

**Swarland Village Action Group Committee:**

Chairman: Neil Mansfield, Secretary / Editor: Bryan Stanley.

Treasurer: Susan Richardson.

Committee Members: Robert & Sue Brotherton, John Richardson,  
Suzanne Stanley, Caroline Thomas.

**Write it Down Now**

Please supply information to the Editor for  
inclusion in the April issue by  
**Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2022.**

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The cost of production of this issue of  
The Column has been met by  
**Newton on the Moor  
& Swarland Parish Council**  
and  
**Swarland Club**

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Call, Text or WhatsApp **Louise on 07502 477 734,**

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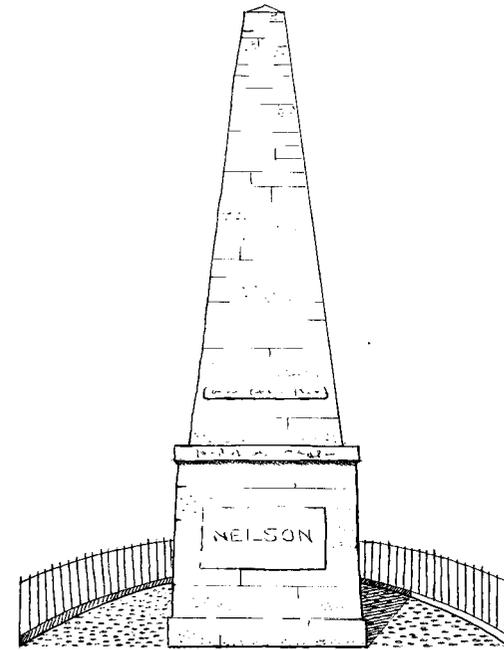
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**SWARLAND VILLAGE WORKING MEN'S CLUB**

Tel. 01670 787 825

**Swarland Club** is pleased to sponsor *The Column*.

# The Column



**February 2022**

Produced by  
**Swarland Village Action**  
**Newsletter 117**

**Ultra-fast broadband provision. See  
inside for meeting details.**

Welcome to your latest issue of The Column and if you're new to the area, a special welcome to you. **To include something, however small, in the April issue, please supply it for inclusion by Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March. Send it to: The Editor, Bryan Stanley, on 01670 787 916 or by email at maxitoby1@gmail.com .**

Even with the eased Covid-19 situation, we are still using the NCC Communities Together Scheme to print it for us. Thanks to Ruth Armstrong for organising this again.

### **Mobile Library Dates**

The NCC mobile library comes to our parish on some Wednesdays. It stops in **Swarland opposite The Square from 10.00 - 11.00am** and **Newton on the Moor from 11.10 - 11.30am**. If you miss either of these it's also in **Guyzance from 11.40am – 12.00** and **Old Felton from 12.15 – 12.35pm**.

The next visits in our area are on **2<sup>nd</sup> March, 30<sup>th</sup> March and 27<sup>th</sup> April**.

Most Libraries are now open for the 'select & collect' service and there are 'doorstep deliveries' for some customers. You may also wish to use NCC's Digital Library Services which are available 24/7.

You can check NCC's website for further library information at [northumberland.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/msgtrn/wpac/home](http://northumberland.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/msgtrn/wpac/home) .

### **Support for Newton on the Moor and Swarland Residents**

## **NOT JUST COVID!**

Don't forget that support is still available from the 45 residents in the parish who have volunteered to help out their neighbours who are resident within the parish during the Coronavirus Emergency, and also in response to the recent storms.

In our Parish, we have a population of over 900, in around 450 houses, and many are elderly and / or living alone. Volunteers are there to help if you are vulnerable through ill health or age, and don't have anyone else to help you. The sort of support we can provide is as follows:

- Daily Phone calls to check you are well and not needing help
- Phone calls for a chat
- Collection of prescriptions
- Collection/delivery of food
- Help with other problems wherever possible.

