

Swarland Village Action Group Committee:

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

Treasurer: Susan Richardson.

Committee Members: Robert & Sue Brotherton, Carmen Hubbard,
John Richardson and Suzanne Stanley.

Write it Down Now

Please supply information to the Editor for
inclusion in the June issue by
Thursday 26th May 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

The Club provides a newspaper service for our area. All
daily newspapers are catered for along with the sale of bread,
eggs and milk.

**This service is currently open
from 7.30 to 10am every day**

Newspapers and magazines may be ordered and reserved.

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

Find us on Facebook (Swarland WMC Paper Shop),
or phone SWM Club on 01670 787 825.

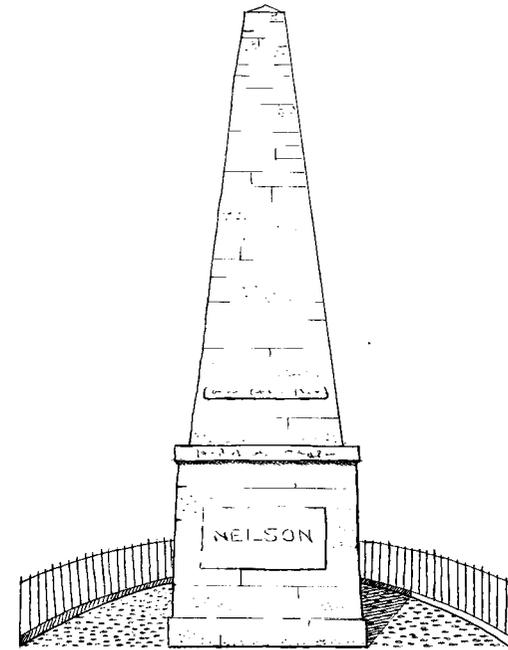
**The Post Office is now providing its
Monday and Thursday service from 8 – 10.00am.**

SWARLAND VILLAGE WORKING MEN'S CLUB

Tel. 01670 787 825

Swarland Club is pleased to sponsor *The Column*.

The Column



April 2022

Produced by
**Swarland Village Action
Newsletter 118**

**Green Issues: our parish seeks to
manage climate change through SNAC.**

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 June issue, please supply it for inclusion by Thursday 26th May. 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 arrange printing 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 **27th April, 25th May and 22nd June**.

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 .

Support for Newton on the Moor and Swarland Residents

NOT JUST COVID!

Support is still available from the residents in the Parish who volunteered to help out their neighbours 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 over 450 houses, and many are elderly and / or living alone. Volunteers are there to help you 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 where possible.

If you need help, email (if possible) janandersonpc@gmail.com or phone 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 is still running a very 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.

*** Of General Interest**

Two eight-week-old Springer Spaniels were stolen overnight from premises near Alnwick. They were in outside kennels and were microchipped. The police wish to reassure the public that reports of dog thefts in the Northumbria Police area are rare. However, it is important to be remember that pets should be kept in a secure area overnight.

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 , 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 held a successful open evening on Monday 7th March in Swarland Village Hall to talk about the potential full fibre network build in the Swarland area. It was explained that Alncom needed approximately 90 homes to apply for vouchers through the Government's Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme. Provided they get the take-up, Alncom will build a full fibre FTTP (Fibre To The Premises) broadband network which will supply the villages with Ultrafast connections. Swarland currently has FTTC (Fibre to the Cabinet) which is connected to houses via copper wire.

The Government vouchers, when combined, will mean that all recipients will be connected free of charge and will also get a new fibre router. Alncom is offering two starter packages for voucher recipients: 85Mbps for £25 and 125Mbps for £30 per month. Both payments include VAT and are for unlimited data download. Faster speeds are available.

One great feature of opting for Alncom broadband is that there's no need to maintain a landline to make it work (but you can keep it if you want to). To register, please go to www.alncom.co.uk and follow the procedure.

Thank you, **John Parker, Head of Community Engagement, The Alncom Group. Tel: 01665 604 816, Mob: 07725 998 307, Email: john.parker@alncom.co.uk ,website: www.alncom.co.uk .**

NOT JUST COVID! Update

Over the past year, we have had many requests for help collecting prescriptions and getting food in for residents, and even now one or two requests come in each month. I know for a lot of people, just knowing there were volunteers there who would help if needed, provided a lot of reassurance.

Then late last year we were hit with Storm Arwen, closely followed by other storms which left the parish without power, and blocked roads and caused lots of other problems and help was needed again by some residents. So, I wanted to put it to you all now, that this group should continue to exist. In addition, that we continue to provide support when needed, and that we could perhaps consider widening our role?

