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Issue 104
July/August 2026

Tyne Valley Express

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In this issue....

Dementia
Cherryburn
Digital Detox
Darling Daisy
Wylam Craft Fayre
Anyone For Tennis?
New Look What's On!
Test Your Fitness Age
WIN - Costa Voucher
WIN - Tennis Set



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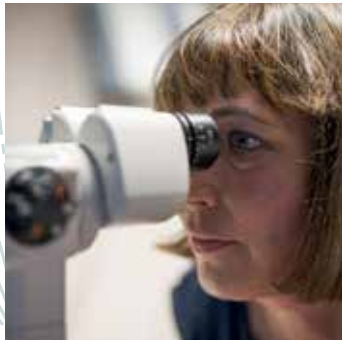
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Editor

Welcome to Issue 104 of the Tyne Valley Express. Our busy summer edition is packed with seasonal articles, competitions and lots of inspiration to help you make the most of the warmer months.

A huge congratulations to **Shelley Harrison**, whose stunning photograph was chosen as the winner of our recent photography competition and proudly graces this issue's front cover.

You'll also notice a brand-new look for our **What's On** listings. We've brought everything together into a convenient centre-page spread, making it easier than ever to discover local events, fairs, festivals and family activities happening across the Tyne Valley this summer.

As always, thank you to our loyal advertisers, contributors and readers for your continued support.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and we wish you a wonderful, sunny summer.

Stephen and the TVE Team.

Stephen McHugh

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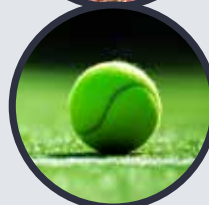
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Considering Equity Release? What About Your Home and Your Family?

A Guide to Modern Equity Release

By Joanne Manghan, North East Equity Release

For many homeowners, releasing equity can understandably raise questions about the home they love, their family and their future plans.

Will I still own my home? Could the amount owed become more than it is worth? What will be left for my family? And could I move home?

Lifetime mortgages offer safeguards and flexibility, but plans vary, so it is important to understand how they work.

Will I Still Own My Home?

A lifetime mortgage is a loan secured against your property, and you continue to own your home.

With plans meeting Equity Release Council standards, you may remain there for life, or until you move permanently into long-term care, provided the mortgage conditions are met.

Could the Amount Owed Become More Than My Home Is Worth?

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What Will Be Left for My Family?

Modern lifetime mortgages allow voluntary payments towards the interest and/or capital. This can reduce the amount added to the loan

and help preserve more of the property's value for your beneficiaries.

A drawdown facility may also be available, allowing money to be released gradually rather than all at once. As interest is charged only once funds are released, this can reduce interest building up over time.

Can I Protect an Inheritance?

Some lifetime mortgages offer inheritance protection, allowing you to ring-fence a percentage of the property's future value for beneficiaries.

This may reduce the amount available to borrow and is usually based on the future sale value rather than a guaranteed cash amount.

What If I Want to Move?

Lifetime mortgages can be transferred to a new property, provided it meets the lender's criteria and the plan's terms and conditions. Some plans offer downsizing protection after a qualifying period, which may allow repayment without an early repayment charge if the new property does not meet the lender's criteria.

Making the Right Decision

Equity release is a long-term commitment that will reduce your estate's value and may affect entitlement to means-tested benefits, so alternatives should be considered.

With the right advice, you can decide whether it suits your needs, future plans and family wishes.

You can contact Joanne on: **01670 209 925 or 0191 695 9493**

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An equity release mortgage may affect your entitlement to means tested benefits and the inheritance you may leave.

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Cherryburn

I've been on a mission to explore all our local National Trust sites, and with Cherryburn recently opening every Thursday and Friday, I was pleasantly surprised by what this little, quaint space had to offer.

Tucked above the Tyne Valley near Stocksfield, Cherryburn tells the story of Thomas Bewick, one of the great figures of British printmaking and natural history.

Managed by the National Trust, Cherryburn invites visitors to slow down, look closely and embrace nature. With a small stone cottage, farmhouse and garden paths, Cherryburn tells the story of Thomas Bewick. Born in 1753, he grew up among fields, woods, birds, livestock and working people, absorbing the details of rural life that would later fill his engravings.

And what a beautiful nature it is. From the farmyard and garden, the Tyne Valley opens out in layers of green, reminding visitors that Bewick's art was created in everyday contact with landscape, weather, animals and work. Nearby, the farmhouse helps tell the wider story of Bewick's life and legacy, with displays connected to his work, publications and printing practice.

My visit to Cherryburn can be summed up in two parts: learning about Thomas Bewick and his life and art, and appreciating the quiet beauty that Stocksfield has to offer.

First, let's learn a little bit about Thomas Bewick:

Thomas Bewick was the eldest of eight children in a family connected with farming and local coal workings. As a boy, he was not always enthusiastic about school or routine duties.