If you need help, email (if possible) [janandersonpc@gmail.com](mailto:janandersonpc@gmail.com) or telephone 07775 060 430 during office hours preferably.

The Parish Council website is being revised regularly with information relating to services available in our Parish (find the website at <http://newtononthemoorandswarlandparishcouncil.org.uk/> .

In relation to Covid, NCC has a useful page of information including a daily update of infections in each ward (at <https://northumberland.gov.uk>) and also has information relating to other emergency situations.

*Best wishes, Jan Anderson (Parish Clerk)*

## **Neighbourhood Watch Update – January 2022**

### **Swarland / Newton on the Moor:**

So far, I have not received any information from the police regarding any criminal activity in our immediate area. However, I wish to draw your attention to a phone call I had recently from a resident in Swarland. It would appear that there have been a number of males selling articles at the doorstep. I have been told that a number of residents have suffered verbal abuse when they refused to buy anything. I remind you that the **so-called youth scheme they quote does NOT exist**. However, when I rang the number the police had given me to report this (see below), on three occasions I was cut off after about 5 minutes. Apparently, the concerned resident had the same experience.

#### **\* Of General Interest**

On Friday 07/01/22 a haul of poaching and hunting equipment was seized as part of a joint day-of-action with the RSPCA. The team executed warrants at two addresses, one in Longframlington and the other in Hexham. The warrants were executed as a result of receiving intelligence that people at the properties were believed to be involved in hunting badgers and foxes. A number of electronic devices and animal traps were seized. An investigation continues.

\* On Tuesday 18/01/22 at 22.45 officers stopped a Subaru Forester on the A1 at Alnwick. Five males with dogs were located inside the vehicle and poaching equipment (lamps) was seized.

**If residents have information on any crime, please report this via the following numbers: Emergency issues 999, non emergency issues Tel. 101. To contact Rothbury Police, phone 101 ext 61353, e-mail [alnwick.npt.northumbria.pnn.police.uk](mailto:alnwick.npt.northumbria.pnn.police.uk) , or call in at the office in the Coquetdale Centre, Church Street, Rothbury. If the office is unattended, please use the yellow phone on the wall and an officer will be able to assist with your enquiry.**

*NW Co-ordinator, Harold Hinchliffe, 2 Nile Drive, Swarland.  
Tel.01670 783 669 or Mob.07713 097 250*

### **Ultrafast Broadband arriving in the area**

Alncom, the Alnwick based Ultrafast Broadband network builder, will be hosting a roadshow in **Swarland Village Hall early in March** to talk about their proposed full fibre build into the village.

The exact date will be confirmed via the Parish Council, Swarland Residents Facebook page and on all the village notice boards. This will be a great chance to come and meet the Alncom team who will be there to answer any questions you may have and to explain how the villages improved connectivity will happen.

## Swarland Village Hall

The Hall, which is run as a community facility is available for hire, bearing in mind that everyone must still follow any remaining Government Covid-19 restrictions. The majority of activities can now be booked but some regular activities are taking place outside or will not recommence until later. **Please support this local facility.** If you wish to check on whether you can book the Hall for a future event, please contact Bryan Stanley (contact details elsewhere) or Steve Woolfrey ([stevewoolfrey.PC@outlook.com](mailto:stevewoolfrey.PC@outlook.com) or 01670 787 883).

