centre Manager







Above left and left: Bee's cafe's lovely cakes.
Above and below: The quilting workshop.



Monthly Patient Participation Group Update





It has been another busy and positive month for the Patient Participation Group, with plenty of opportunities to listen, talk and support our local community.

Our Let's Talk session on 29 May was led by guest speaker Helen McCree from Musical Memories. It was a lovely opportunity to hear more about the value of music, memories and shared conversation, and we are grateful to Helen for joining us.

We were also pleased to support Carers Week, which ran from 8 to 14 June. To mark the week, the PPG held a carers coffee morning on 8 June. There was lots of chat, a warm welcome and, of course, some gorgeous cakes supplied by the PPG. Everyone who attended left with a small gift from the PPG. [See the pictures right.]

On 19 June, a meeting was arranged to discuss the Medical Centre. Those attending included Sue Graham, Chair of the PPG; Claire Riley, Chief Corporate services for ICB; Colin Stephenson from the ICB; Luke Akehurst MP; and Alison Grey, local councillor. We hope this will help keep local patient concerns and priorities firmly on the agenda.

At the time of writing, the CQC report has still not been published. We will share further information when it becomes available.

On 26 June, the PPG held a charity quiz night at the cricket club in support of If U Care Share, a mental health charity. The cricket club was full on a very hot summer's night, and everyone enjoyed a fun and friendly evening. The winning team received £50, while the team in last place was awarded the wooden spoon. Huge gratitude goes to the cricket club, especially the volunteers who worked tirelessly behind the bar throughout the evening. The final figure is still to be confirmed, but more than £300 was raised for this very worthy cause.

St Bede's Catholic Secondary School and Sixth Form Centre

July at St Bede's – A Month of Celebration, Transition and Looking Ahead

As we move into the final weeks of the academic year, July is always a special and memorable time at St Bede's. It's a chance to celebrate achievements, reflect on a fantastic year, and prepare for exciting new beginnings.

We have been delighted to welcome our new Year 6 students as part of our transition events. It has been wonderful to see them starting to feel part of the St Bede's community, meeting staff, making new friends and getting a taste of school life. We are very much looking forward to welcoming them officially in September.

Our recent 60th Anniversary Open Day was a huge success and a real highlight of the year. It was fantastic to see so many families, former students and members of the community come together to celebrate this important milestone. From student performances and artwork to refreshments, stalls and activities, the day truly showcased the spirit and pride of St Bede's. A huge thank you to all staff, students and volunteers who helped make the event so special.

As always, we are incredibly proud of our students for their continued hard work, resilience and commitment throughout the year. Whether in the classroom, in sports, performing arts, or through their contributions to school life, their achievements have been outstanding.

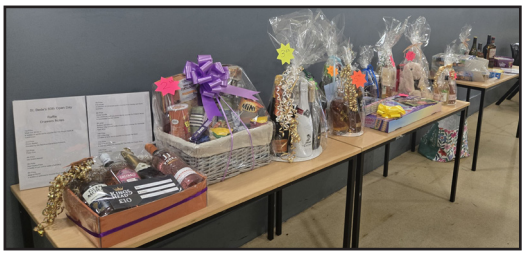
In the coming weeks, we will also be preparing to say goodbye to our Year 11 and Year 13 students. We wish them every success as they move on to the next stage of their journeys, whether that be further education, apprenticeships or employment. They will always be a valued part of the St Bede's community.

July also brings opportunities for students to take part in enrichment activities, trips and end-of-term celebrations, helping to round off the year on a positive and enjoyable note.

As we approach the summer break, we would like to thank our families for their continued support this year. We hope everyone has a safe, restful and enjoyable summer, and we look forward to welcoming students back in the new academic year.

Catherine Hammill
Head Teacher

Cover photo of lemonade stall by Juan Fitzgerald, Communities in Focus.







