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Issue 98
July/August 2025

Tyne Valley Express

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In this issue....

Reader Offers

Butterfly Watching

Wonderful Walking

Harnessing the Sun

Dilston Physic Garden

Tyne Valley Expressions

Photography Competition

WIN - Costa Coffee Voucher

WIN - Forum Cinema Tickets

WIN - National Trust Family Pass



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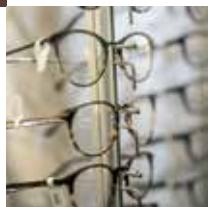


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Editor

Hello readers, welcome to another feature-packed issue of your favourite local free magazine.

We're now half-way through the year and we mark the start of summer with some exciting news - Tyne Valley Express has just won Best Business Advertiser 2025 at the recent UK Enterprise Awards. It's our fifth successive award and a testament to the hard work and commitment that goes into every edition. We're delighted.

The winner of our recent Photography competition has been decided and the front cover is dedicated to first place Adrian Bollans and his fabulous winning photo taken At the Corbridge Steam Rally, titled "Engine Envy". Second place went to Shell Harrison and third place to previous winner Bob Turner. See (p61) for details. Over fifty entries received in total, thank you to everyone who took part.

Our fantastic team of writers are back with a selection of fab seasonal articles - including the second of our Hidden Gems feature by Katie Pharoah (p12), a fabulous piece on Butterfly watching by Mike Pratt of Northumberland Wildlife Trust (p44) and The Restorative Power of Dru Yoga by new writer Rachel Orange (p52).

We have a fresh set of puzzles with our Women's Equality Day themed Coffee Break page (p56) plus another chance to win a £10 Costa voucher. Answers to last month's puzzles are now live online at: www.tynevalleyexpress.co.uk/puzzles. We also have two fab new competitions, see below and (p43).

Locally, there's the Stocksfield Summer Festival (p41) taking place on Saturday 19 July, and there's a heads-up for the Crawcrook Fair (p17) coming Saturday 13 September. For those interested in learning Bridge, classes start at Hexham Bridge Club this September (p49).

We are truly fortunate to live in such a beautiful and vibrant corner of the country. The Tyne Valley is not only rich in natural beauty, it's also home to an incredible community spirit and a wealth of fantastic local businesses that help our area thrive. From the independent shops and family-run cafés to the skilled tradespeople, artists, and small enterprises that line our high streets and country roads - the Tyne Valley is bursting with talent, creativity, and heart. These local businesses don't just provide goods and services, they create jobs, support our economy, and bring people together. They are the backbone of our region, please support them however you can.

It seems that Summer has finally arrived. Here's to brighter days, shared moments, and the simple joys of community life.

**Stephen and the
TVE Team.**

Stephen McHugh

Tel: 07884 340 451

Email: info@tynvalleyexpress.co.uk

A-One Business Centre, Summerhill, Blaydon-on-Tyne, NE21 4JR



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SO IF YOU FANCY A CINEMA NIGHT WITH YOUR CLOSEST FRIENDS & FAMILY,

HEAD OVER TO WWW.TYNEVALLEYEXPRESS.CO.UK/COMPETITIONS
OR SCAN THE QR CODE. [INSERT QR CODE...]



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Join us at: Park Pavilion Café: Wednesday/Thursday/Friday 2.30pm-4.30pm. Crafter's Get Together: Mondays 11am-1pm. Book Club: 2nd Wednesday of each month 7pm. Upcoming events are on our notice boards. Book the Pavilion/Bowling Green for a private event. www.ourvillages.org.uk Crawcrook Park Pavilion ourvillagescag@gmail.com

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Community group to support and preserve the work of individuals and groups of volunteers working in the Ryton and Stella ward to restore and maintain the environment including: litter-picking, flower-beds, cemetery, memorial gardens, and heritage sites. www.facebook.com/RytonCommunity.

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Mat-work Pilates classes and 1:1 Pilates sessions led by chartered physiotherapist. Classes suitable for all levels and abilities. Mondays 9.30am & 10.20am. Wednesdays 6.15pm & 7.15pm. Saturdays 8.00am. 1:1 sessions are available on request.

Ryton Community Centre
Tyne-physiopilates@outlook.com

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Ladies choir. Pop, rock, gospel, musicals. Regular performances in the community. Lots of socialising and events too! - Stargate Hall facebook.com/rytonsingers

RYTON YOUTH SINGERS

Youth choir for young people ages 11-16. Regular performances in the community. Rehearsals run every Sunday 12-1pm
Stargate Hall Ryton facebook.com/profile.php?id=61551260005195

RYTON METHODIST CHURCH

SUNDAY MORNING 10.15am. Contemporary service with children's group followed by Coffee. MONDAY EVENING Girl's Brigade. WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON Ladies Fellowship meeting with guest speakers. SATURDAY MORNING 10am – 12pm. 2nd Saturday of the month only. Coffee and cake.

Ryton Methodist Church 0191 4606411

HOLY CROSS CHURCH

SUNDAY 10.30 am Holy Communion, SUNDAY 10.30 am Young Church held in Church Hall, Ryton Village, THURSDAY 10.00 am Holy Communion. Please check Holy Cross Website for further information.

Holy Cross Church - 01914529381

HOLY CROSS CHURCH HALL

Thinking of holding party or celebration, this may be the perfect venue for you. Church Hall has COVID-19 measures in place. For further details please telephone:

Holy Cross Church 01914135233

RYTON OUTDOOR BOWLING

Home to the Towers, Vets and Women's Clubs. Based in Ferndene Park, Ryton. Come and join us either for pleasure on

most afternoons or Sunday (am) or in Competitions throughout the Summer.

Ferndene Park - 01914133872

MEN'S SHED RYTON

Carving out companionship, good old-fashioned conversation in a wi-fi free environment. Meetings every Tuesday and Thursday 10-3.

Ryton Methodist Church rytonmensshed@proton.me

GARDEN, GATHER & NATTER

We welcome people of all ages and abilities to come and get involved in this wonderful green space. Wednesday mornings from 9:30 (weather permitting!). For more immediate information on events, you can find us at facebook.com/ferndeneparkryton Ferndene Park, Ryton. friendsofferndene@outlook.com

RYTON & DISTRICT CAMERA CLUB

Ryton & District Camera Club meets every Tuesday at 7.30 pm in the Ryton Community Centre, Cross House, Ryton, NE40 3QP. Anyone interested in photography will be made very welcome whether an expert or beginner.

Ryton Community Centre www.rytoncc.weebly.com

STARGATE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Wednesday stargazers baby and toddler group 9.30am to 11.00. Thursday 2.00 to 3.00 Yoga. Thursday 6.00 to 7.00 ryton singers. Sunday 11.00 ryton mini singers. Stargate community centre fiona.todd33@gmail.com

BABY AND TODDLER GROUP

Baby and toddler group Wednesday morning 9.30 to 11.00 term time only Stargate and Crookhill community centre fiona.todd33@gmail.com

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Greenside Community Centre 07543268926

HOLY SPIRIT CHURCH

All Sunday morning services, including Children's Club, are held at Holy Spirit Church. For other services and venues see our website. Venue hire is also available at St John's Community Hall at very reasonable rates. Crawcrook info@greensideparish.org

CENTENARY METHODIST CHURCH

Sunday Morning Worship 10.30am. Every Saturday morning 10.30am till 12 noon Coffee Morning. Drop in for coffee/tea. Centenary Methodist Church information@centenarymc.org.uk

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Hidden Gems: Dilstion Physic Garden

With summertime at its peak, I've been on the hunt for the best outdoor garden spaces to relax and explore. I was pleasantly surprised to find a Botanic Garden not far from Corbridge that I quickly fell in love with: Dilstion Physic Garden. Just off from the Devil's Water, Dilstion Physic Garden sits tucked away, a wealth of nature that you can both relax and learn from.

Dilstion Physic Garden is a unique destination of discovery and relaxation, a UK Charity that is on a mission to transform health and well-being through medicinal plant education and research.

For just an £8 entry fee for adults, you can see and learn about a variety of plants, discovering over 700 extraordinary flowers, herbs, vegetables and trees with rich histories. Breathe in herbal and floral scents as you wander down trails that bring plants, science, myths and medicine to life. Relax on the chamomile lawn, play a round of croquet or a game of giant chess, all the while sampling teas, coffees and more whose ingredients have been sourced from the garden itself.

During my visits, I tried the spiced cacao, which when the weather turns and autumn arrives, will be a staple. You can purchase teas, books and more from their gift shop to take home with you too.

I had a great time just wandering and learning many interesting facts.