What held his attention was the life around him: birds in hedgerows, animals in fields, movement in woods and water, and the small dramas of the countryside.

This love later translated into his art when he was apprenticed to Newcastle engraver Ralph Beilby.

At Cherryburn, the print room is a must. Demonstrations, when available, reveal the journey from woodblock to printed page and make clear just how much skill, patience and pressure sat behind each tiny image. I even left with a gift: a print made by one of Bewick's engravings.

A garden for people and wildlife

"In the garden, I was employed in weeding the beds of cabbages and carrots, and in gathering peas for dinner," – Thomas Bewick's memoir.

The above quote sits on one of the planters in the gardens around Cherryburn. I thought the nature around the cottage and farmhouse was pretty – boasting views of Stocksfield, rolling fields of yellow buttercups and more – but there's even more than meets the eye.

Tucked away down a little path around the back of some picnic tables is a Silent Space. This is a bench where you can just sit, listen to the wind and the birds, watch swaying forget-me-nots and be one with nature. This was arguably one of my favourite things about Cherryburn, encouraging me to get off

my phone (and not take as many photos) and just breathe. In partnership with Silent Spaces, this provides places in gardens to take a quiet moment if you need it.

And the gardens don't stop there; meander through the museum part of Cherryburn, and you'll eventually find gardens galore with plenty of seating options to take in the sights.

There's always something to discover, from a wooden teepee to colourful plants, to playing badminton on the grass.

My afternoon there was so pleasantly simple but rewarding – both in providing a relaxing moment and educating me about art and Thomas Bewick's life. Going to this tucked-away part of history and nature was definitely worth visiting.



Planning a visit?

Things to note: Cherryburn is now open on Thursday's and Friday's, check the National Trust's website or social media before setting off, just in case. There is a small car park at Cherryburn and last entry is 4pm. There isn't a café on site, so feel free to pack a picnic to enjoy in the gardens! I packed a flask of tea and snacked on sandwiches before diving into a book whilst basking in the sunshine.

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
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To be continued...

Writing has been a lifelong pleasure but abandoned when life got in the way. Once retired from my career as a linguist and teacher, I finally found the time to be self-indulgent.

I belong to a wonderful writing group, Northumberland Writers, who are very supportive and all good friends. Until recently I edited a small monthly magazine, writing articles on many different subjects as well as organizing the work of others.

Apart from my family and beloved dogs, my writing is a joy and a delight bringing me some recognition that this obsession is worthwhile!

DARLING DAISY

Emptying the bins was such an innocuous domestic activity. She had not expected any discarded item to have such a profound effect upon her life. She had tipped the small wicker waste basket so that its contents would fall into the large black bin bag in the garage, when the scrap of paper spiralled in slow motion before her disbelieving eyes. Darling Daisy – 3.30? She had reached into the container to retrieve the still fluttering scrap. Was this part of a letter? If so where was the rest of it? Had he begun a letter then stopped, and if so, why? Clearly it was an assignation with a woman. Who was she? What had been going on?

He was away on business as he frequently seemed to be in recent months. Her voice was cool when she reached him in his hotel room. She told him calmly that she wanted to talk with him about an important matter when he returned. As she put the phone down, she could not prevent herself from wondering if he had been alone. Perhaps that woman was there with him. She had read about this happening to other people but never imagined it would happen to her. A careless moment, an unforeseen discovery – evidence of an affair.

Darling Daisy – the words echoed in her mind day and night. The torn corner of notepaper, the words written in his bold handwriting – the image flashed into her consciousness at those moments when she least wanted their intrusion.

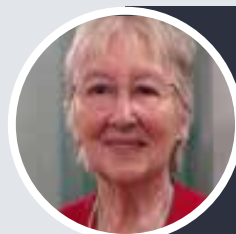
She tackled him about it, determined to retain her dignity. She would not play the role of the rejected wife. She accused him of being unfaithful to her with another woman. Names didn't matter, she would not give that woman the validity of a place in their lives. Daisy was an interloper and had no right to be there. She would ignore her. At first, he denied everything, said she was mad to think such a thing, demanded to know what proof she had. She told him of her suspicions, how she had observed over some months a change in his attitude to her, how she was sure with a wife's intuition that he no longer loved her.

The situation grew worse as time went by. Eventually it became clear there would be no positive outcome. She steeled herself to say the unbelievable words, 'I want a divorce'.

Clearly, he was hit for six by the enormity of her decision, by her distant froideur, by the utter conviction of her attitude. In vain, he denied all wrongdoing, refuting the accusation that he was seeing another woman. Then suddenly he realised with a massive shock that perhaps she wanted out. This was all a ploy to stir things up, muddy the waters, hide the fact that it was in fact she who was unfaithful. His face paled as the question raced through his mind – who was the man?