**Archery Practice:** indoor sessions at **7pm on Monday evenings – starting late October.** The Club can supply all equipment. For details contact **Steve** on [Family.Woolfrey@outlook.com](mailto:Family.Woolfrey@outlook.com) or **01670 787 883.**

**Crafty Friends, now meet on 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday morning of each month.** For more information contact Anne on **07934 425 844.**

**Karate Classes on Tuesdays 5.30 - 8.30pm.** Contact **Ashleigh Davidson** on **07947 694 014** or **07930 838 872.**

**Qi Gong (Chinese Energy Exercise) Class on Wednesdays 10 – 11 and 11.15 – 12.15.** Waiting lists are currently full – for details contact Anne Raine on **07934 425 844.**

**Swarland Craft Group meets on Wednesdays, 1.30 – 3.30pm.** Our first meeting on **22nd September** was very successful. Unfortunately, at the moment the Group cannot accept new members as we have reached the capacity of the Village Hall. Any enquiries: **Margaret on 01670 787 705.**

**Swarland Carpet Bowls on Thursday evenings from 7pm.** New members are always welcome. If you would like to give it a try, contact **Malcolm or Joan Nesbit** on **01670 783 140.**

**Pilates Classes on Thursdays 9.30-10.30am.** To join in contact [sandyturnbull6@gmail.com](mailto:sandyturnbull6@gmail.com) . Possible Monday class soon as well.

**Tribe-Zuza dance** sessions in the Hall currently on hold. For further details on meeting place, contact Angela on **01670 787 223.**

### Newton on the Moor Jubilee Hall - Coffee Morning

We were sorry to cancel our January coffee morning, but in the light of illness in the team, high levels of Omicron locally and the threat of awful weather it was the sensible thing to do.

We shall look forward very much to welcoming you back on **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> February**, when the tasty Winter service of Jen's wonderful hot bacon or sausage rolls will be available. We shall be baking the usual delicious cakes for our friends to eat in or to take home and the kettle will be on for coffee and tea from 10.00 until midday.

Advance notice for the next Coffee Morning which will be held on **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March.** We look forward to seeing you – do come along!

*Alison Gallico*

## NotM & Swarland Parish Council - September 2021

### **Storms Arwen, Malik and Corrie**

Two months after Arwen, we were hit again at the end of January by another two storms, Malik and Corrie, resulting in further power outages, tree losses, property damage and loss of broadband. Many thanks, again, to the large number of volunteers throughout our area who helped their neighbours and the community: whether providing neighbourly care, removing fallen trees, or in many other ways. Earlier in January, the County Council launched its own inquiry into the aftermath of Arwen, and it is seeking evidence from throughout Northumberland both about the problems and also the effectiveness of the various responses.

The Parish Council (PC) will be submitting a report, but we would also encourage local residents to submit their own stories. No deadline has been given, but the inquiry is hoping to receive submissions during February and March. These can be sent directly to [nccstormarwenreview@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:nccstormarwenreview@northumberland.gov.uk) .

### **Community resilience**

Despite the brilliant work undertaken by good neighbours following the storms, there are lessons and opportunities that are worth addressing in our own area. For example:

- How can we ensure that everyone knows what is happening re electricity supplies and other utilities, when there is no power for phones, broadband, radio / TV etc?
- How can we tap into the sorts of resources which NCC made available to some parts of the county?
- How do we ensure that the most isolated and vulnerable people are not overlooked?
- Is there scope to acquire some emergency generators for different areas of the community?
- What contribution could our village halls and the Vyner Park pavilion make?

The PC is beginning to explore this question of 'community resilience', with a view to building on (and not stifling) the wide range of spontaneous help which already occurs.

### **Road safety**

We reported recently on the three priorities which we submitted to NCC for possible inclusion in next year's Local Transport Plan. Although we will not hear about the outcome until possibly May or June, we are trying to address much sooner the long-running issue of the maintenance, improvement and adoption of the various back-roads in Swarland. We are awaiting confirmation of a planned site meeting with relevant officers from both the highways and the planning teams. We have also been sent an interesting report and decision which was made by NCC in 2006 to

*[Cont overleaf]*

*PC Update cont]*

dedicate the roads as highways, and then to adopt them, section-by-section, as 'highways maintainable at public expense'. A copy of that document is now posted on our website.