Did you know that some chemical ingredients found in many plants such as snowdrops, can enhance memory by increasing the presence of the neurotransmitter acetylcholine at the gaps between brain cells?

As my grandmother has dementia, the memory section of the gardens was of keen interest to me. And it's truly fascinating to learn about the science of it all, all the while immersing myself in such a beautiful part of nature.

Escape the hustle and bustle of life by relaxing alongside the Tranquillity Pool, rest on benches tucked away in quiet shaded areas of plants and just be one with nature. Racing thoughts were swept away as I watched bees swoop from flower to flower. Dilstion Physic Gardens is a space where you can just breathe.

Another thing I loved is that most plants had not only the science of them detailed on their placards but the folklore of them too.

Did you know that forget-me-nots were named as such when a German knight tossed a posy to his lady as he drowned? So many stories could spring to life in that garden.

There's also a variety of sculptures and statues along the various trails. Find the stag hidden amongst the trees or the Buddha at the end of the bamboo tunnel. There's also the Oak

Horned God by Jona Maurice to showcase the pagan god of nature and wilderness. One of my favourites was the Devil's Pyramid by Victoria Harrison which looks over the Devil's Water and is decorated with medicinal plants with 'Devil' in their name.

Another favourite aspect of mine was seeing the Cloutie Tree. An ancient Celtic and Tibetan custom is to tie a piece of cloth (cloutie) to the branches of a chosen magic tree (in this instance an oak) while making a wish or prayer. As the colour of the cloth fades, the elements take on the wish that will hopefully come true. It was lovely seeing so many pieces of cloth tied to the branches, so many hopes and prayers held in one place.

Whether you're curious, creative or just looking to lose yourself amongst nature, Dilstion Physic Garden is a beautiful little haven to visit. Rejuvenate your mind, body and soul there. There are even workshops, courses and tours if you want to learn more and explore some of the transformative health benefits of medicinal plants. It is a sanctuary for both plants and people and a place I wholeheartedly recommend visiting.

Open Wednesday to Sunday from April-October 11am-4pm, and Friday to Sunday from November-March 12pm-3pm, find Dilstion Physic Garden in Corbridge, Northumberland, NE45 5QZ.



Do you know a hidden gem or underdog business in and around the Tyne Valley? I'm exploring the area and hope to get to know the best places that may be overlooked. If you have a place to recommend, get in touch!



Katie Pharoah

Katie Pharoah
Writer for Tyne Valley Express
katie@tynevalleyexpress.co.uk



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Community group to support and preserve the work of individuals and groups of volunteers working in the Ryton and Stella ward to restore and maintain the environment including: litter-picking, flower-beds, cemetery, memorial gardens, and heritage sites. www.facebook.com/RytonCommunity.

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Ladies choir. Pop, rock, gospel, musicals. Regular performances in the community. Lots of socialising and events too! - Stargate Hall facebook.com/rytonsingers

RYTON YOUTH SINGERS

Youth choir for young people ages 11-16. Regular performances in the community. Rehearsals run every Sunday 12-1pm
Stargate Hall Ryton facebook.com/profile.php?id=61551260005195

RYTON METHODIST CHURCH

SUNDAY MORNING 10.15am. Contemporary service with children's group followed by Coffee. MONDAY EVENING Girl's Brigade. WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON Ladies Fellowship meeting with guest speakers. SATURDAY MORNING 10am – 12pm. 2nd Saturday of the month only. Coffee and cake.

Ryton Methodist Church 0191 4606411

HOLY CROSS CHURCH

SUNDAY 10.30 am Holy Communion, SUNDAY 10.30 am Young Church held in Church Hall, Ryton Village, THURSDAY 10.00 am Holy Communion. Please check Holy Cross Website for further information.

Holy Cross Church - 01914529381

HOLY CROSS CHURCH HALL

Thinking of holding party or celebration, this may be the perfect venue for you. Church Hall has COVID-19 measures in place. For further details please telephone:

Holy Cross Church 01914135233

RYTON OUTDOOR BOWLING

Home to the Towers, Vets and Women's Clubs. Based in Ferndene Park, Ryton. Come and join us either for pleasure on

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Ferndene Park - 01914133872

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Ryton Methodist Church rytonmensshed@proton.me

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RYTON & DISTRICT CAMERA CLUB

Ryton & District Camera Club meets every Tuesday at 7.30 pm in the Ryton Community Centre, Cross House, Ryton, NE40 3QP. Anyone interested in photography will be made very welcome whether an expert or beginner.

Ryton Community Centre

www.rytoncc.weebly.com

STARGATE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Wednesday stargazers baby and toddler group 9.30am to 11.00. Thursday 2.00 to 3.00 Yoga. Thursday 6.00 to 7.00 ryton singers. Sunday 11.00 ryton mini singers.

Stargate community centre fiona.todd33@gmail.com

BABY AND TODDLER GROUP

Baby and toddler group Wednesday morning 9.30 to 11.00 term time only Stargate and Crookhill community centre fiona.todd33@gmail.com

CRAWCROOK SLIMMING WORLD

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Emmaville Hall - 07894 284343

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Greenside Community Centre

07543268926

HOLY SPIRIT CHURCH

All Sunday morning services, including Children's Club, are held at Holy Spirit Church. For other services and venues see our website. Venue hire is also available at St John's Community Hall at very reasonable rates. Crawcrook info@greensideparish.org

CENTENARY METHODIST CHURCH

Sunday Morning Worship 10.30am. Every Saturday morning 10.30am till 12 noon Coffee Morning. Drop in for coffee/tea. Centenary Methodist Church information@centenarymc.org.uk

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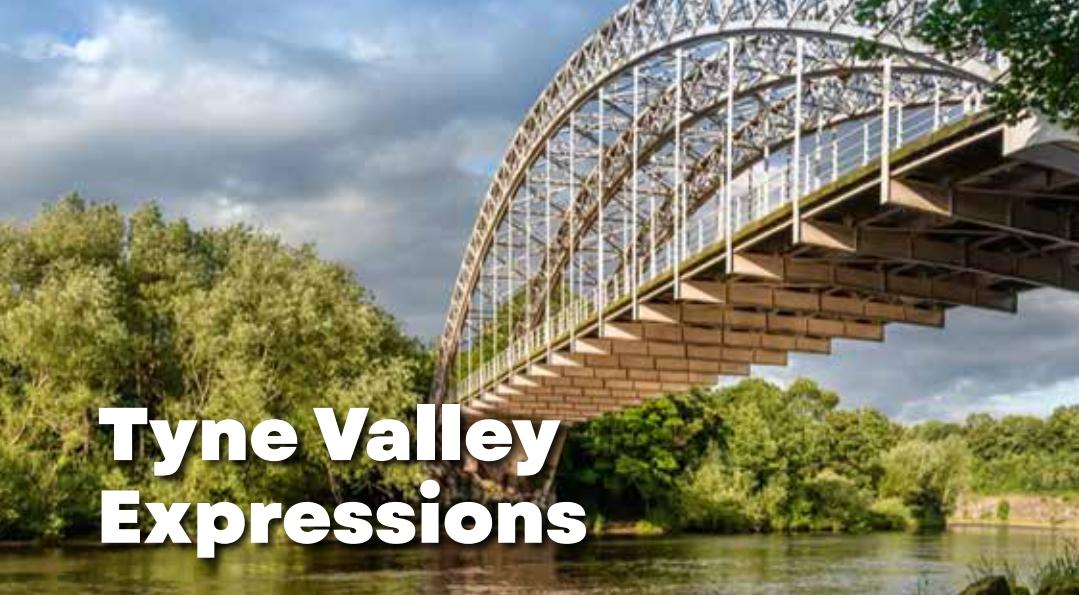
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Tyne Valley Expressions

I love this charming tale about an anniversary; it really made me smile and it's got a local theme too! Hope you enjoy it as much as I did, Kim.

Vanessa lives, works, writes, and runs in Northumberland. She joined Northumbrian Writers in 2021 and enjoys writing short stories, flash fiction and poetry. Running with a local club helps her to focus and maintain her fitness and wellbeing.

Happy Anniversary, Angel.

Twenty-seven years. That's a long time, Jan thought to herself as she snuggled back under the covers. Seconds earlier she had laid a card on Tom's pillow so he would see it when he came back into the room. Twenty-seven years: the ups, the downs, good times, the not-so-good; that scary time when Nick's appendix burst, and Jan had to drive to the hospital because Tom had been for a pint or three.

As she reminisced, the monotone thud of steady footsteps ascended the stairs. The bitter aroma of freshly brewed coffee drifted up from the kitchen and Jan imagined her husband, newspaper inserted under one arm, trying not to wobble the tray as he brought their morning cuppas up to bed. The familiarity of this routine was comforting: coffee, the headlines, the crossword, and nothing in particular to get up for.