Registering his pallor, she concluded that he was guilty. Relations between them became impossible, and divorce action was set in train. She tearfully told friends the awful news, sustained herself with too many glasses of wine, fretted about what would happen next. Safe at home, she wondered who now would do the gardening and the DIY.

He found himself experiencing a single lifestyle, struggling to iron his shirts, eating out too much, and woefully out of practice with the dating game. Worst of all, he was desperately short of cash. He had been foolish to ever get involved in gambling. It had eroded his savings just when he needed the money most. It was an addiction. His first trips to the races had been enjoyable – a colleague had given him a good tip for an impressive horse who had romped home, but then its form had faltered. He had been so stupid. What a mess! He should have realised that not all Race Meetings were joyous, not all horses winners. He had won absolutely nothing since Darling Daisy had won the 3.30 at Hexham.



Alison Ringrose

Alison Ringrose
Author
Northumbrian Writers Group



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- 6th-8th December Thursford Christmas Spectacular - 3 days **SOLD OUT**
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Day tours 2026

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Tel: 07505 975509 (Dave)

Email: borderreiverarchers@yahoo.com

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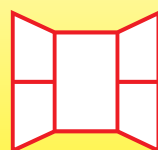
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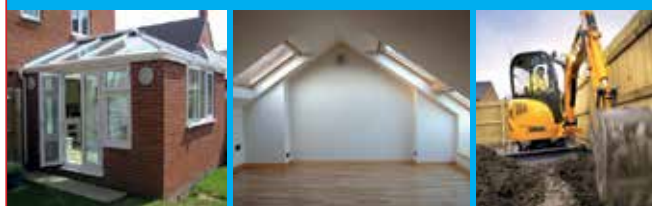
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Dementia -

Using colour in the home to improve the lives of our loved ones

Dementia is an umbrella term for a range of progressive disorders affecting the brain. It causes nerve cells to die. As a result, the brain does not process sensory information the way it used to which further affects the ability to differentiate between objects.

One of the most common symptoms is memory loss, but colour contrast perception also changes, as well as the sense of depth. For example a dementia patient will find it difficult to walk down a flight of stairs, because the individual steps are hard to distinguish. This altered sensory perception can result in confusion and anxiety. Fortunately colour can be used in the home or in a care setting to help improve safety, orientation and independence.

People living with dementia struggle to focus on objects that don't stand out sharply against their backgrounds. An example of where this could pose a safety risk is in a bathroom with a white toilet and a white floor. High colour contrast in terms of lightness and darkness improves visibility.

To improve safety and prevent confusion in this instance, simply purchase a new toilet seat or seat cover in a darker colour. A pleasant medium tone green is very effective as green is the last colour people with dementia lose their ability to see. Black is not a good option. For the dementia patient black surfaces can be mistaken for empty holes or openings.

To make navigation in the home easier, apply contrast between the floors and walls. Darker floors and lighter walls will enhance the 3D perception of the space. Paint the doors in contrasting colours to the walls. To make light switches appear more visible try outlining them with coloured tape. However, coloured light switches are neat and more attractive.

Where there is a change in direction in the home, such as at the end of a hallway or at the opening to a different room, paint the adjacent room in a different colour or in a lighter or darker version of the same colour. Keep to the same colour family of reds and oranges, or blues and greens.

It's best to keep all flooring uniform, but low colour contrast is useful where there is a transition from one flooring type to



another. For example in an open-plan home where a carpeted living room transitions into a vinyl-floor kitchen, the colours should be kept similar or the patient will read this difference as a change in floor level.

At the dinner table, use placemats or tablecloths which are a darker colour than the plates or vice versa, to help define the edges of dishes. As a result of memory loss, it can be difficult to remember the location of personal items. Glass fronted cupboards, closets and drawers will make items visible and improve independence.

Good lighting is equally important as colour. A well-lit hallway for example eliminates the need for assistance in finding the toilet late at night. Avoid lighting which causes shadows as shadows can make surfaces difficult to interpret. General lighting that provides even distribution is recommended.

While colour placement and contrast is important for safety and orientation, colour harmony in the home is needed to create a feeling of comfort. The right colours can make a dementia patient feel calmer and more attentive.

Studies show that the recommended colours for dementia are blues, pinks, reds, and greens. Blue is calming and can reduce anxiety. Red stimulates brain activity and can increase appetite. Pink is warm and cosy, while green promotes calm and clarity and is shown to be the most relaxing.

This is not to say that other colours are off limits. The best colours are the colours that the patient loves. They simply need to be used in the right doses.

Too much colour intensity on a wall can be over stimulating. It is better practice to paint the walls in a pastel or a neutral such as beige, cream, taupe, warm grey or off-white to serve as the backdrop. Then use the stronger or more saturated colours as accents in accessories, throw pillows, upholstery and so on.

By making thoughtful choices about colour, contrast and lighting, it is possible to create a home environment that is safer, calmer and easier to navigate for someone living with dementia. Small changes can make a significant difference, helping to promote independence, reduce anxiety and improve quality of life for both the individual and their caregivers.