Open Day Photos
Top: some of the prizes
Middle: one of the stalls (Photo Juan Fitzgerald)
Bottom: making tasty snacks! l-r Judith Asoro, technician; Kendal Dodds, technology teacher; Lainey Dodds and Katie Dower (students)

Cricket Round up

The first team remains in contention to win the League or gain promotion but were disappointed to lose top spot following defeat in the final game of the first half. They started this round up in top spot and won the next two matches. They thrashed Willington after bowling them out for just 54. Kieran Gohery took his best Lanchester figures with 8-14. Lanchester took just 26 balls to wrap up the win, with Charlie Mustard smashing an unbeaten 48. They then followed up with a marvellous win at second placed Seaham Park. Lanchester made 240-9, Callum Brown leading the scoring with an unbeaten 69. They then bowled the Park out for 124 with Kieron Taylor taking his second best ever figures of 6-21. The team then struggled at Tynedale but recorded a losing draw which had kept them top. However, a shock defeat to Boldon dropped them to third spot. The 170 they scored didn't look enough but Boldon lost 8 wickets reaching the target after being 94-0. Occasional bowler, Luke McCabe took 6-56, his best ever figures for Lanchester.

The seconds also recorded an easy win over a poor Willington but then lost the subsequent three league matches against Seaham Park, Burnmoor and Boldon. Mark Jacobs took 6-20 against Willington. Glen Harrison scored 138 against the Park at just over a run a ball, which was a second career hundred.

The thirds have recorded three consecutive wins by beating Willington, Burnmoor and Seaham Park. Harry O'Sullivan Brown, Ibs Khan and Jack Ledger all scored fifties against Willington. Nathan Watson and Ben Rayner both scored 73 against Burnmoor. 13 year old Jack Brooks and Harry O'Sullivan Brown took 4 wickets each v Seaham Park.

Women's and Junior Round up

The Women's softball team recorded their first win when they beat Greenside, with two wickets by Nicola Wainwright being the key factor. They then competed in a tournament where they beat Ryton but lost to Whickham and Beamish. They were then well beaten by a strong Whickham side in their most recent League encounter.

The under 17s have lost both recent matches, to Burnopfield in the League and Cramlington in the Cup.

The under 15s lost to Whickham but beat Burnopfield, while Shotley Bridge conceded. Nathan Watson made a retiring 50 against Whickham then took 3 wickets against Burnopfield. The team still sits in third place.

The under 13s have had three league wins which sees them in third place with the top two still to be played. Jack Harrison and Ollie Wainwright scored retiring 30s against Shotley and Tommy Rolfe took 2-5. Ollie Wainwright top scored and took 2 wickets against Greenside, with George Tilley and Louie Peveller also taking 2 wickets. They then had a brilliant one run win over South Northumberland, a run out off the final ball sealing victory.

The under 13 girls lost their three games, against three more experienced teams.

The under 11 girls lost by 2 runs against Sacriston but were well beaten by Hetton Lyons.

The under 11s have had good wins over Burnopfield, Sunderland (in the cup) and Cramlington.

Finally, **the under 9s** have won both matches by big margins, beating Consett and Burnopfield and whilst there is no official table, they are the only unbeaten team.

Andrew McConnell

Lanchester Bowls Club

Summertime Blues

In 1958 Eddie Cochran co-wrote and released a song called Summertime Blues which describes the unhappy feelings of a teenage boy who has to spend all summer having to work to keep his boss and his parents happy. For those not old enough to remember the original, Marc Bolan and T Rex (the epitome of the glam rock era) released a cover version heavily reliant on percussion as the b side of the single Ride a White Swan in 1970.

Looking at the results of some of the six teams we put out each week, perhaps it's time that the song was re-released as sadly we have three teams anchored firmly at the bottom of their respective leagues!

Although our Tuesday team have 26 points, they are thirteen points below the team immediately above them. Despite a creditable 6-2 win over View Lane on a steamy hot evening, our North West Durham Wednesday team are still six points adrift of the next team. In the South West Durham league, our B team have yet to win a game and are eight points off Shildon Town above them; their results include an 8-0 hammering from Lanchester B who, at the time, were immediately above them in the table.

All of the above teams have one thing in common: we have struggled to get consistent selection.

Perhaps the most consistent selection has been for the Wednesday afternoon A team who, despite a 6-2 reverse away to Shildon Town, sit second in the table. Our Saturday and Monday teams have had mixed results, but both sit comfortably in mid table.

The beauty and the vagaries of bowls was best shown this month in our Monday home fixture against Sherburn Park (see photos). Because of the excessive moss on the centre of the green we were playing on rinks one, two, three and six. After nine ends we were doing well on two rinks; rink three with Andy Travis as skipper were winning 14-4, whilst Mike Stoddart's team on rink one were winning 10-4. Sadly rink six were losing 5-10 and our team on two were really struggling at 4-12.

Andy's team continued to play well and won easily 22-8. Unfortunately, Mike's team dropped off and with one end left were trailing by three shots. The jack was played long on the final end, and Mike bowled three good woods to add to the one we were already holding, giving us a one shot win.