### **Queen's Platinum Jubilee**

We would welcome suggestions as to how we could secure a lasting legacy to mark the Jubilee, possibly some tree-planting or some similar visible statements. This would be in addition to a celebration on 4<sup>th</sup> June, to be hosted by the Vynner Park Charity.

### **Community litter-pick**

The annual litter pick is planned for Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> March. Refuse bags, tools etc will be available to collect from Swarland Square at 10am on that morning.

**PC Clerk, Jan Anderson [janandersonpc@gmail.com](mailto:janandersonpc@gmail.com) or 07775 060 430.**  
**PC website: [newtononthemoorandswarlandparishcouncil.org.uk](http://newtononthemoorandswarlandparishcouncil.org.uk) .**

### **First meeting of the Action on Climate Group**

The newly formed Swarland and Newton Action on Climate group (SNAC) met for the first time on January 11<sup>th</sup>. Its aims are to support Northumberland County Council's target of net zero by 2030 and, because climate change and the natural world are so closely linked, to increase biodiversity within the area.

Although the first meeting of the group was set up by members of the Parish Council, it's hoped that other members of the community will get involved in the running of the group. As well as developing specific projects, the group will also try to raise awareness of the issues and lobby for change.

Some of the initial ideas include tree planting and pond restoration, improving opportunities for recycling, providing electric charging points, sharing knowledge about how to move away from oil and gas heating, looking at demand for public transport and carrying out a carbon footprint survey.

Meetings will be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be on Tuesday February 15<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm and will progress some of the ideas discussed at the first meeting.

So far, the group has attracted interest from all parts of the Parish, and also has representation from Swarland Primary School, Percy Wood and Vynner Park. If you are passionate about wildlife or want to do something to act on climate change, we'd love to hear from you. You can get in touch by emailing Liz Clark ([Liz@cabrit.co.uk](mailto:Liz@cabrit.co.uk)) or Carolyn Letts ([Carolyn.Letts@btinternet.com](mailto:Carolyn.Letts@btinternet.com)).

### **Lower Coquetdale Red Squirrels**

Well, what a difficult few months our poor Red Squirrels have had!

Storm Arwen caused devastation to many of the areas the squirrels live in. We have been unable to see if dreys have been damaged, but know that in some areas the trees with feeders on were destroyed.

Forestry England then closed Swarland Woods, due to safety and denied access for volunteers on their land; unfortunately volunteers are still not allowed to work, so we were unable to put food in feeders to supplement the squirrels in the colder winter months. This also meant that we were unable to control the Grey Squirrels in Swarland Woods, which has led to an increase in Greys to the area.

As some of you may have heard, in January we removed 3 dead Red Squirrels from Swarland Woods. We are still waiting for all the results, one has come back positive for Squirrel Pox and Adenovirus, so it is presumed the results will be the same for the other two. Both viruses are carried by Grey Squirrels and are deadly to Red Squirrels. The Greys carry Squirrel Pox virus, but are unaffected by it. Unfortunately, if it is transferred to a Red Squirrel it will die within two weeks. It develops blisters and sores around its eyes and mouths (similar to myxomatosis in rabbits) and suffers a very unpleasant death.

Due to this we have removed all feeders from the woods to avoid cross contamination. We are still unable to control the Grey Squirrels whilst we are not allowed to volunteer in the woods (it is currently deemed unsafe). We have to be constantly in control of Grey populations as they quickly grow out of control and push our Red Squirrels further away or kill them as has been the case this time.

**With the presence of these diseases, we ask anyone with bird or squirrel feeders near Swarland Woods to either remove all food from the feeders or disinfect them daily with Virkon disinfectant.**

**We are still able to control Grey populations in private gardens, so if you do have any Grey visitors please let us know. If you spot any Reds we would love to know there are some still safe out there. You can report the find via the Report a Sighting button on the website [www.lcreds.org.uk](http://www.lcreds.org.uk) or email us at [sighting@lcreds.org.uk](mailto:sighting@lcreds.org.uk) .**

Thank you.