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BLAYDON, WINLATON & WINLATON MILL

Winlaton Camera Club

We meet Tuesdays at 7.30pm, September to May in the New West End Club, Winlaton. We are a friendly bunch with a passion for photography, so pop along and join us. For details, visit www.winlatoncamera.club
West End Social Club
info@winlatoncamera.club

Yoga classes

Yoga for all for one hour every Monday at 3pm until 4pm. A varied programme every week. Be happy, healthy and relaxed when you practise yoga. Please bring your own mat and blanket and blocks etc. for your needs. St Pauls church hall
Carol 07895417870

Women's Walking Football

Come and join a friendly game of Women's Walking Football. Weekly price £3 (first game is free). Takes place every Friday from 1.45-2.45 at Winlaton Community Centre, North Street, Winlaton NE21 6BY
07469771683

Winlaton Mill Village Hall

Monday Pilates 10-11 + Yoga 6-7. Tuesday Karate 5.30-7.30. Wednesday Bootcamp 6-8. Thursday Playgroup 10-11.30 + Singing 7.30-10. Friday Photography 1-3 + Bootcamp 6-7 + Folk 7.30-10. Saturday Coffee morning 10.30-11.30. Winlaton Mill Village Hall
Info@winlatonmillvillagehall.com

Flower Club

Flower arranging demonstrations, practical workshops, talks take place first Tuesday of each month except August at 7.00pm in Winlaton Community Centre. Visitors welcome £6 including refreshments.

Winlaton Community Centre
01914132366

Blaydon Carpet Bowls

Come and join a friendly game of carpet bowls in St Cuthbert's Community Hall. Every Wednesday from 1-3 o'clock. No experience needed. A free cup of tea or coffee plus a biscuit is included in the price of £2. St Cuthbert's Community Hall
07949265987

The Blaydon Shed

A relaxed friendly drop-in for

all men 18+, chat or pursue hobbies. We are currently at Clasper House (Next to Skiff) on a Tuesday 11-2.30pm, and Blaydon Library every Thursday between 11-2.30pm. £1 a session, hot drinks and snacks free.
infoblaydonshed@gmail.com

Gateshead Libraries, Arts & Heritage

Gateshead Arts Team delivers a wide range of friendly, creative workshops for all ages through our Gateshead Live programme and projects like Gateshead Art Diamonds, which is for people of retirement age. For more details, please email ColleenDewing@gateshead.gov.uk.
Gateshead Libraries

RYTON, CRAWCROOK & GREENSIDE

Baby and Toddler Group

On Wednesday 9.00 till 11.00 Term Time only fun group for children and their families Stargate and Crookhill community centre - fiona.todd33@gmail.com

Our Villages Crawcrook & Greenside

Pavilion Café, Wednesday-Friday 2.30pm - 4.00pm (Thursday take away only). Crafting sessions, Monday 11am. Monthly Book Club, second Wednesday, 7pm. Our Villages AGM, Wednesday 15 July, 7pm. We need volunteers! Please contact us for information. Crawcrook Park
ourvillagescag@gmail.com

Yoga for All

Monday 11am Wednesday

6.30pm Hatha Yoga to suit all. 1 hour class £6. Friendly and welcoming. Come along to Holy Cross Church Hall, Ryton or linda@yogalinda.org.uk or 07779337708

Holy Cross Church

Bootcamp Workout Group

Totally free 45min workouts. Good craic, coffee afterwards and a better start to your day. Swalwell Visitor Centre - Mon/Thurs. Barmoor Hub, Ryton - Tues/Fri 6am-6.45am
No pressure, just turn up and give it a go - Barmoor Hub
neildavidson8866@gmail.com

Yoga classes

Stargate Community centre (opp. fish shop) Yoga class every Thurs at 2pm - 3pm. All abilities

welcome. For more details contact Carol.

Stargate & Crookhill Community Centre - Carol 07895417870

Holy Spirit Church

Sunday morning services, including children's Sunday Club, at 10.00am, followed by tea & coffee. For other services and venues see our website: www.greensideparish.org.uk
Crawcrook
info@greensideparish.org

St John's Community Hall

Large, clean, well maintained hall with kitchen available for hire for regular classes, badminton, birthday parties, or celebrations: www.greensideparish.org.uk/stjohnshall.htm
St John's Hall - 07767956371

Ryton Men's Shed

Ryton Men's Shed meet Tuesdays and Thursdays to converse and create through woodworking projects. It provides an opportunity to forge new friendships, build confidence and gives the men a sense of purpose. The men can also fix and restore items.