The door handle squeaked as it was pressed down with an unsteady elbow, and with the door inching open behind him, Tom shuffled in looking pleased with himself.

"Ah, you remembered," he smiled, spying the envelope as he planted the tray down on the bedside table, freeing the rolled-up paper onto the bed at the same time.

Jan raised an eyebrow, "Do I ever forget?"

"Well, there was that one time..." he teased.

"It was late. Late, not forgotten," she scolded, welcoming the hot cup of coffee he was handing her.

Before settling back into bed, Tom reached into his wardrobe and took out a neatly wrapped box. He always got her a present and his wrapping skills had much improved over the years. Jan, more practical, always just offered up a card, apart from birthdays or Christmas.

"Happy anniversary, love." He kissed her gently on the cheek.

"You don't have to stick to the list you know," Jan rolled her eyes, but was secretly thrilled.

"I like the list and anyway, I just Google it these days. Don't have to rely on that scrappy bit of paper in the back of my wallet anymore." Tom's eyes twinkled as he laughed. "Can you remember the first one?"

"Ha! Yes, paper", Jan spluttered, trying not to spill coffee on the duvet. "You thought it would be funny to get me 'The Modern Wife's Handbook'! Cheeky devil, my workmates thought it was hilarious. I've still got it somewhere."

Jan thought it had been a one-off, Tom's idea of a joke, but year two, cotton, Tom bought her hankies embroidered with her initial.

Tom was on a roll: "Remember year three?" Jan glanced at the dusty glass bowl, weighing heavy on the dresser, a smooth chip

Northumbrian Writers Group...

Comprises six sub-groups meeting weekly (term-time) in Hexham, Ponteland, Morpeth and on Zoom.

If you would like to find out more about these friendly classes, please email Claire on: claire@claire276.plus.com

To be continued...



on the rim where it had been knocked many years earlier. "A glass bowl! You're lucky you didn't end up wearing it like a space helmet". She shot him a mischievous look: "Angie's husband surprised her with a trip to Paris for their anniversary that year!"

Angie was Jan's best friend and consequently had been her bridesmaid. She had married Ross in a lavish affair in stark contrast to Jan and Tom's Registry Office do.

"Yeah, and where's Angie now? Living in La Petite Villa with Jean-Luc while Ross is stuck here still paying off Une Grande Mortgage." Tom's Franglais made Jan giggle but she had to admit he wasn't wrong.

That plain old bowl with the chunk missing had survived four house moves and three kids. It had been kept on the hall table for chucking loose change and keys in, an act of ritual, as metal clanked into the heavy-bottomed dish after a long shift at the hospital. When the children came along, it was where they got their pennies for the ice cream van. Now it sat on a doily on the dressing table full of shells the kids had collected from various beaches. A fine layer of sand had made its way to the bottom of the bowl and memories of warm sunny days and paddling in the sea came flooding back as Jan and Tom sat in peaceful solace indulging in their rich Italian blend.

"Penny for 'em?" nudged Tom. "C'mon, open your pressie."

Jan wondered what it could possibly be this year as she carefully unwrapped the paper and eased out the box. Holding it in her palm, she could see it was The Angel of The North in fake-rusted metal hanging from a key ring.

"I give up," she blurted, bewildered. "What on earth does this represent?"

Tom coughed for dramatic effect. "The Angel was completed in 1998," he proclaimed proudly, "the year we got married. And according to Google, sculpture is the traditional gift for twenty-seven years of wedded bliss!"

He grinned and clinked his mug with Jan's. "A toast!" He gestured: "To you, my angel."



Vanessa Saunders

Vanessa Saunders
Author
Northumbrian Writers Group

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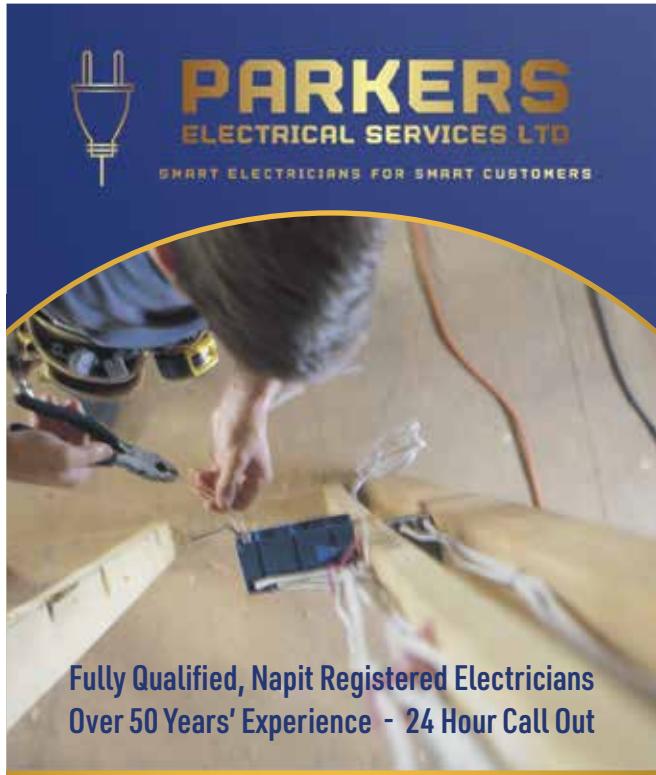
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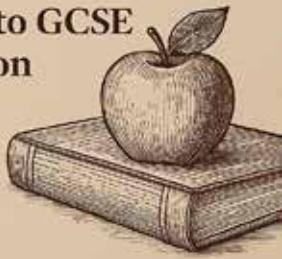
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Everyone is welcome to our Sunday services which take place every week at 10.30am, as well as the Coffee Morning we host every Thursday 10am – 12 noon. For baptisms, wedding and funerals please contact us.

Heddon Methodist Church
lynda.coulthard@methodist.org.uk

SINGERS

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Women's Institute
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HEDDON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

Meetings held first Monday of the month from 7pm. For more information contact our Secretary. Heddon WI Hall - 01661 853365

HEDDON ART GROUP

We meet fortnightly on alternate Tuesday afternoons from 1:30 to 3:30 and Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 9:00. New members and interested visitors are always welcome to share their interest in art, whether painting, drawing or other media. Heddon W.I. Hall chambers497@btinternet.com

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Harnessing the Sun

What You Need to Know Before Installing Solar Power at Home

As the global push for renewable energy gains momentum, solar power has become an increasingly popular option for homeowners looking to cut energy costs and reduce their carbon footprint. But with heavy marketing, government incentives, and a surge of new installation companies, it's important to understand how solar works — and what to look out for before making the investment.

What is Solar Energy and How Does it Work?

Solar energy is generated by capturing sunlight and converting it into usable electricity through photovoltaic (PV) panels. These panels are typically mounted on rooftops and made up of many solar cells, which absorb sunlight and create direct current (DC) electricity. This DC power is then converted into alternating current (AC) by an inverter, making it suitable for use in your home.

When your solar system generates more electricity than you use, the surplus can be fed back into the grid, potentially earning you credits from your utility provider. Conversely, during times when your system isn't producing enough power — such as at night or on overcast days — you'll draw energy from the grid unless you have a battery system in place.

Why Batteries Matter

While solar panels are effective during daylight hours, they alone can't store power. This is where batteries come in. A solar battery stores excess energy generated during the day so it can be used later, increasing your energy independence and reducing reliance on the grid.

In recent years, battery technology has improved significantly, and costs have dropped, making it a more feasible option for many homeowners. Alongside an emergency power switch (EPS) switch, a solar battery system also adds resilience during power outages, ensuring critical appliances stay on when the grid goes down.

Fitting Solar Panels to Different Roofs

Contrary to popular belief, you don't need a perfectly south-facing roof to benefit from solar. While orientation and angle do influence efficiency, modern solar systems are versatile and can be fitted on a variety of roof types, including flat, pitched, tiled, and even metal roofs.

What matters most is that your roof has sufficient sunlight exposure and is in good condition. We typically assess shading from nearby trees, buildings, or chimneys, and design the system accordingly to maximize output.

Why Choosing the Right Installer Matters

Not all solar companies are created equal — and choosing the right installer is perhaps the most important decision you'll make during this process. Look for a company that is **MCS-certified** (Microgeneration Certification Scheme), which ensures the installer meets recognised standards for quality and performance.

More importantly, you want a provider who is in it for the long haul. A well-established, trusted company will not only install your system properly but also provide ongoing support,

including annual maintenance checks. These routine inspections ensure that your system remains efficient and safe, and that cables, connections, and inverters are all functioning correctly.