I appreciate that two years have passed since this group was set up and our lives and responsibilities have in many cases changed. **If you now feel that you can no longer continue as a Volunteer, please just let me know and I will remove you from the contact list. Please also let me know if you have any ideas for the role of the group in the future.**

Best wishes, Jan Anderson, Clerk to NotM & S PC. (07775 060 430)

Swarland Village Hall

The Hall, which is run as a community facility, is available for hire and is now largely free of Government Covid-19 restrictions. **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 (steve woolfrey.PC@outlook.com or 01670 787 883).

Archery Practice: Monday (indoors), 7pm. To recommence in October. For information on outdoor sessions held throughout the summer contact **Steve** on Family.Woolfrey@outlook.com or **01670 787 883**. The Club can supply all equipment.

Crafty Friends: meet on 4th Saturday morning of each month. For more information contact Anne on **07934 425 844**.

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

Qi Gong (Chinese Energy Exercise) Class: 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: Wednesdays, 1.30 – 3.30pm. The Craft Group is happy to welcome new members again; all enquiries to: **Margaret on 01670 787 705**.

Swarland Carpet Bowls: Thursdays, 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: Thursdays, 9.30-10.30am. To join in contact sandyturnbull6@gmail.com . Possible Monday class soon as well.

NotM & Swarland Parish Council - September 2021

Planning

By the time The Column is published, the County Council will have (at last!) adopted its new local plan, the compilation of which began in 2009, following the merger of the county with the district councils. The new plan is a lengthy read of 400 pages. We are pleased that the plan has designated firm 'settlement boundaries' for both Swarland and Newton, together with comforting words about the protection of the 'open countryside'. However, there are also ambiguities and contradictions within and between some of the policies, which could enable developers to argue the case for new developments (whether beneficial or detrimental) in the countryside. The 'Northumberland Local Plan, 2016-2036', with its Policies Map (showing the settlement boundaries) can be viewed and downloaded from the NCC website.

Percy Wood caravan proposal

In the past 30-odd years, use of the Percy Wood site has grown exponentially from an original 15 touring caravan pitches to over 400 permanent pitches. This same period saw the conversion of the adjacent farmland to a golf club. In recent times, these two separate businesses have come under the same ownership. In 2019 the latest owners (Harrison Leisure) lodged a planning application for a further 60 Holiday-let pitches to expand out of the caravan site area into the golf course, on the former golf driving-range land immediately adjacent to Swarland's built-up area, behind the Village Hall. The Parish Council (PC) and some 87 residents made objections. The planning officer prepared a report, recommending that the application be approved (most planning applications nowadays are determined by officers, rather than by councillors). However, in this instance it was agreed that the NCC North Area Committee would determine it at its meeting on 23rd March. Jackie Stent (on behalf of the individual objectors) and Suzanne Stanley (on behalf of the PC) were able to make brief but punchy presentations to the meeting. Harvey Emms of Nathaniel Lichfield Planning Consultants spoke on behalf of the applicants.

The planning staff did a creditable job of supporting the proposal and giving a less-than-complete picture of the policies in the new Local Plan. Thankfully, a number of local County Councillors, led by Trevor Thorne, cast serious doubts on the merits of the proposal, citing concerns about the integrity of the settlement boundary, the risk of further expansion into the golf course, poor drainage, disturbance to local residents, poor design, and a range of other matters. Following a lengthy Q & A session and discussion, the matter was put to the vote and the application was rejected (7 against and 2 abstentions).

Our thanks to Jackie, Suzanne and Trevor, and also to NCC members Steven Bridgett, Georgie Hill and Martin Swinbank, who contributed significantly to the outcome.

[Cont overleaf]

[PC Update cont]

Road safety

We were pleased to see that the installation of the road safety measures at Swarland School are progressing and that 40mph signs have been introduced all along Leamington Lane. Meanwhile, NCC officers are still pursuing the issue of the state of Swarland's back-roads. As we have previously reported, few of these roads are 'adopted' as highways maintainable at public expense. However, they are owned by NCC, they have been dedicated as public highways and some parts were brought up to an adoptable standard in the 1990s (but have since been neglected), and most sections are now in a lamentable condition. In 2006, NCC resolved to improve and then adopt each section of the road in phases, to be funded from its Highways budget, but there is no sign that this has ever been implemented.

Community litter-pick



Thanks to those who helped with the annual litter pick on Sunday 20th March, which was co-ordinated by Greg Anderson, with help from Rob Brotherton and his tractor.

We had a good haul on the day even though one resident in particular regularly does her own clean-up around Swarland.

**PC Clerk, Jan Anderson janandersonpc@gmail.com or 07775 060 430.
PC website: newtononthemoorandswarlandparishcouncil.org.uk .**

Newton on the Moor Jubilee Hall – Easter Coffee Morning

Do come & join us on **Saturday 9th April**, from 10.00 to noon, when we shall be offering coffee, cakes and an Easter raffle. We are now able to offer gluten-free cakes to those who need them. As usual there will be plenty of cakes to take home with you after the event.