Rink six also played their part winning the last four ends to finish 12 shots all. By the final end our team in rink two, led by Joe Newton, had fought back to be drawing fifteen all. With the penultimate wood of the match Joe put a wood within a foot of the jack and it looked like we would pick up another two points. The opposition skip though had other ideas and played a superb shot to rest against the jack and take the match.

Three tight rinks and an easy win gave us the two points for the shot aggregate (65-51) and so we won a topsy turvy match 7-3.

The big fixtures in July are the derby clash between our A and B teams in the Wednesday afternoon league and the home friendly against Washington Glebe.

"There ain't no cure for the summertime blues" - well hopefully there might be.

Bob Cuthbertson





Thank You and Best Wishes to Joanne Marshman



Many patients and members of our village community will know Joanne Marshman, who has recently left Lanchester Medical Centre after many years of dedicated service.
Joanne first joined the practice as a secretary in 2009 and, through her hard work and commitment, worked her way up to become Practice Manager. Alongside Julie, the Assistant Practice Manager, Joanne became one of the familiar faces patients recognised and trusted.
She was often seen around the village supporting our local independent businesses, and her friendly, approachable manner made her a reassuring presence for patients. Joanne regularly attended Patient Participation Group meetings, where she gave practice updates and answered general questions whenever she could. If she was unable to answer something directly, she always made sure to point people in the right direction, usually with a smile.
Recently, Joanne was also very supportive of the PPG's new initiative, Let's Talk, and we are grateful for the encouragement she gave to the group and to patients. It was lovely to see Joanne and her family at the Cricket Club on Friday 26 June, once again supporting the PPG at the charity pub quiz. A small presentation was made to Joanne on the evening, with a bouquet of flowers and a card from the PPG subgroup.
Joanne will be sorely missed by patients, Lanchester Medical Centre and her colleagues.
We wish Joanne all the very best in her new adventure. We hope to stay in touch and still see her around the village for coffee and cake.

Lanchester Medical Centre PPG

Lanchester Lawn Tennis Club – Summer Update

Another month of fabulous weather has meant plenty of opportunities to enjoy tennis on our beautiful grass courts, although at times it has perhaps been a little too hot! Like the professionals at Wimbledon, our players have been making good use of regular hydration breaks to keep cool during matches.
The annual Club Tournament is now well underway, with a number of closely contested matches already completed. Competition has been fierce across all events, with players looking forward to Finals Weekend in September.
Our teams have also continued their Northumberland & Durham League fixtures. The Men's team are enjoying an excellent season and continue to play at a very high standard. Their latest match away at Wylam ended in a thrilling 6–6 draw on sets, meaning the result had to be decided on the total number of games won. In an incredibly close finish, Wylam just edged the match by 60 games to 58.
Meanwhile, our Mixed Veterans team faced our friendly rivals from Shotley & Benfieldside Tennis Club. Although the result didn't go Lanchester's way, it was another enjoyable evening of competitive tennis played in great spirit, with everyone appreciating the opportunity to play on the club's magnificent grass courts.
Off the court, the club held its annual summer barbecue, which was very well attended by members, friends and families. It was a wonderful afternoon of social tennis, games, a fiercely contested tug of war and, of course, plenty of delicious food and refreshments. A huge thank you to everyone who came along and helped make the day such a success, and especially to our social committee for once again organising a fantastic event.
Our popular Monday evening coaching sessions also continue to attract players of all ages and abilities. Whether you're picking up a racket for the first time or looking to improve your game, there's something for everyone, and new members are always very welcome.
If you are interested in joining the club or taking part in our coaching sessions, please contact us at lanchestertennis@gmail.com or visit our website for more information: https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/lanchesterlawntennisclub
With plenty more league matches, coaching, social events and the Club Tournament still to come, we're looking forward to another exciting month at LLTC.

Barbara Ridley





Above: Enough sausages to feed the village.
Right: Men's captain Adam "serves"
Below: Tug of war.



Deadlines and contact information
Articles, letters and photos by Monday 27th July to lanchestervillagevoice@yahoo.co.uk
Adverts by Monday 27th July to lanchestervvadverts@gmail.com or phone Paul 07957 871106 (advertising only)
By post: The Village Voice, c/o Lanchester Community Centre, Newbiggen Lane, Lanchester, DH7 0PB.

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