Ryton Methodist Church
mensshedryton@gmail.com

Brighten Ryton

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.

brightenryton@gmail.com

HEDDON, HORSLEY & WYLAM

Craft Fayre

Sunday 23rd August at Wylam institute NE41 8AP 11.00am to 4.00pm. Live Music Charity Raffle. Craft Corner. Face painting a craft fayre like no other. Come along stalls indoor and outdoor with wonderful local Artisan makers. Teas and coffee
Wylam Institute
Susanmarley911@gmail.com

Singing Mamas

Calling women of all ages and stages, mamas and non-mamas who love to sing together for fun and good vibes; enjoy a chat and eat biscuits! Little ones welcome. Fortnightly/Term Time Only. The Hearth Arts Centre
lindseyjoysings@gmail.com

Heddon Methodist Church

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
andrew.stirling@methodist.org.uk

Wildlife Group Talks

All welcome £3 includes refreshments. Tuesday March 3rd "Dragonflies" Michael Coates, County Recorder. Tuesday April 7th "Ratty Restored" Mel Rockett, WLT volunteer. Last talk this season, talks restart in September St Mary's, Ponteland
pontelandwildlife/talks

Hadrian Quilt Group

A patchwork and quilting group meets alternate Wednesdays 1000 until 1300 in the Womens Institute Hall at Heddon on the Wall. Next session 21 Jan 2026. Knowledge of patchwork and quilting is not essential, but basic sewing skills required.
Womens' Institute Hall
mcstocksfild@gmail.com

St. Andrew's Church

Everyone is welcome at our Sunday services at 10.30am. Many different things happen as part of the life of our church. To receive weekly email or to book baptism or weddings please contact hmrchurches@gmail.com

St. Andrew's Church, Heddon
hmrchurches@gmail.com

The Hearth Centre

We've got lots going on this Spring incl. art classes; live music; drama; well-being & a delicious cafe! See you soon. The Hearth Art Centre
www.thehearth.co.uk/whatson

Village Hall

Horsley Village Hall is available to rent for classes events and private functions. Recently refurbished. Fully fitted equipped kitchen. Accessible access. Lower and upper hall available. Conveniently located just off A69. To book. Go to www.horsleyvhall.org
Horsley Village
07715054860

PRUDHOE & MICKLEY

Pinocchio Pantomime

Dragon Tale Theatre Group presents the pantomime Pinocchio this half term, running from the 28th to the 31st October. Join us for a magical, family friendly show packed with laughter, music, and adventure for all ages. Highfield Middle School dragontaletheatregroup.co.uk/tickets

Sunday Service

Edgewell Christian Church, Edgewell Road, Prudhoe warmly invites you to our Sunday Service at 11.00am. Everyone is welcome! Edgewell Christian Church stephenhyde1957@icloud.com

Bairns & Brews

Toddler Group Thursdays 10-11.30am term-time. Playtime for the Bairns and chill time for you. Babies to pre-school. All welcome. Donations please (minimum £2). Info on Facebook Prudhoe Methodist Church Friends. Methodist Church Hall peter@thischurch.com

Conservation Interest Group

Help is needed to protect this beautiful, unique chalk grassland, at Low Prudhoe. This habitat contains unusual butterflies, solitary bees and flora and is being overwhelmed by non-native Cotoneaster shrubs. Please help us remove the invaders!

Spetchells - scig.co.uk

Prudhoe Methodist Church

A warm welcome awaits you at Sunday morning worship 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 prudhoemc.org. Methodist Church peter@thischurch.com

Live & Breathe Yoga

Tuesdays 6-7.15pm £10. Fridays 11.15-12.30pm £10. Yoga for all abilities with a friendly, welcoming, informal group. St Matthew's Wellness Centre 07794459268

Prudhoe Wildlife Garden

Beautiful Wildlife Garden, opposite the Asda garage. A

tranquil space for all to enjoy on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10am. A group of volunteers who love wildlife and our garden. Contact Jane on 07870 407168 or see www.prudhoespace4nature.uk Prudhoe and Mickley jcrgardener@gmail.com

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 can email us Prudhoe jdobson3726@gmail.com

STOCKSFIELD & RIDING MILL

Stocksfield Local History Society

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

Stocksfield Plants and Garden Society

Tuesday 19th May 7:30pm Summer Wreath Making Demonstration from Elm Street Flowers and Social Get together. Visitors welcome (£5). Sunday 7th June our Pop Up Plant Sale.