The Risks of Pop-Up Solar Companies

Government incentives and tax rebates have sparked a boom in solar installations — and with that, a flood of **pop-up companies** looking to cash in. Many of these newcomers lack the experience, accreditation, and infrastructure to offer long-term service and support.

These companies often rely on **aggressive marketing**, targeting homeowners with flashy promises of "free solar panels" or exaggerated savings. While the offers may look attractive at first glance, they often come with hidden costs, low-quality components, or poorly executed installations that can lead to expensive repairs down the line.

Be wary of high-pressure sales tactics or companies that are reluctant to provide customer references, proper documentation, or long-term warranties. It's always worth doing your research, reading reviews, or better still go with companies that operate in your area so you can talk to previous customers.

What to Ask Before You Commit

When vetting potential installers, consider asking the following:

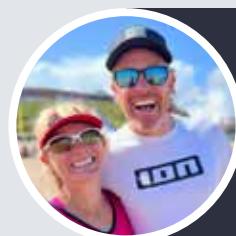
- Are you MCS-certified?
- What warranties do you offer on both the panels and the installation?
- Do you offer maintenance or monitoring services?
- What brand of panels and batteries do you use?
- Can you provide references or examples of past installations?

Getting clear answers to these questions can help you separate reputable providers from opportunistic ones.

Final Thoughts

Solar energy is a smart, long-term investment for both your wallet and the planet — but only if it's done right. The key is not just in the panels or the technology, but **in who you trust to install and maintain the system**. With the right installer, solar can offer decades of clean, reliable power.

As government support for renewables continues, more households are expected to make the switch. If you're considering solar, take the time to educate yourself, avoid heavy-handed sales tactics, and choose a company that will stand by their work for years to come. At Tyne Valley Wind and Solar we regularly do small presentations in local church halls so keep an eye out for these on Facebook or on our website.



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What's On

PRUDHOE & MICKLEY

SPACE FOR NATURE

We are a group of local volunteers involved in creating and developing various sites around Prudhoe to increase bio-diversity and wildlife, including the Prudhoe Wildlife Garden just behind West Wylam Inn. Contact Jane on 07870 407168. Prudhoe pruhoespace4nature@gmail.com

BORDER REIVER ARCHERS

Meet at Ovingham Middle School on Sunday mornings. Why not come and enjoy a full hour Taster Session, (pre-booking required) or just drop in to watch and have a chat, without booking. Full details on the website: borderreiverarchers.co.uk Ovingham Middle School borderreiverarchers@yahoo.com

LIVE & BREATHE YOGA

There's Fabulous Yoga Tuesday 6-7.15pm £10, and Friday Mornings 11.15-12.30pm £10. Monthly prepayment savers also available. Join Pam, a fully qualified BWY yoga teacher, to reset body & mind! St. Matthew's Wellness Centre snowballpam@hotmail.com

THE GATE CHURCH

There's a warm welcome for you and your family at The Gate Church every Sunday at 10.30am. You'll find that we believe the Bible and love to sing out our praise – there's plenty of faith and fun for everyone! - thegatechurch.org.uk

RENEW WELL-BEING OASIS

You'll find a warm and welcoming space at Renew Wellbeing Oasis every Tuesday from 1.00pm – 3.30pm. Lovely refreshments and it's FREE! Meet new people, share hobbies and activities or just sit quietly - it's OK not to be OK! Prudhoe Parish Hall -07985473484

PHYSIO-LED PILATES

Tuesday 7.30pm Pilates for Riders. Wednesday 5.50pm level 1 / 7pm level 2. Thursday 9am Men's mixed ability / 10.10am level 2 / 11.20am level 1 (osteoporosis safe). Pilates improves core strength, balance and movement. Booking essential. St Matthew's Wellness Centre 07787158957

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and encourage you to write fiction, poetry and memoir and offer supportive feedback to help you develop your work. New members very welcome - try a free taster session. Online on Zoom and in-person.

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PRUDHOE GLEEMEN MALE VOICE CHOIR

We meet on Monday evenings 7pm at Prudhoe Methodist Church. Our next concert: Ovingham Reading Rooms, Sat 15 March 7:30pm. Tickets £10 Ovingham Reading Rooms gleemen@uwclub.net

PRUDHOE GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

To find out about renting a Prudhoe Town allotment contact us by email or through our community Hut behind the West West Wylam Inn in Prudhoe (Saturdays 10am to 12 noon only), by Facebook (groups/prudhoe gardeners association) or by email at prudhoe gardeners association@ hotmail.com

PRUDHOE COMMUNITY BAND

Prudhoe Community Band rehearse on Saturday mornings during school term times. Always happy to welcome new musicians. No auditions necessary. Come along and say hello. Website prudhoe community band.co.uk for details. - Prudhoe Social Club prudhoe community band@gmail.com

PRUDHOE & DISTRICT U3A

We are a friendly organisation offering day-time meetings for talks, coffee mornings, and a wide variety of interest groups from Art Appreciation to Walking. Our principle is enjoying shared learning, with everyone contributing. Please visit prudhoe.u3asite.uk Prudhoe Parish Hall chairmanprudhoeu3a@yahoo.com

SPECHELLS CONSERVATION INTEREST GROUP

Please join our group and help protect the Spetchells, our beautiful unique chalk grassland which provides an important habitat for rare species of butterfly and mining bees. Volunteers are

needed to remove invasive plants and carry out ecosystem surveys. Spetchells Riverside Park SCIG.co.uk

PRUDHOE COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT

Meets every Tuesday and Friday morning for friendly, supported gardening. Join our group to grow fresh veg and flowers, sharing and learning gardening skills and helping to maintain our Community Allotment. Look out for events on our facebook page. PCA Redwell Court PCA@jobentley.plus.com

BAIRNS & BREWS

Café and Toddler Group, Thursdays 10-11.30am (termtime). Play-time (songs, crafts & toys) for the Bairns and a chill time for you. Kids free and just £1 per cuppa (free refills). Info from Facebook (Prudhoe Methodist Church Friends) peter@thischurch.com. Prudhoe Methodist Church Facebook Page

CASTLE TRIATHLON CLUB

Come and join your friendly, local triathlon club with free coached running sessions on Monday nights at 7:30pm and coached swimming sessions on Wednesdays at 7pm and 8pm. For information email castletri@outlook.com or head to <https://www.facebook.com/CastleTri2015/> Regents Drive and Waterworld castletri@outlook.com

PRUDHOE INDOOR MARKET

Our monthly indoor markets are held one Saturday a month in Prudhoe Parish Hall. We have lots of fantastic local traders with high quality products. Details on Facebook or at www.chevent.co.uk - Prudhoe Parish hall contact@chevent.co.uk

PRUDHOE LIBRARY

Library is open for time limited browsing. We are operating amended hours so please check website before visiting

www.mylibrary.co.uk
prudhoe.library@northumberland.gov.uk

PRUDHOE METHODIST CHURCH

A warm welcome awaits you at morning worship every Sunday at 10.30 and at the many meetings throughout the week. For more information please check out Prudhoe Methodist Church Friends on Facebook or our webpage Prudhoe Methodist Church

Prudhoe Methodist Church. Message via Facebook Page

WEST WYLM RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Meet on the last Monday of every other month, at 6.30 p.m. For further information contact us The Manors, Adderlane Road 01661831380

PRUDHOE GROUND FORCE

Meets every Wednesday morning 9 – 10am at various locations in Prudhoe to litter pick or do other environmental work. Anyone wishing to join this group call for details of the day or email us jdobson3726@gmail.com

PRUDHOE COMMUNITY CHOIR

Meets on Wednesday evenings from 7.30pm to 9.30pm. We are a mixed voice choir, singing a wide variety of popular songs in harmony. New members are always welcome. Ability to read music is helpful but not essential. No audition required. Stocksfield Baptist Church Hall 07432054753



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- **Companionship Services** - This service can be from a few hours to a full day of shopping, attending you to appointments. Having a cuppa and a chat to playing games and completing cross words. Or having your hair washed and dried, nails painted whatever you would like to do.
- **Assistance to appointments** - All our staff are fully insured to take you to appointments ie hospital appointments, doctors we can accompany you and take notes to pass on to family or just for your records.
- **Breakfast, lunch, tea calls** - These calls are based on a comfort call to make sure all is well, make breakfast or a sandwich up for lunch. Lunch we can make you a fresh meal and make a sandwich up for tea. Tea call, again make you a fresh meal or heat a microwave meal up.
- **Bed calls** - This call is based on a comfort call, make sure things are all good and support to lock up and make sure you have everything needed until the next morning. Companionship and reassurance.
- **Shopping services** - We can take you out shopping, or we can go and get your shopping and support you to put away.
- **Respite services** - We are here to support family members if they need a break for a few hours or even a full day visit. Our aim is for you to go and do the things you need to do without the worry that your loved one has no support. We encourage engagement with activity packs that include games, cards, dominoes, colouring books if that would be of interest. All our activities are there to engage and boost brain activity.
- **Night shift services** - We now offer an overnight service. We have introduced this service for clients who may be unwell or struggling to cope overnight on their own. Giving peace of mind to the client and family members.