*Lower Coquetdale Red Squirrel Group.*

**Deadline for items for the April issue of  
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## Recycling, Wants & For Sale Corner

Why not recycle your unwanted items through The Column? Recipients of free items can make a donation towards this newsletter's running costs. Items for sale? – If successful, the seller can make a similar donation.

**Little Henry vacuum cleaner and all tools.** Good condition. Offers £40ono.

**Large square log basket** approximately 49x49cms & 50cms high. £15. If interested contact Tel. 01670 787 380.

Grand-children's outgrown items – no reasonable offer refused.

**Children's bikes**, hardly used.

**TR20 Trax**, pale blue, suit age 7-9.

**Spiderman balance bike**, Red, plus helmet & gloves.

**Pollo Petal bike** plus stabilisers, Lilac, plus helmet & gloves.

**Riding hat** 6 7/8; no falls, no damage.

**2 prs Jodhpur boots**, size 33-34.

If interested, contact 01665 581 173

## Letter from Jackie Stent re Percy Wood Planning Application

In October I emailed the Planning Officer in charge of the above application. There's not a lot to report as things are at a bit of a standstill. In December 2021, Highways England submitted a letter to the planning portal stating they were no longer against the application and no further conditions would be imposed by them. They had originally requested further information from Harrison Leisure and stopped a decision being made until the end of November 2021 at the earliest.

In early January, I emailed the Planning Officer, Tony Lowe, to ask if the application was to be on the agenda of the Planning Committee on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and was told it was not scheduled for that meeting. He also said we would be informed when it was on the agenda but I wonder how much notice we will actually be given. I intend to email Tony again next month about the next planning meeting in February 2022.

Storm Arwen in November 2021 caused many problems for us all and resulted in the driving range shelter being ripped apart with debris strewn all around it. The roof was removed by a group of workmen (no hard hats or safety precautions to be seen!) during the following week but the structure is still there with the rubbish just left on the ground. During the recent storm this weekend, parts of the metal structure were wobbling about, so we rang Percy Wood to warn them it may be dangerous. They said they would have a look at it.

Since my last update, the spoil heaps in the car park near the Bari Bar have been fenced off but nothing has been removed.

Percy Wood should now be closed completely for the month of February as it is an 11-month site.

*Jackie Stent*

## Trevor's Bit

At the end of November, we experienced a very severe storm bringing much devastation to our part of Northumberland. It left a trail of chaos across our patch with fallen trees, damaged buildings and numerous damaged power cables which brought life to a standstill in numerous parts of central Northumberland. Swarland and Newton on the Moor were badly affected. I was greatly heartened by the responses from the community to this terrible disaster. I would personally like to thank volunteers for their efforts in looking after their neighbours, especially the elderly and vulnerable, in these difficult times. The response from the farmers with their chainsaws and tractors was especially welcome in clearing our roads from the fallen trees which once undertaken allowed traffic to move freely across our roads again. I would like to thank my contact at Northern Powergrid for the sterling work that he and his organisation undertook to restore power to many of our homes, despite many urgent angry calls. Unfortunately, some communities were left without power for several days largely due to the very extensive damage to the power grid. Our leader at NCC, Glen Sanderson, has asked the Prime Minister to carry out a national and local enquiry into the responses of Northern Powergrid to this disaster to ensure that staffing levels were sufficient and that continued investment in equipment has continued to take place as there was some criticism of some power generators being extremely antiquated. We need to ensure that if another storm of this velocity were to happen again that the systems are in place to deliver swifter responses. I would like to thank all the staff at County Hall who worked "around the clock" to deliver critical services.

It would be a very good idea if Swarland and Newton on the Moor, as communities, could set up some sort of emergency response unit if such events ever happen again. The use of community buildings to provide hot drinks, food and a place of warmth would be an essential part of a plan. I am sure County Hall would be willing to assist in setting up such a response with a good system of communications to all the electorate.