Full details on website www.stocksfieldplantsandgardens.com Stocksfield Community Centre stocksfieldpg@gmail.com

Stocksfield Community Centre

We have a wide range of events and activities available. For more detailed information please visit our website at www.stocksfieldca.org.uk or contact us: SCA, Mount View Terrace admin@stocksfieldca.org.uk

Garden Visits And Talks

If you want to be entertained whilst raising money for the NSPCC and the NGS then book a talk or a visit to my garden by phoning. Your own venue for talks and

Crabtree Road Stocksfield for garden visit - 07765862374

Whittonstall Community Band

An all age community band welcoming anyone interested in playing in our friendly musical ensemble. From October to April we rehearse at Broomley School, Stocksfield every Thursday during term time, 6.30-8.30. In summer we rehearse at the church in Whittonstall. Broomley School whittonstallcommunityband@gmail.com

Stocksfield Quaker Meeting

Meeting For Worship at 11.00am every Sunday. Details of other activities publicised at Meeting House or available from the Clerk Quaker Meeting House, New

Ridley Rd StocksfieldClerk@northumbriaquakers.org.uk

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 Stocksfield Baptist Church tynedale.secretary@gmail.com

Stocksfield Sing Circle

For women of all ages and stages who want to sing for pleasure and not perfection! We learn songs by ear and sing in our natural voice! Join us on Tuesdays, in the school term time, 7.30-9pm. Quakers Meeting House mynameislindsey@hotmail.com

CORBRIDGE, HEXHAM & ACOMB

Circle Dance

We are a friendly group meeting on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month 7 - 9 pm at The Torch Centre, Hexham. We dance beautiful music from across the world. Just bring comfortable shoes and enthusiasm. Torch Centre Hexham joyce.storm@gmail.com

Family History Society

We are a friendly group who meet on the second Thursday afternoon of each month to discuss all things genealogical. Full details of our members' forums and guest speakers are published at <https://www.ndfhs.org.uk/branches/about-the-branches/>. Hexham Golf Club ndfhs.tynedale@btinternet.com

Hexham Brass

A fun brass band playing a range

of great tunes in performances around the region. We practice on Tuesday evenings 7.15pm to 9pm, open to new players of all ages. Get in touch if you'd like to join us! St Aidan's Church info@hexhambrass.co.uk

Acomb WI

We meet on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7pm. We have a varied programme of events including speakers, visits and walks. - Acomb village hall acombwi@gmail.com

Tynedale Lions Club

A mixed friendly group meeting every 2nd and 4th Monday. Helping our community by volunteering our time and also raising funds for local good causes and charities. The County Hotel 7p.m tynedalelionsclub@gmail.com

Hexham Rotary Events

Hexham Rotary welcomes all. We meet most Monday lunchtimes at the County in Hexham and are involved in a huge range of activities. Interested? Phone Brian on 01434 603827

Hexham Rotary

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Test Your Fitness Age

How fit are you?

A milestone birthday, a health scare, feeling a bit more 'creaky', or realising that it's more of an effort to bend or stretch can lead us to wonder about our fitness. Keeping fit and active as we age is one of the most important things we can do; it's fantastic for mind and body and really does help to 'future proof' us.

How do you gauge how fit you are though? There are some obvious indicators like still being able to run for a bus, fit into your clothes or get up and down the stairs easily, but it's important to have some baselines that you can measure. Everyone's fitness levels are different, so comparing yourself to other people isn't very useful, but there are ways that you can test yourself and see progress. Here are a few quick things you can try yourself as a start, and I'm using an average 60 year old as an example.

The Chair Test

To measure lower body strength, sit on a chair with your arms crossed over your chest. See how many times you can stand up and sit down in 30 seconds without using your hands. You should be aiming for at least 12 repetitions.

You can improve your number with regular practice, and lower body exercises like lunges and squats.

The Leg Stand Test

Balance is key as we age, so this test is an important one. Stand barefoot on a flat surface, put your hands on your hips and lift one foot off the ground. If you can hold the position without swaying, hopping or putting your foot down for about 30 seconds you've achieved a good result. Consistency is key to improvement here, try standing on one leg as you brush your teeth for example.

The Walk Test

This simple test checks how well your heart, lungs and muscles are working. Find a flat path and walk for 6 minutes; at age 60 you should be reaching at least 500 metres. Walking regularly and trying to go further or quicker will all help you push past your targets.

The Grip Strength Test

Grip strength gives a simple measure of overall musculoskeletal health, and you may have done a grip test the last time you visited your healthcare professional. You can test yourself at home by squeezing a tennis ball or similar; simply squeeze it for as long as you can before your grip fatigues. If you can squeeze hard for over 20 seconds then you are doing well.

Strength training will help improve your grip, even doing wrist curls while holding a can of beans!

The Press Up Test

The dreaded press up! It's still one of the most effective ways of testing and improving your fitness. They aren't easy to get right, and it's perfectly acceptable to do 'half' press ups on your knees or doing them vertically against a wall. At age 60 men should be able to do more than 8 and women more than 5 press ups in a row, and that does mean slow press ups with

good form!

Repetition is your friend here, doing press ups every day will give you a dramatic improvement, and lots of bragging rights.

All of these tests can give you an indication of how fit you are, but remember they are just broad outlines and everyone is different. What they can show you is where you can improve, and that's the important information. By doing these activities regularly, and building physical activity into your daily life will help you improve performance and age well.