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We are currently taking applications for our next Beginner's Course, suitable for total novices who would like to start archery and join a club. These are 3 x 3 hourly sessions on 3 consecutive Sundays.

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Wonderful Walking:

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As I travel around the Tyne Valley it's really encouraging to see so many people of all ages being active. Whether it's Parkrun in Prudhoe, cricket in Corbridge or rowing up the Tyne from Newburn, there's always something happening. The most common sight though is of people walking all over our beautiful region; maybe strolling along the riverside from Wylam, conquering the Hadrian's Wall path or walking through some of our lovely parks and woodlands.

Walking is possibly the best way of becoming and staying active, and often delivers significant physical and mental benefits without you even noticing. It's simple and free, and can help cut the risk of heart disease and stroke, reduce weight, and along with improving sleep and mood, boost the immune system and sharpen your memory. So with all these positive benefits, let's have a closer look at something we all pretty much take for granted, getting up and going for a walk.

Getting Started

As always, if you are thinking of increasing the amount you are active you can always have a quick chat with your healthcare provider first, who will often have some great advice about setting a few targets or goals. And if you feel a bit unsteady on your feet then make sure you set off with a friend you can lean on, or remember to bring any mobility aids like walking sticks or poles with you. Make sure you have some comfortable shoes on, and if you are planning on longer walks then some water, sunscreen, a hat and a charged mobile phone are good items to bring.

If you aren't usually very active then start gently. Stay on the flat in areas you know, and gradually increase your distance; a park or trail with handy benches is great for this!

Speed or distance?

We've talked before about intensity of exercise, and it's particularly relevant here. Any walking will be of benefit to you, but try and inject some pace into your walk whenever you can. A brisk walk of about 3 miles an hour will really increase the health benefits to you, so try and get above a stroll whenever you can. You can tell if you are hitting the right pace if you can still talk but not sing! The NHS has an excellent free app called Active 10 which tracks your walking, tells you if you are walking fast enough, shows your achievements and helps set goals - you can find it on the App Store. So a good pace is your target, but some longer walks can really help strengthen joints, muscles and your heart, as well as letting your mind unwind. Ideally try and mix short brisk walks with longer ones where you can really stretch your legs.

Counting Steps

You'll have no doubt heard that we should all be aiming for 10,000 steps a day, which is roughly 5 miles/8 kilometers depending on your stride length. This is a great target, but it's not achievable for everyone, but there is some recent good news about how many steps a day bring benefits. Researchers have found that walking any amount is important, while walking even around 2000 steps a day lowers the risk of death from cardiovascular disease, and 4000 daily steps



reduces the risk of death from any cause. The research clearly showed that the more you walk the better your well being, which is great encouragement for us all.

The hidden benefits

If you walk regularly you'll soon notice that your fitness is improving, and most likely your weight is going down and your body is getting stronger. What you might not notice straight away are the benefits to your mind. Just 10 minutes of walking outside is enough to increase alertness and mood, especially if it's sunny. Walking in nature is proven to reduce anxiety and depression, and is an accessible form of exercise for people with a range of mental health symptoms.

Physical activity like walking releases endorphins (the chemicals that promote happiness), and it reduces levels of stress hormones like cortisol, boosting our ability to relax and unwind. Being outdoors on a walk also exposes us to natural light and tops up our levels of vitamin D. You'll also be able to appreciate nature up close, even in the urban areas along the Tyne Valley you'll regularly see deer, owls, rabbits and buzzards, and I'm always delighted to see the salmon, kingfishers and the occasional seal in the river when I'm out for an early morning walk.

Make it social

Walking with friends or family is a great way of catching up and swapping news, and it's also worth joining a walking group to make new friends and stay motivated. There are lots of organised walks in the region, so it's worth having a look at the Ramblers website - ramblers.org.uk or join one of the free weekly Wellbeing Walks in Northumberland organised by Places Leisure - placesleisure.org

Now that summer is here, what are you waiting for? Head out of your front door and explore our beautiful region by foot - I guarantee you'll feel fitter and happier for it!



Tim Morton

Tim Morton

Former head of Physical Activity
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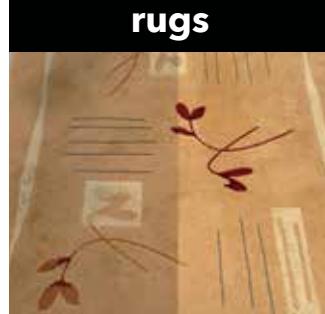
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What's On

STOCKSFIELD & RIDING MILL

STOCKSFIELD FESTIVAL

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Place: Stocksfeld Cricket Club
Contact: Stocksfeld Festival - Facebook Page

PLAYGROUP FOR UNDER 4'S

Every Friday in term-time, RIDING MILL OUTDOOR PRESCHOOL welcomes young children. along with a parent/carer, to join us for PLAYGROUP from 9.15-11am. Check out our website www.rmop.co.uk or follow us on Facebook! Riding Mill Outdoor Preschool chair@rmop.co.uk

CAFÉ CONNECT

Come and join us at Cafe Connect on Sunday, July 22nd at 4:00 pm for a Summer Barbeque. Fun and games for all the family. Everyone welcome.

Stocksfeld Methodist Church jacquic074@gmail.com

RIDING MILL TENNIS CLUB

Village tennis club, set in picturesque surroundings off Millfield Road, is 75 years old. 3 Courts are hard macadam. Pickle ball is also played outdoors in the summer on our multi use games area court. New members welcome. Riding Mill Tennis Club ridingmilltennis@gmail.co.uk

STOCKSFIELD PLANTS AND GARDEN SOCIETY

Places available for coach trip to RHS Harlow Carr. Thursday 25/9/25 Open to all. £20. Non members must pay additional entrance fee into gardens, members get in free. Departs Stocksfeld Station 8:30am return approx 6:30pm. Entry forms on website www.stocksfeldplantsandgardens.com - RHS Harlow Carr Harrogate stocksfeldpg@gmail.com

ART GROUP

Supportive, self-help group for anyone interested in art. Held every Thursday morning, 9:30-12.00pm. Please contact Maggie for more information.

The Scout Hut - 07525 054048

GARDEN VISITS AND TALKS

Derek and Patricia Hodgson OBE open their garden, called "inspirational" by Alan Titchmarsh on Love Your Garden, from May to September. Patricia also gives gardening talks and piano recitals and stand up comedy to fundraise for the NSPCC on request. Stocksfeld for visits and venue of choice for talks 07765862384

STOCKSFIELD STRIDERS

We're a small friendly running club that meets on Tuesday and Thursday (Regents Drive Industrial Estate) evenings at 7pm. Stocksfeld Cricket Club stocksfieldstriders.chessck.co.uk

STOCKSFIELD SING CIRCLE

For women of all ages and stages. Sing a few songs in your natural voice, create beautiful harmonies, and then chat over a cup of tea and biscuits. No experience needed/No sheet music/No judgement. Friendly bunch of people awaits!

Quakers Meeting House lindsey@bodhimama.co.uk

STOCKSFIELD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

SLHS meets on the second Wednesday of each month (excluding December) from September to April at Stocksfeld Methodist Church, Mount View Terrace from 7:30 – 9:15 pm, with a varied programme of talks on the local area. New Members welcome.

Stocksfeld Methodist Church email: slhs@k-webster.co.uk

STOCKSFIELD BAPTIST CHURCH

We are a warm, welcoming and informal church that meets every Sunday 10am-11.30am. All are welcome, wherever you are on your faith journey. For all events see Stocksfeldbaptistchurch.net STOCKSFIELD_enquiries@stocksfieldbaptistchurch.net

STOCKSFIELD COMMUNITY CENTRE

We have a wide range of events and activities available. For more detailed information please visit our website at www.stocksfeldca.org.uk or contact us on the details below.

SCA, Mount View Terrace admin@stocksfeldca.org.uk

SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCING CLUB

We meet on Tuesday evenings from 7.45 p.m. to 10.p.m. from February to December. No partner needed, and beginners welcome. Baptist Church Hall 01661843163

STOCKSFIELD TENNIS CLUB

Small tennis club at Guessburn welcoming new members of any standard or age. Visit www.stocksfeldtennisclub.com for information on joining, session timings, coaching and more. All weather courts and floodlighting allows for year-round play. What's stopping you, join now!

