

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 25th May 2023.**

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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 Village Action**

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from 8.00 to 10am every day**

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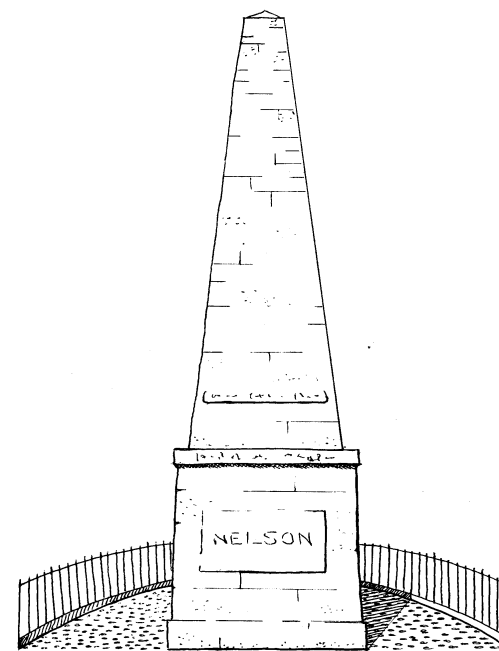
SWARLAND VILLAGE WORKING MEN'S CLUB

Tel. 01670 787 825

Swarland Club is pleased to support *The Column*.

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The Column



April 2023

Produced by

Swarland Village Action

Newsletter 124

**See the latest news on the plans for the new
Doctor's Surgery in Felton**

Welcome to this 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 by Thursday 25th May 2023. Send it to: The Editor, Bryan Stanley, on 01670 787 916 or by email at maxitoby1@gmail.com .**

Swarland Village Hall

The Hall, which is run as a community facility, is available for hire. **Please support this local amenity.** If you wish to check on whether you can book the Hall for a future event, please contact Bryan Stanley (contact details elsewhere in this issue) or Steve Woolfrey (stevewoolfrey.pc@outlook.com or 01670 787 883). **Please note that activities are now back to normal after the Hall's refurbishment.**

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

Bootcamp: meets on Tuesdays 5.30 – 6.30pm till weather improves. Hopefully outside again now. Contact Jo on 07803 272785 for details.

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. Temporarily on hold. 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. New members are welcome. All enquiries to: **Margaret on 01670 787 705**.

Swarland Carpet Bowls: Thursdays, 7pm. August to end of March. New members are always welcome. If you would like to give it a try, contact **Malcolm or Joan Nesbit on 01670 783 140**.

The Swarland Village Hall team is looking for a new Treasurer. If you would like to know more, please contact Steve on 01670 787883 or Family.Woolfrey@outlook.com , or Malcolm on 01670 783140 or geordie1243@gmail.com .

Neighbourhood Watch Update – September 2022

Swarland / Newton on the Moor:

As of today (16/03/23), I have not received information from the police of any criminal activity in our area.

However, you might be interested in the following regarding electric scooters (E-scooters). These are becoming more popular and it is important that everyone is aware of the legal requirements associated with them. E-scooters are classified as Personal Light Electric Vehicles, and as such they are treated as motor vehicles and are therefore subject to the same legal requirements as other motor vehicles - viz:- they are subject to **MOT test, licensing and insurance**. Unless these requirements are met, it is illegal to use them on our region's public roads and footpaths.

Guidance was issued stating that rental companies could soon make the vehicles available to the public, in conjunction with local councils. **HOWEVER**, the use of privately bought E-scooters on the road, cycle lanes, tracks and pavements, remains **illegal**.

The police say that they do not wish for anyone to fall foul of the law, so please make sure you are aware of the rules concerning E-scooters.

Of General Interest

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. 07713 097 250

Support for Newton on the Moor & Swarland Residents

This is just a reminder that support is always there from the 45 residents in the Parish who first volunteered to help out their neighbours during the Coronavirus Emergency.

The sort of support the volunteers can provide is as follows;

- Phone calls to check you are well and not needing help.
- Phone calls for a chat.
- Collection of prescriptions.
- Collection/delivery of food.

If you need help, email (if possible) janandersonpc@gmail.com or telephone 07775 060430 preferably during office hours.

Best wishes, Jan Anderson (Parish Clerk)

**Deadline for items for the June issue of
The Column: Thursday 25th May 2023.**



Jubilee Hall Newton on the Moor

On **28th January** Colin Gough gave a super talk at the Hall on 'Newton Notables'. The event was a huge success and also included soup and a roll after the talk. We hope to hold some similar events/talks in the future.