Make sure you are moving regularly, whether it's walking, running, cycling, swimming or dancing. Do as much strength training as you can, and try to get out in the fresh air as much as possible. Eat and sleep well, and challenge your mind by reading, doing quizzes or learning something new. Before long you'll be feeling better and really ageing well.



Tim Morton

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Digital Detox

Do you need a Digital Detox ? Reclaiming Your Morning, Your Mind, engaging in Your Community.

In a world where our phones wake us before the sun does, a digital detox isn't a luxury anymore it's a lifeline from overwhelm. It's too easy to reach our screens before we've even taken our first breath of fresh air. That small rectangle of light becomes the first thing our eyes absorb, long before the natural light outside has a chance to greet us. And while it feels harmless, that early hit of blue light and information overload can shape the entire rhythm of our day.

What if, instead, the first light you saw was the soft glow of the morning sky? What if your first movement was a stretch, a dog walk, a yoga flow, qi gong, a swim, or a gentle cycle outdoors? These simple acts reconnect you with your body, your breath, and your environment long before the digital world starts making demands and raising your cortisol levels.

This is the heart of a digital detox, it's a need to choose presence over autopilot, intention over impulse. It's not easy and I myself fall into the trap its work in progress but on the days I manage life is calmer happier and feels lighter.

Morning Light Before Phone Light

The moment you wake up, your brain is in a delicate state its open, receptive, and impressionable. Reaching for your phone immediately floods your nervous system with notifications, news, and noise. It pulls you into other people's priorities before you've even checked in with your own.

Stepping into natural light first thing, signals to your body that the day has begun. It boosts serotonin, regulates your circadian rhythm, and lifts your mood. Pair that with a dog walk, a few minutes of morning yoga, or a gentle early cycle outdoors with less cars and nature gifts, and you've already set a golden and positive intention for your day. If you need support first thing or motivation buddy up or try to change your routine to accommodate this new habit.

These practices anchor you to be in your body before the digital world has a chance to scatter your attention.

Healthy Tech Boundaries

A digital detox doesn't mean abandoning your phone entirely. It means using technology consciously, rather than reactively. Setting boundaries helps you reclaim your time, energy, and mental clarity.

Here are a few simple, powerful shifts:

Allocate specific times for tech morning, midday, evening. Outside those windows, let your phone rest. Turn off non-essential notifications so your attention isn't constantly hijacked. Set limits for social media, not as punishment, but as protection. Use your phone with purpose, not as a reflex for wanting or needing a dopamine fix.

When you create boundaries, you create space ; space for creativity, rest, movement, and genuine connection.

Reducing Social Media Exposure

Social media can be inspiring, educational but it can also be overwhelming. Constant comparison, endless scrolling, and the pressure to be "on" can drain your emotional reserves.

A digital detox invites you to step back and ask ; Is this nourishing me, or numbing me?

Limiting your exposure doesn't disconnect you, it reconnects you to



your real world. It frees up time for the things that truly matter: your wellbeing, your relationships, your passions, and your community.

Reconnecting With Real Community

One of the most beautiful outcomes of a digital detox is rediscovering the richness of in-person experiences. When you step away from screens, you step into life, the real, textured, sensory world that exists beyond the scroll.

Try joining a yoga class, art workshop, a local exercise group a music night, cinema or theatre performance, a local poetry evening, a community walk or outdoor event. Check the listings in this tyne valley magazine.

These experiences nourish you in ways technology simply can't. They offer eye contact, shared laughter, spontaneous conversation, and the warmth of being physically present with others. They remind you that connection is something you feel, not something you "like." Nature as Your First Portal of the Day

When you choose nature over notifications, you choose grounding over overstimulation. A morning spent outdoors, even briefly sets the tone for a calmer, more intentional day.

Imagine this rhythm

You wake. You stretch. You step outside. You breathe in the cool air. You walk the dog. You feel your feet on the earth. You move through a few sun salutations. You cycle through quiet lanes. You return home awake, alive, and centred. Then you check your phone, from a place of calm, not compulsion.

This is the power of a digital detox; it gives you back your mornings, your mind, and your sense of self.

When you reduce digital noise, you make room for: creativity, clarity, connection, movement, joy, purpose and rest. Your phone will always be there. The world will always be online. But your mornings, your energy, your relationships, and your inner peace, well I believe those are worth protecting.



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Anyone for Tennis?

Every summer, the eyes of the sporting world turn to Wimbledon – the oldest and most prestigious tennis tournament on the planet.

Held at the famous grass courts of the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club in London, Wimbledon remains one of Britain's most iconic sporting events. While the game of tennis has evolved dramatically over the years, Wimbledon has proudly retained many of the traditions that make it unique.

It is the only Grand Slam tournament still played on grass, competitors must wear predominantly white clothing, and advertising around the courts remains minimal. These traditions, combined with the tournament's rich history and world-class competition, help make Wimbledon the pinnacle of professional tennis.