Stocksfeld Tennis Club Stocksfeldtennisclub@gmail.com

STAY AND PLAY

A toddler group run by volunteers from Stocksfeld Baptist Church for children from birth to starting school and their carers. It runs every Tuesday (term time) from 10-11.30am. A variety of activities are provided in a relaxed setting.

Stocksfeld Baptist Church Facebook: www.stocksfeldbaptistchurch.net

STOCKSFIELD ANGLICAN CHURCHES

For information on services at, and contacts for Bywell St Peter's, Stocksfeld St John's and Mickley St George's, please visit our website at www.stocksfeldchurchofengland.org Stocksfeld www.stocksfeldchurchofengland.org

HATHA & SOMATIC BASED YOGA CLASSES

Hatha/Somatic yoga practice, breathing practices and relaxation. Wednesdays 9.30am-11am, booking is essential. Contact Rose for more information and to book your place. Riding Mill Millennium Hall

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ST JAMES CHURCH

Sundays 8:00am Holy Communion and 10:00am Parish Worship; Wednesdays 9:30am Holy Communion and 7.00pm Quiet Evening Prayer. Services are also accessible via Zoom. For further details please visit our website at www.stjameschurchridingmill.com. St James Church mckenzie.d@btinternet.com

SPINNERS/WEAVERS/DYERS

Tynedale Guild of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers meets 3rd Sat. of every month 10am-4pm. Visitors & new members very welcome if you would like to try your hand at these mindful textile crafts. Programme available at www.wsd.org.uk/guilds/tynedale Stocksfeld Community Centre tynedale.secretary@gmail.com

ART CLUB

A friendly self guided group with occasional guest artist, meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday at 7-9pm. Visitors and new members very welcome.

Millennium Hall 01434 682478

MATTERS AND CRAFTERS

We are a friendly group of crafters meeting at Newton and Bywell Village Hall every Thursday from 10.30 until 3.00. Visitors and new members welcome. For more information tel: 07810 286 285 or by email: dorothy43@uwclub.net Newton and Bywell village hall. 07810 286285

SOUND RELAXATION (SOUND BATH)

Deep relaxation and nurturing restoration with soothing sounds of relaxing instruments that transport you to healing state of mind. This holistic wellbeing experience is for mind, body, and soul. 2nd Wednesday of the month from 7 pm to 8:30 pm £25. Riding Mill Millennium Hall 07543268926

If you run a local charity, group or a non-profit organisation, you can list it in our What's On diary completely free at: www.tynevalleyexpress.co.uk/whats-on/





Tickets

Family ticket (2 adults and 3 children under 18) - £18
Adults - £6
Children (age 2 - 18) - £4



Stocksfield Festival

Climbing wall

Food vendors

Petting zoo

Music

Crafts

Family fun

Magician

Bouncy Castle

SATURDAY AUGUST
23RD 2025
11AM - 4PM

Stocksfield Festival

SATURDAY AUGUST 23RD 2025

11AM - 4PM

Final line up!

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CRAFT VENDORS TENT
BUNGEE TRAMPOLINES
BOUNCY SLIDE
CLIMBING WALL
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Please note that the National Trust Scotland is a separate organisation and Scottish properties are not included within this offer.

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We've hidden the National Trust logo somewhere in the mag.

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Butterfly Watching

'Butterfly watching'; there is, believe it or not, several books with this title, a subject slightly ethereal and to most folks eliciting the response "what?". Colourful in passing, intriguing even and increasingly uncommon (this year is a good one, last year abysmal) most people appreciate a butterfly fly by and welcome them in their gardens. But actually, standing and closely observing their detail, and behaviour, not really. Well, I am a butterfly watcher, a birder and a tree hugger. I also observe and take in the wonder and good of nature in detail as part of my personal health plan, looking into the wild is good for us.

I've just had a blissful few moments, a brief stop by an old hedgerow and overgrown edge of a copse, up the road from Hetton on the Wall, where I was surrounded by butterflies. It was quite magical.

For about 10 minutes I left the busyness of life behind. I felt myself de-stressing and letting go of my worries (like how do we get another few million towards the Rothbury purchase, the details of a presentation I was about to deliver, an unexpected illness in the family) the ordinary mix of anxieties we all cope with every day.

Nothing mattered while I zoomed in first on a comma. This orange fritillary patterned specimen looked like a crinkled old leaf until it opened its wings, to reveal its orange splendour. Very close and with my reading glasses on, I saw its eyes, antennae and its white legs. There were also a clutch of other species sampling some wild roses and hawthorn flowers, five red admirals and two tortoiseshells, all instant reminders of childhood butterfly chasing! There were smoky black ringlets and a couple of meadow browns with their tan underwings and a few small whites sparring and spiralling in the morning sun.

I looked up to see three new fledged blue tits watching, all yellowed in their new fluffed up feathers, and heard the sounds of skylark, swift and pipit not far away, it felt like the essences of summer were all around. It changed my mood and perspective for the whole week after.

We so need these moments to help us navigate the tough stuff, the intensity and pace of our modern lives. Nature is our respite, for sure our natural health service on tap.

Aside from our own lives what is happening globally and politically is anxiety making. Even in our beautiful countryside the thoughts of distant war zones penetrate and create fear and frustration.

From my naturalist perspective I do worry on top of all the human suffering about the terrible impact on animals and wildlife and the environment of wars. Human life in these places is reduced to survival mode where no one cares or notices anything, never mind a butterfly! But perhaps at times they do. If there are any left. For many writers in war time do write poetry about the birds and wild places they see, as a



contrast and solace to the terror and pain they experience around them

At home I'm also frustrated by the governments plans to undermine long held wildlife protections in their now infamous 'Infrastructure and Planning Bill', being pushed through parliament as I write. It is a great danger to wildlife protection at a time we need to have more biodiversity and bring back abundance. Here in the UK we have one of the worst levels in the world, can you believe it, in this country where we love our landscapes and nature?

Local MPS and Councillors do here thankfully, on the whole, see the importance of ensuring nature thrives, alongside plans for new housing and other development, we really need to maintain protection of what we have. Nature is part of the solution to many problems, not a blocker. We all need to live with wildlife and green spaces around us, so we can have those magic healing moments at hand and let our children grow up feeling nature around them.

These few butterflies I saw symbolise the intrinsic beauty of the Tyne Valley and Northumberland. It can seem at times like everything is ok here and our wildlife is not at risk. But so much has been lost that seeing a few butterflies, let alone a hedgehog or a group of bats, or a cloud of insects, as we are experiencing this year, seems like a special event, when it should be normal.

Let's hope we humans sort ourselves out globally and locally so nature can continue to support us in this increasingly challenging world.



Mike Pratt

Mike Pratt - Chief Executive
Northumberland Wildlife Trust
www.nwt.org.uk

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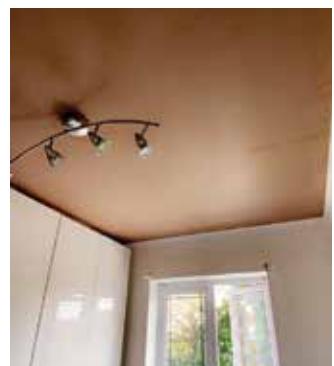
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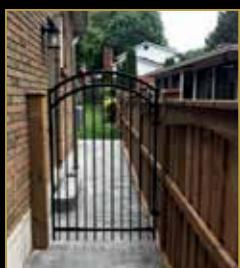
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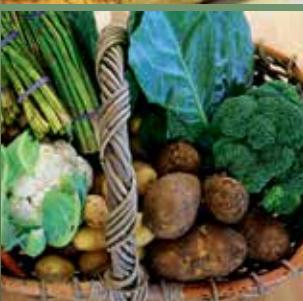
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What's On

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HEXHAM BEACON CLUB

We are a club for Retired Gentlemen. We host a non political, non denominational gathering most Wednesday mornings between 10:30 and 12:00. Guest Speakers feature each week on interesting subjects along with coffee and biscuits. Hexham - pjholtmes4@gmail.com

NATIONAL TRUST TYNE VALLEY ASSOCIATION

Our Association will re-assemble on Monday, 15 September in the Priors Hall at Hexham Abbey. From 2 o'clock refreshments are available, followed by a talk at 2.30pm. The first time all visitors are welcome free of charge. Hexham Abbey jackie.wood@gmx.co.uk