The next Coffee Morning will be on Saturday 14th May. All are welcome.

Alison Gallico

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.



Nancy Smith 1930 – 2022

Many people in our local area have been saddened to learn of the death of Nancy, who died on 1st February at the age of ninety-one.

As Nancy Wheatley, she grew up in Swarland, moving here with her parents, who were Settlers, and her younger brother, first to a flat in what remained of the Hall, and then – on her sixth birthday – into the newly built, pink washed house on Park Road, which was to be her home for the rest of her life.

Although Nancy had been in a care home during the last three years, she was always interested in what was going on in the village where for so long she had been a well-known member of the community.

She attended the local school, walking to Newton on the Moor each day until the new School was built at the cross-roads in 1937. In 1941, she 'passed the Scholarship' examination and subsequently attended the Duchess's County Grammar School for Girls.

On leaving school, Nancy entered the Civil Service, and worked in the Inland Revenue offices in Alnwick and Morpeth, where she remained after her marriage to Robert Smith until she had her family of two sons. A few years later, she attended the Teacher Training College in Alnwick Castle, and on qualifying she began work at Felton School and remained there until her retirement.

Music was a big part of Nancy's life, from her teenage years when she played the harmonium for Sunday evening services in the still standing chapel at Swarland Hall, to the decades during which she was the organist at Felton Parish Church.

She was also an active participant in the Swarland pantomime, where her role as the Fairy was legendary.

Nancy had a great sense of humour, and was very popular in her wide circle of friends. She could remember people and events from throughout her long life, and as an avid 'crossword puzzler', did her best to preserve her memory.

She also had a deep Christian faith, which sustained her through the many darker times which she faced during her life.

We will miss her . . . and the village has lost a great and well-respected character.

**Deadline for items for the June issue of
The Column: Thursday 26th May 2022.**



'Rewilding' your garden

Why the inverted commas? Because 'rewilding' and 'biodiversity' are fast becoming words that cause people to sigh heavily and roll their eyes. And in any case, how wild can we be in our increasingly suburban villages? However, there's no doubt that species numbers are declining dramatically. For example, up to 10 years ago, our garden was daily full of hoverflies and ladybirds in mid-summer; now we're lucky if we see half a dozen in a week. So, the more we can do to help increase the populations of insects, birds, mammals, worms and other creatures of the soil, plants and fungi, the better – we're interdependent. One of the priorities of Swarland and NotM Against Climate Change (SNAC) is to encourage some rewilding of our gardens, so here are a few suggestions:

Go a bit wild with your lawn. Lawns are one of the biggest features of many gardens, but if they're kept very short, they're of little value to wildlife. Can you find a patch that you're willing to leave uncut, especially during May, June and July? If you live in an older property, you're likely to find Early Purple Orchids, Self-heal, Cowslips, Bird's-foot Trefoil and Loosestrife appearing along with the buttercups, daisies and clover. But even in a newly turfed garden, you can sow plug plants of native wildflowers – see suppliers such as Naturescape.

Just add water. If you don't already have a pond or a naturally wet area, you can find plenty of advice online to help you create even very small ponds that will encourage frogs and toads to spawn, newts and dragonflies to breed, and provide a swimming pool and hatchery for pond insects such as whirligig beetles and skaters.

Try not to dismiss plants as just weeds! They have a role to play as part of our natural flora that has evolved over millennia. Thus, Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell, Painted Lady and Comma butterflies need nettles to lay their eggs and feed the caterpillars, while the Orange Tip needs Garlic mustard, Lady's Smock and Honesty. Granted, you'll think twice about letting brambles or dandelions take over, but do think twice before hoicking out all 'weeds'.

Location, location. Success means the right plant in the right place. Meadow flowers need poor soil and plenty of sun, whereas those of us who have trees (such as Swarland's protected tree belt) can add insect-friendly (and therefore bird-friendly) shade-lovers: White and Red Deadnettle, Primrose, Campion, Foxglove, Violet, and Snowdrop, and cultivated plants such as Hostas.

Let it rot. Decaying matter, from leaves to fallen tree trunks, is vital to allow fungi (nature's recyclers) and insects to flourish, and also eventually returns goodness to your soil. Nothing is wasted, and little piles of small branches, twigs and dead leaves create hibernation facilities for hedgehogs and toads.

Get involved in SNAC so that as many of us as possible work to achieve our projects. See the new website for details: www.snac.online.

Read all about it: One of the most comprehensive and readable books on the subject is *Wildlife gardening* by Chris Baines, 2016. And visit the Wild About Gardens website – a joint venture between the RHS and the Wildlife Trusts.