In the Beginning

Wimbledon first began in 1877 and has been held at the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club ever since. The first tournament started on July 9th, 1877, with just 22 men competing for the title. Spencer Gore became the inaugural champion, watched by around 200 spectators who paid a shilling each to attend.

In 1884, the tournament expanded to include Gentlemen's Doubles and Ladies' Singles. Ladies' Doubles and Mixed Doubles followed in 1913, creating the five traditional championship events that continue to be contested today.

Until 1922, Wimbledon operated under a unique "Challenge Round" system, where the previous year's champion automatically qualified for the final and only had to play one match to defend their title.

Another major milestone came in 1968 with the beginning of the Open Era, when professional players were finally allowed to compete alongside amateurs. This transformed Wimbledon into the truly global sporting spectacle we know today.

The tournament became even more popular in 1937 when Wimbledon matches were first televised, bringing the drama and excitement of Centre Court into living rooms across Britain.

Wimbledon Today

While Wimbledon has modernised in certain areas, including the addition of retractable roofs and state-of-the-art facilities, it has remained remarkably faithful to its traditions.

Over the years, the tournament has produced some of the greatest champions in sporting history. British fans waited 77 years between men's singles champions before Andy Murray ended the drought in 2013 and repeated the feat in 2016. On the women's side, Virginia Wade remains the last British singles champion, having lifted the trophy in 1977.

Today's tournament features a new generation of stars battling for tennis's most coveted prize. The world's best players arrive at Wimbledon every year knowing that victory on Centre Court can define a career and secure a place in sporting history. British hopes are currently led by rising stars such as Jack Draper, who will be looking to inspire the home crowd and perhaps become the next name etched onto the famous honours board.

A Truly Special Event

Whether you're a lifelong tennis fan or simply enjoy the unique atmosphere that Wimbledon brings each summer, there's something special about this remarkable tournament. The strawberries and cream, the packed crowds, the famous grass courts and the unforgettable sporting moments all combine to create an event unlike any other.

Nearly 150 years after it first began, Wimbledon continues to captivate millions of fans around the world and remains one of the highlights of the British sporting calendar.

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A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

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

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

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

5D	11K	10G	3B	5H	7K	7M	2G	3M	11A	4I	5B

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

B	S	Q	D	M	H	R	T	P	H	A	L	E	P	A
G	R	E	R	E	D	E	F	X	W	K	Z	K	P	S
U	L	I	U	D	J	O	K	O	V	I	C	Z	B	S
K	L	V	U	S	G	S	E	R	V	E	I	Y	E	E
T	B	A	C	K	S	P	I	N	M	E	R	M	A	P
U	N	J	D	V	E	J	M	P	Z	N	R	W	X	C
U	I	E	R	V	E	J	I	P	Y	C	S	I	O	O
S	P	G	M	T	A	R	T	N	L	S	I	L	B	U
W	N	D	F	A	V	N	A	G	T	R	N	L	L	R
I	H	E	W	D	N	D	T	R	J	T	N	I	A	T
S	C	U	S	S	A	R	C	A	O	T	E	A	Y	E
A	T	C	S	L	D	I	U	T	G	K	T	M	O	E
L	A	E	O	O	A	H	K	O	R	E	R	S	R	L
H	M	M	Z	J	A	S	E	F	T	S	P	E	A	T
B	R	E	A	K	P	O	I	N	T	E	R	T	S	L

ADVANTAGE	DJOKOVIC	ROYAL BOX
BACKSPIN	FEDERER	SERVE
BREAK POINT	HALEP	TENNIS
COURT	MATCH	TOURNAMENT
DEUCE	NADAL	WILLIAMS

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

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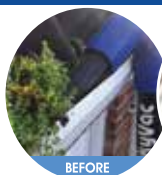
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April 15, 2020 via Google

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Luke is reliable, honest, punctual, easily contactable and a pleasure to work with as a tradesman. He works cleanly is tidy and leaves no mess. His work is top notch I cannot recommend him highly enough 5 stars.

Angela, Chollerford

January 7, 2020 via Google

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Antiques WANTED	Funeral Directors / Plans E. Peart p12	Plasterer WANTED
Architects WANTED	 Jack Lowther Celebrant p45	Plumber Rightio p26
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Auctioneers WANTED	 Furniture Clinic p21	Physiotherapy WANTED
Available For Hire JRC Excavations p20	Garden Centre Jack & Jo's p06	Reclamation / Timber Roger's Timber p36
Bakers / Catering WANTED	Garden Services Addison & Son p06	Restaurants / Pubs WANTED
Banks / Finance NE Equity Release p05	 Double Green Care p12	Roofing L. Richardson Roofing p23
Bathrooms WANTED	 Norwood Horticulture p14	 Royal Roofing p32
Blinds / Shutters Blinds Ryton p09	 Terra Firma Ground Care p33	 Elliott Spoors p37
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