Our coffee morning on **11th February** included the ever-popular bacon and sausage butties and along with our scones and bakes it was once again greatly supported. A big thank you to everyone who attended.

Our next event will be our **Easter Coffee Morning on Saturday 8th April** which will obviously have an Easter theme and there will be a raffle. Please come along and enjoy the warm and friendly atmosphere. Following on from that we shall be holding our next coffee morning on **Saturday 13th May**.

We have some summer music events in the pipeline which will include a free concert with Alnwick Pipers and Guests (donations to the Hall welcome), plus Songs and Strings evening for **Midsummer 22nd June** – TBC. Watch this space for further details.

To keep up to date with our events or book the Hall, you can access our website via the going to the following address and then click on the Jubilee Hall icon - <https://northumberlandvillagehalls.org.uk/> . You can also use this site to research other village halls across the county and see what they have going on.

Diane Williams

Swarland Moor Local Heritage Group

We began 2023 with a talk from Sue Rogers on The Evolution of the Rights of Way Network and how missing routes can be found & retrieved for future use. Sue provided information on what clues to look for in the landscape, though did comment that getting some of these ancient rights of way recognised can take many years, so patience is needed.

This was followed by Phil Huntley who presented a summary of his research on the history of New Moor House. He talked about the Roman roads, the droving routes, coaching Inns, and the Corn Road from Hexham to Alnmouth.

The next meeting is **Tuesday 11th April** when Neil Storey will talk about **Northumberland in the Great War**. Neil is a social historian specialising in the study of the impact of war on British society in the first half of the 20th century.

On the **9th May** the group will be joined by Chris Hunwick who will talk to us about the **Archives of the Duke of Northumberland at Alnwick Castle**. Chris has been the Duke of Northumberland's archivist for many years.

We meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm at Swarland Village Club. If you enjoy history and heritage topics or are new to the village, please come along and join us, either as a guest or becoming a member, you will be very welcome. Further information can be found on our Facebook page or by emailing swarlandmlhg@gmail.com .

Lesley Selfe

NotM & Swarland Parish Council - March 2023

Swarland Woods: Storm Arwen Recovery work late 2023

Across Northumberland since 26th November 2021, Forestry England and its contractors has been working through its many forests to recover the woodlands and ensure safe public access. Swarland Wood is now on the list for recovery work to be undertaken this autumn. This work will include removing fallen trees and clearing conifers from one area, and in another area thinning the coniferous trees to allow the forest to become more stable and resilient for the future.

This work would normally done on a 40 to 80-year cycle across the woodland, but the storm has accelerated the speed of change in some areas, with the need for this to be carried out now. Detailed plans are still being put together. The work will start, at the earliest, in September and it is hoped that it will be on weekdays only, permitting access to the woods on the forest road at weekends. Once plans are finalised, the Parish Council will organise an open meeting, probably in June, with Forestry England which is keen to work with residents on this project. There will inevitably be disruption for forest access during the works to ensure safe working conditions, but this will also be an exciting opportunity for the local community to be involved in replanting and documenting the changes over the coming years and to take the opportunity to improve the visitor experience, one idea being to create a dark sky viewing location.

The last set of forestry works took place in Swarland Wood around 2014, felling trees for timber production, which is a key part of woodland management. Ground disturbance during work in the crop will result in increased wildflowers and ground vegetation, and vistas which have been unseen for many decades will be opened up. So, watch out over the coming months for further details!

Neighbourhood Plan

Following our articles in the last 2 editions of The Column, several people have volunteered to join a group along with some PC members, to manage the compilation of a Neighbourhood Plan. At our March meeting, the PC formally agreed to declare our parish as a Neighbourhood Plan area, and to notify NCC accordingly. This will open the door to advice from NCC planning experts, as well as to some Government funding which is administered via the charity Locality. The NP group will prepare and carry out a community engagement strategy, to seek views both on the prospective scope of the NP, as well as on the detail of policies which may be appropriate.

The NP has to be compatible with the policies in the Northumberland Local Plan, but there is potential to make more detailed provisions about future developments in, or the protection of, the villages and the open countryside in our parish. NPs have already been adopted, or are being prepared, in communities close to us including Longframlington, Alnwick / Denwick, and Felton. Nothing is ruled in or out at the moment, although the NP's drafting will need to distinguish between policies and actions which are legitimate 'planning matters', and those opportunities which will need to be pursued other than through the statutory planning process.

We hope that further details of the NP group and its programme of work will be available soon.