Trevor Thorne, (County Councillor for Shilbottle Ward), The Stables, Embleton Hall, Longframlington NE65 8DT.

Email: [trevor.thorne@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:trevor.thorne@northumberland.gov.uk). Tel: 01665 570249 (mobile: 07769 304311).

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## **Felton Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG December)**

The PPG extends thanks to Suzanne Beddow for her contributions after she resigned from the Group. (Next meeting Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February)

### **Staffing changes**

Dr Emma Turner has left the practice. A new F2, Dr Laura Johnson has joined the practice for 4 months. Catherine Cosser has joined the practice as a Dispenser, and Jackie Folks has joined the practice as a receptionist. Appointment of a new Practice Manager is ongoing. The role has been advertised.

### **Services at Felton Surgery**

Flu vaccination clinics are being held at Felton but vaccination supplies are only available to cover the currently scheduled clinics. More clinics will be scheduled if further Flu vaccine supplies become available.

Resumption of other services and Clinics at Felton, which have all be cancelled due to the impact of Covid-19, are being discussed within the Practice. It is hoped that there will be some positive news on the resumption of some services soon.

### **Covid-19 Vaccinations and boosters**

Covid-19 vaccinations and boosters continue to be delivered at the Amble hub. The surgery will continue to contact eligible patients when vaccines are available and clinics scheduled. All patients are urged to contact the surgery if they know they are eligible, but have not been contacted.

There is also the national booking service which can be used, with appointments available at regional centres. If patients receive a text to book with the national service, this does not mean that there will necessarily be an appointment available at the local hub. Patients are free to choose which service to use.

### **New Surgery**

Dr Lees clarified that the developer Assure, has been asked to put the purchase of materials on hold whilst the contractual and procedural processes catch up, but that planning for a new Felton Surgery was continuing.

### **Merger between Felton and Widdrington**

The merger between the two practices is ongoing and it is hoped to complete in the new year.

### **CQC Inspection**

The Care Quality Commission inspection report is available to read on the website.

Full Minutes of PPG meetings are available to read on the Felton Surgery website. Contact the practice by phone on **01670 787 353** or visit its website for further information at **www.feltonsurgery.nhs.uk** .

*Dorinda Jack on behalf of the PPG.*

## **Swarland Moor Local Heritage Group**

On 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021 the group had its Christmas lunch at Nelson's. It was a good opportunity for people to chat outside of the normal meetings and the food was fantastic. A big thank you to the staff at Nelson's who gave up their day off to spoil us, it was appreciated by all who attended.

Due to the infective nature of the Omicron variant, we have made the decision to postpone the talk on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022, which was about the Chillingham Cattle. This will be rescheduled.

The next meeting will be on the Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022 which is an open evening for members and guests to share their stories of Swarland's Past. This can be anything from the earliest days of Swarland, right up to the last couple of years. Anyone who wants to join us please come along with anything you want to share. If you would prefer to have your notes / comments read out, please email them in advance to **swarlandmlhg@gmail.com** . As there are many new residents in the village it will be a good opportunity to share and celebrate the history of the village.

New members and guests are all welcome, we meet at The Swarland Club at 7.30 on the second Tuesday of the month. Further information and updates can be found on our Facebook site or by emailing: **swarlandmlhg@gmail.com** .

*Lesley Selfe*

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### **Litter: the worst of it**

Litter around the parish is always annoying and needs to be cleared up regularly, but one Swarland resident who regularly collects it said last week; "On Leamington Lane, going uphill, roughly opposite the sign for the school we have a doggie debris tree. I feel sorry for any dog that has such an irresponsible owner. Is it possible to put a note in The Column reminding people how irresponsible this behaviour is? It's a smelly, unhygienic eyesore."

The same resident has also once more found used stoma bags in the area which is unpleasant, unhygienic and unnecessary.

*The Editor*