Suzanne Stanley on behalf of SNAC

Swarland Moor Local Heritage Group

It has been a slow start to 2022 for the group, as unfortunately due to Covid-19 both the February and March meetings were cancelled. Both talks, Chillingham Wild Cattle and Lindisfarne Castle renovations, will be rearranged next season.

On the **12th April Eleanor George** will be giving a talk on **the Smith family of Thirston House in West Thirston**, which I am sure will be both interesting and informative. The meeting will take place at Swarland Club at 7.30.

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

Coquet Concert Band



The Coquet Valley's own concert band is getting back to rehearsing this year's programme of challenging and varied music, following successful concerts in Felton, Rothbury and Acklington towards the end of 2021. The diary for 2022 is beginning to fill up so look out for one of our performances near you. Better still, be part of the music making!

If you play a brass or woodwind instrument to Grade 5 standard or above, why not come and join us on a Wednesday evening in Swarland Village Hall.

Contact us via email coquetconcertband@gmail.com or via our Facebook page.

Newton on the Moor Carpet Bowls Club

The Club meets on Tuesday evenings in the Jubilee Hall and would welcome new members. We have members' evenings and occasional matches. No experience necessary and coaching is available. Contact **John Cowen** on **07717 700 011** for more information.

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Hedgehogs and Springtime

It's that time of year when one of our garden friends awakes from its slumbers and begins the season by putting on some weight and looking for a mate. I'm talking about the humble Hedgehog. Cute and adorable, hedgehogs provide an invaluable service to our local landscape by keeping a check on numerous bugs and critters such as slugs.

As a volunteer at our local Northumbrian Hedgehog Rescue Centre at Longframlington, I've unfortunately witnessed some of the horrific injuries that these helpful little creatures sustain during their daily lives. So, can I reach out to everyone with a garden, of whatever size, to **GIVE HOGS SOME ROOM!** They don't ask for much, but have asked me to pass on a few reminders to help them:

To allow them to wander freely, gaps or holes (the size of a DVD) provided at ground level in solid fences would be great.

Unkempt corners of the garden are a favourite hide-away.

Log piles are helpful "service stations" providing shelter and a bite to eat.

If you have any building work where holes are dug and they are left over night, please cover them, or if that can't be done, lay a board as a ramp into the hole to facilitate an exit route.

And finally, if you have a STRIMMER, please use it with care, and avoid strimming long grass as you can't see what may be hidden. Lacerations from these devices cause deep cuts, loss of limbs and numerous other injuries, most of which are fatal!

More in-depth information can be obtained at The Rescue Centre's own website: the Northumbrian Hedgehog Rescue Trust at <https://www.hedgehogs-northumbria.org.uk>.

And lastly, THANK-YOU for helping our prickly friends.

Mick Tarry

Swarland Book Club

meets the second Friday of the month, 7.30pm at the Swarland Club. All are welcome.

If you are interested in finding out more, there is a Facebook page – Swarland Book Club, or contact Philippa Martin on 07968 230 848 or broadyards@btinternet.com for more information.



Felton Surgery News

Our telephone line (01670 787 353) is open Monday – Friday 08.30 – 18.00 (closed 1pm to 2pm).

Due to higher-than-normal call volumes to the surgery, it may take longer than normal for your call to be answered. You will be advised of your position in the queue. Please note the surgery building remains open for the collection of medication from the dispensary. It is open. Monday - Friday 08.30 – 13.00 / 14.00-18.00.

Ordering Repeat Medication

Please, wherever possible, order your repeat medications online through the NHS App. Owned and run by the NHS, the NHS App is a simple and secure way to access a range of NHS services on your smartphone or tablet. The NHS App is available now on iOS and Android. If you wish to order prescriptions by phone, please note this service is only available Monday to Friday, 11am till 1pm and 2pm till 3pm. -

Covid Booster Vaccinations – Update

Felton Surgery is now part of Northumberland Health in partnership with the Widdrington practice. Covid-19 vaccinations are now available for its patients at the Amble vaccination hub on 5th, 12th and 26th April as part of the Well Up North Primary Care Network. To book an appointment, please contact 01670 570187.

Felton Surgery Patient Participation Group

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.

Looking after your trees

Just a reminder that if you have trees in your garden, particularly along the public highway or close to property, it's important to have them inspected regularly to make sure they're healthy and stable (though Storm Arwen wrecked them anyway).

The tree belts along The Avenue and Leamington Lane are covered by a Woodland Tree Order which aims to protect not just the trees but the natural woodland flora and shrubs beneath them. If you own part of the tree belt, remember that you need to submit a planning application to do all but routine management such as clearing excess brambles or invasive plants such as ground elder.

NotM&S Parish Council

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