HEXHAM BRASS BAND

Hexham Brass are a friendly band playing and performing a wide range of music from show/film tunes to pop to classic brass band music. We welcome new players of all ages and abilities, playing every Tuesday 7.15pm to 9pm West End Methodist Church info@hexhambrass.co.uk

HEXHAM ARMY CADETS

We parade each Monday and Thursday between 7pm and 9pm. For both girls and boys 12yrs (yr 8 at school) to 18yrs. We do lots of activities such as Fieldcraft, Shooting, Expeditions, First Aid and the Duke of Edinburgh award. TA Centre, Hencotes 07972641665

HEXHAM BRIDGE CLUB

Hexham Bridge Club meets on Thursday evenings at 6.45pm. Friendly, competitive duplicate bridge. Tuition for beginners is available. Courses usually start in September. New members and visitors are welcome at any time, however please contact us beforehand. Hexham Community Centre contactus@hexhambridgeclub.org.uk

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HEXHAM INDOOR MARKET

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HEXHAM PRIDE

Saturday 14 June 11am-5pm and Sunday 15 June 12-2pm Picnic and live music at Hexham bandstand. Sele Park, Hexham admin@hexhampride.org

TAPESTRIES EXHIBITION

This unique collection of over 40 beautiful tapestries showing the history of Methodism will be on display at West End Methodist Church, Hexham, NE46 3DF on Saturday 29th March from 11.00am to 4.00pm. Light refreshments served, Parking. Admission free. West End Methodist Church 01434622135

MESSY CHURCH

Messy Church at Hexham Community Church on Beaumont Street. We meet on the second Sunday of every month (except August) 10.30am-12.30pm. Games, craft, songs, stories and a free light lunch for everyone! We would love to see you! Hexham Community Church 01434 601113

CREATIVE WRITING

These friendly classes will inspire and encourage you to write fiction, poetry and memoir, and offer supportive feedback to help you develop your work. New members very welcome - try a free taster session. Online and in-person. Hexham cafes and Zoom claire@claire276.plus.com

MORRIS DANCING

Women meet every Monday in West End Methodist Church Hall, Hexham 7.30pm-9pm. Men meet

every Thursday in Acomb Village Hall (Sep – May) from 7.30pm. Come and see what we do, no obligation to join. See above 0780 9609166

HEXHAM PROBUS CLUB

Provides regular gatherings for retired or semi-retired professional or businessmen aged over 55. We meet most months in the County Hotel Hexham for conversation and fellowship followed by lunch. New members from the Hexham area are welcome. County Hotel Hexham 01434 607798

HEXHAM ROTARY

Every Monday Lunchtime (just about). Come and meet us at the County Hotel in Hexham for fun, friendship, speakers, trips, events, fund raising and so much more. Phone Brian on 01434 603827 or visit: County Hotel mbmassey2@gmail.com

JIVEALIVE

We are Hexham's Modern Jive group, a friendly group meeting weekly Wed 8-10pm at The Torch Centre, Corbridge Road. 18yrs+ No partner necessary. Contact. JiveAlive@googlegroup.com or find us on facebook Torch Centre, Corbridge Road JiveAlive@googlegroup.com

LITTLE OAKS NURSERY

Christmas Shopping evening on November 22nd, from 7 pm. Selection of stall holders selling Christmas gifts and handcrafted goods. Raffle prizes to be won. Refreshments are available, including mulled wine, prosecco and Christmas nibbles. Acomb Village Hall 01434 613422

CORBRIDGE PRESCHOOL CIC

Provides early education and childcare for under fours, once they are walking. Fees are low to ensure the preschool can be accessed by all families. Children enjoy fun activities and the opportunity to develop their social and communication skills. Corbridge Parish Hall Shelly.dronfield@gmail.com

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HEXHAM AND DISTRICT PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Interested in photography? Hexham Photographic Society have a varied programme of events with something for everyone. We meet every Tuesday at 7.30 pm in the Torch Centre. All are welcome, full details at: www.hexhamphotographic.org Torch Centre Hexham president@hexhamphotographic.org

ELVASTON BOWLS CLUB

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HEXHAM TOWN WI

Monthly meetings on the 3rd Monday at 7.15pm for 7.30pm in the Community Centre. Varied programme of activities and speakers. A great way to meet new people, make friends in a relaxed, warm and welcoming environment. Visitors welcome. Hexham Community Centre 07790 108273

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The restorative power of Dru yoga

Dru Yoga is a therapeutic, heart-centered style of yoga that's quietly transforming the way people approach wellbeing. Rooted in a blend of Hatha and Kundalini Yoga, with graceful elements of Tai Chi and Qi Gong, Dru Yoga is designed to work on every layer of your being to improve physical health, mental clarity and emotional balance. It's a moving meditation which appeals to everyone regardless of age, flexibility, or experience. At the heart of Dru are the powerful Energy Block Release sequences, which help shift stuck energy, relieve tension and leave you feeling deeply relaxed. Classes often incorporate classic yoga postures, flowing breathwork, ancient mudras (hand gestures), affirmations and guided meditation. Sessions often feature Tibetan singing bowls, gongs, or chimes for a truly soulful, sensory experience.

The word Dru comes from "Dhruba," the Sanskrit word for "pole star" and symbolises your inner still point even whilst you're in motion.

Dru was created by Mansukh Patel, Chris Barrington, Rita Goswami, Annie Jones and John Jones in 1978 whilst studying at Bangor University Wales. Dru's origins were inspired by sacred teachings of Francis of Assisi and Mahatma Ghandi.

Today Dru's training centre and The World Peace Flame created in July 2003 are located near Bethesda, in Snowdonia National Park, North Wales.

Check out www.druyoga.com to discover retreats, events, training and more.

Now taught in over 31 countries, Dru Yoga has a growing presence right here in the Tyne Valley. Whether you're healing an injury, easing stress, or simply curious, this gentle-yet-powerful practice offers a beautiful path to inner balance.

Why choose Dru Yoga?

Dru Yoga is often described as "yoga with a heart." It offers a gentle yet powerful approach to movement, breath, and mindfulness that makes it accessible to everyone. Unlike other yoga forms that emphasise complex poses, Dru invites you to move with kindness, awareness, and flow. The benefits are immense even if you suffer from an injury, as a skilled teacher can work around your injuries to support your recovery.

Dru Yoga in support of wellness

Dru Yoga supports mobility, eases chronic pain and enhances posture through gentle flowing sequences. It's also known to reduce anxiety, lift low mood and boost clarity by calming the nervous system and encouraging a peaceful mindset. One of Dru's strengths is its use of breath (or prana) to unlock energy and bring balance to the body.

Who is Dru yoga for?

Dru is for everyone. It is suitable for beginners and seasoned yogis, children and seniors. It's for anyone looking to balance body, mind and spirit. Dru yoga meets you exactly where you are.

How often should you do Dru yoga?

You don't need to practice every day to feel the benefits. Even one or two sessions a week can make a noticeable difference. Attending a weekly class combined with shorter home practices to maintain flexibility and flow is key.

How do you prepare for a Dru yoga session?

Dru Yoga doesn't require fancy equipment. A good-quality yoga mat, comfy clothes, a cushion or blanket for seated meditation and you're good to go.

Two Dru yoga postures you can try at home

Here are two gentle, therapeutic postures you can try with just a mat or towel and a few quiet minutes to get centered.

Cat Pose (Marjaryasana)

Benefits:

The Cat Pose creates a gentle, wave-like motion along the spine, helping to release physical and emotional tension. It stretches and tones the back, abdominal muscles, supports digestion and nourishes internal organs. Mentally, it fosters a harmonious flow of positive energy. This pose also enhances pranic energy, activating full chakra awareness. The practice can be deepened by engaging bandhas (energy locks).

How to practice:

Begin in a tabletop position, with hands shoulder-width apart and knees hip-width apart. On an inhale, gently arch the spine, gaze slightly upward and extend through the shoulders down to the wrists. As you exhale, draw the navel toward the spine whilst gradually drawing the chin to chest, creating a deep, rounded curve in the back. Breathe mindfully.

The Dog Pose (Adho Mukha Svanasana)

Benefits:

This pose strengthens the arms, shoulders and legs while stretching the hamstrings, calves, and spine. It increases blood flow to the brain, which helps nourish and calm the mind.

How to practice:

Start in relaxed cat pose. On an exhale, engage your pelvic floor, tuck your toes under and spread your hands. Raise the hips towards the ceiling, extend through the shoulders and gently draw the navel towards the spine. Step your feet out almost as wide as the mat to allow space. Gently soften your heels towards the floor.

Happy Practicing Namaste



Rachel Orange

Rachel Frances Orange
Dru Yoga Teacher, Sound Practitioner
& Holistic Therapist
www.akashayogaandtherapy.com

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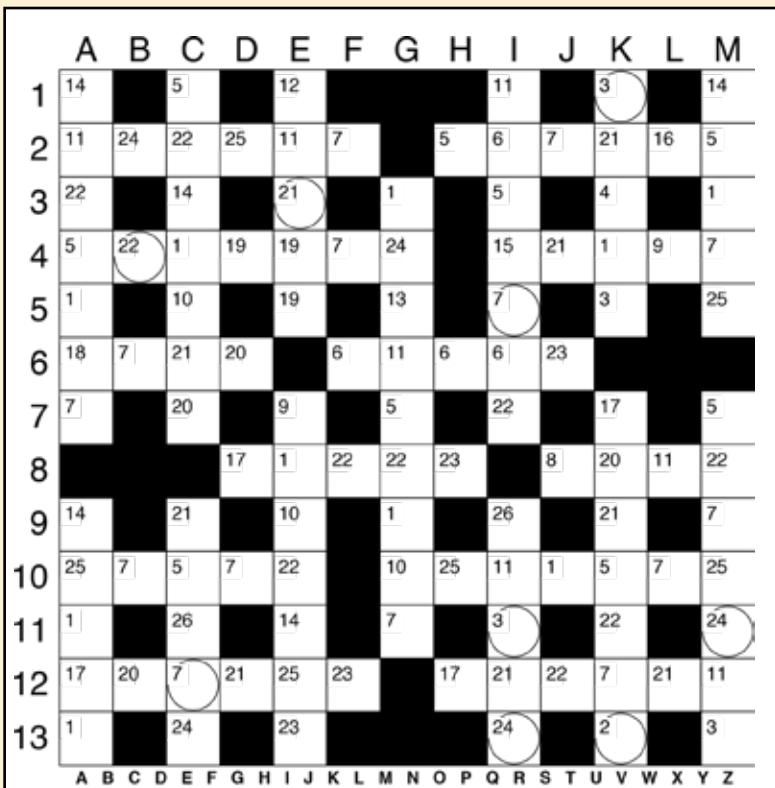
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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
G												

14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
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H												

Enter the letter in each circled cell in the order given below to reveal a themed answer:

3E	11I	12C	11M	13K	1K	5I	13I	4B

Winners will be chosen at random from the correct entries.
Solutions will be available on our website from the next edition.

F	S	S	S	T	S	U	G	U	A	G	G	P	D	E
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Photography Competition Results

Firstly, thanks to all of you that entered our second TVE photography competition. Once again we had a strong entry with some really great images and choosing my top three was a difficult task, so thanks to you all for the standard of entries. My main message to all entrants though is Please read the brief! When entering a competition for something like a cover shot, you cannot win if you don't match the brief, so it was quite important to fully read the brief and my points that accompanied it. As last time, we had some fantastic shots that unfortunately, were presented in portrait format instead of in landscape format as requested, which means key elements would be cropped off to make them fit the cover. This too applies for allowing copy space for the magazine title. Again, a few images could not be selected as key elements would be covered by the TVE logo. That said, a lot of very good shots were presented. I've selected my top three images as you will see below. The first choice winner jumped out at me immediately, and the overall winner, which I'm happy to announce, is Adrian Bollans with his superb shot, Engine Envy, taken at the recent Corbridge steam rally! Congratulations Adrian, Your image is on the cover and will be seen by thousands of people around the North East! Here are my top three...



Winner, Adrian Bollans - Engine envy.

This jumped out at me immediately. It met the brief fully and was super sharp and perfectly exposed and executed. The moody sky and colours of the steam engines worked perfectly together to create a very interesting image, something a bit different, and perfect for a cover shot. Congratulations again Adrian, I really like this shot!

Runners up - both very close contenders!

Shell Harrison - Red Squirrel

A beautiful shot of a, sadly rare, Red Squirrel. You have captured the squirrel perfectly with a lovely appealing expression and it is positioned perfectly in the frame to suit the brief of the competition. Well exposed and a great capture. One comment though, would be that when entering shots for a cover, it's best



if you don't add any additional text of your own. Copyright will always remain with the photographer and doesn't need adding to the shot. It can interfere with text that the magazine needs on the cover space. Well done Shell! A beautiful image to be proud of.

Bob Turner - Tyne green rower

You won the last competition Bob, and you have come very close once again with this lovely image taken on the Tyne in Hexham. Sharp and well composed, it's a lovely shot. The only thing preventing a win this time is the lack of cover space at the top of the image, meaning key elements of the composition are covered over by the logo. For a magazine cover it's important to allow space at the top for logos etc. a bit more sky at the top and less foliage at the bottom would have been spot on. The glass like river gave some beautiful reflections and the lone rower gave a superb human element to the shot. Another superb shot Bob, that came close to getting you another win.

**Can the winners please contact us at:
info@tynervalleyexpress.co.uk to claim their prizes**

Honourable mentions!

There were a few other beautiful images that were in contention but were either presented in portrait format and therefore sadly didn't meet the brief for a cover shot, or just didn't quite make the top three. These images also caught my eye! Shaun Cosgrove, Simon Boyd, Dan Baker, Richard Hannam and Jackie Robson! Well done all of you, and thanks again to everyone who entered.

Keep enjoying your photography!

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Our website now has a fully interactive Business Directory meaning our Traders contact details are available at the click of a button:

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Carpentry	Dunham Fitted Furniture	p50		BA Paving	p45	Sports / Clubs	Border Reiver Archers	p35																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																
Carpet Cleaning	Carpet Care NE	p02	Hair / Beauty	The Mart Barbers	p53		IR Cleaning Services	p38	Handyman	David Castonguay	p30	Storage	WANTED		Carpets / Flooring	Karpet Mills	p58	Health / Wellbeing	Sole Focus Podiatry	p07	Taxi Service	WANTED			Designer Flooring	p59		Total Health	p42	Theatre	WANTED		Charity	Journey	p51		Hadrian Primary Care Alliance	p49	Tiler	WANTED		Chimney Sweeps	WANTED		Hearing	Collingwood Ear Care	p49	Travel Agent	WANTED		Chiropodists	WANTED			Lisa Graham Hearing Care	p53	Tree Surgeon	Tyne Valley Woodlands	p45	Chiropractic	WANTED		Heating Services	Rightio	p25		T.C Tree Services	p50	Churches	WANTED			J P Westall	p54	TV and Aerial	WANTED		Cleaning (Inside)	Inside Sparkle	p17	Hobbies / Collections			Tyres / Wheels	WANTED			Maid 2 Sparkle	p18		Hexham Bridge Club	p49	Volunteering	WANTED			Double Green Care	p22	Home Care	Community Buddies	p33	Website / Hosting	Web Solutions	p41		Polish Maids	p47	Home Improvement	TC Home Improve	p14	Wheelie Bin Cleaner	WANTED		Cleaning (outside)	Walker & Son	p27	Interior Design	WANTED	Windows / Doors	Metal Services	p02		Jesmond Jetclean	p30	Ironing	WANTED		AJ Mullins Window Products	p07		The Gleam Team	p55	Jewellers	WANTED		MBC Double Glazing Repairs	p26	Coffee Shops	WANTED		Joiner	WANTED		Fortify Locksmiths	p46	Community	Community Buddies	p33	Key Cutting	WANTED			In2Locks	p45	Computers / IT	WANTED		Kitchens	Dunham Fitted Furniture	p50	Counselling	WANTED		Legal Services	WANTED	Window Cleaner	WANTED		Dancing	WANTED		Locksmith	In2Locks				Decorators	Wylam Painting & Decorating	p26							Brian Hewison	p46	Loft Conversion	WANTED				Dentist	WANTED		Massage	WANTED				Driving Instructor	WANTED		Mobility	Bewick Mobility	p09			Dry Cleaning / Laundry	WANTED			Acorn Stairlifts	p22			Electric / Solar	Tyne Valley Wind and Solar	p29	Motivation / Development	WANTED				Electrician	Parkers Electrical Services	p21	Motorhomes	N'umberland Motorhomes	p18				Fulton Electrical Services	p27						Entertainment	WANTED			Motorhome Depot	p30			Estate Agents	Kirsty Hodgson	p13							A&G Property Auctions	p15	Music Classes	WANTED					WPG Sales and Lettings	p64	Opticians	Elizabeth Evans	p03			Events	Crawcrook Fair	p17	Oven Cleaning	Hadrian Oven Cleaning	p51				Stocksfield Festival	p41	Outdoor Activities	Border Reiver Archers	p35							Turbo Venture	p18		
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