[pto]

[PC cont]

Road Safety

We were surprised to discover the installation of some NCC speed-measuring equipment opposite the Cook and Barker in Newton, for two reasons. It had already been agreed that the priority siting would be on the Avenue in Swarland, to determine what, if any, further traffic calming measures may be merited, following the completion of the road safety scheme at the School. Also, from past experience, there is no particular speeding problem on the old A1 in front of the Cook, and NCC had previously promised to consult us over the appropriate siting of their equipment in future.

PC Clerk, Jan Anderson - janandersonpc@gmail.com or 07775 060 430.

PC website: newtononthemoorandswarlandparishcouncil.org.uk.

Take action! No Mow May and beyond

Two shocking facts about the loss of wildlife in the UK:

1) We've lost **97%** of our wild flower meadows and pastures since the 1930s.

2) We are the most nature- and tree-depleted country in Europe.

How shameful and embarrassing is that! Since moving to Swarland 30 years ago, we've kept records of bird sightings and insects in our garden, which show that not only the varieties, but also the numbers (except goldfinches!) have dramatically decreased, despite our garden being much richer in native and other plant species than it was. And what has happened to the Cuckoos and Grasshopper Warblers we heard every year in Swarland Woods?

But we can all help. The charity Plantlife says "simply allowing our lawns to grow through May has the potential to provide major sources of nectar for plant pollinators and to support other wildlife" (remember insects are food for many birds). Find bits of your grassy areas that you're happy to leave undisturbed throughout May (and hopefully beyond) to let varied grasses and wild flowers grow. The RHS suggests also trying different grass lengths to create varied habitats and says "Hold back the weedkiller and fertiliser . . . bringing your lawn to life!". **Reframe your view of 'weeds'** – they're our native wild flowers that have evolved alongside our birds and insects in a mutually supportive relationship. Dandelions, however much you recoil from them on your patch, are a vital early pollen source for bees. Don't worry about your garden being 'tidy' – that can mean 'sterile'. If you find no mowing still limits you to daisies and buttercups, but you've really got excited about it, there are good online companies that sell wildflower plug plants or better still, specialist local nurseries such as Gardener's Cottage Plants.

Taken together, our Parish has a lot of garden, land that was once natural habitat, home to populations of birds, insects, worms, small mammals and a varied plant population - until the bulldozers arrived. **Let's give some of it back when it most matters.** And two further top tips: **Just Add Water** (even a tiny pond brings benefits), and **Hedges not Fences** wherever possible: they provide food, shelter, nesting sites and are wildlife corridors. Enjoy your hospitable garden.

Suzanne Stanley, SNAC

News from Swarland and Newton Action on Climate (SNAC)

Thanks to everyone who entered our photography competition. Congratulations go to Rob Simpson for the winning photo which you can see on our home page at **www.snac.online**. We've also created an online gallery to show off some of the other entries.

You can now find *Swarland and Newton Action on Climate* on Facebook too, so please do 'follow us' for the latest information and news about talks, walks and other events.

At our March meeting, we welcomed Alex McLennan from Forestry England (FE). Alex came to give us some early information about FE's Storm Arwen Recovery Plan for Swarland Wood. We're hoping that SNAC will be able to work with FE to record the changes in biodiversity once the work has been done. You can find more information about FE's plans in the article from the Parish Council elsewhere in this edition of The Column.

Together with FE, we're planning a guided walk in Swarland Wood on Wednesday 31st May. Further details will be available soon on the SNAC website and on Facebook.

We are still waiting for confirmation about the funding for the new bus service. NCC remains confident that the money will be awarded and that we can then get the service up and running.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 18th April at 7pm at Swarland Club – everyone is welcome to come along. You can find out more about SNAC at **www.snac.online** or by emailing **talktosnac@gmail.com** .

Liz Clark (on behalf of SNAC)



Acklington Women's Institute

Could you be interested in joining the WI,
it's got lots to offer you.

Acklington WI meets every second Tuesday at 7.15pm in
Acklington Village Hall.

Just come along to the next meeting on Tuesday 11th April or give
Jan Anderson a call or email on 07775 060430 or
janandersonpc@gmail.com .

11th April - Talk 'Something to declare'
9th May Talk 'The importance of trees to the environment'
13th June - Garden Party event.

And it's 'extra sticky'

We all know we should be avoiding single use plastics, but we're often in the hands of the manufacturers. It's so good therefore to find that Sellotape is now entirely made with plant-based materials, has **no** plastic and is apparently extra sticky. What's more, it comes in a simple cardboard box without a plastic window. They claim that the tape (cellulose) can be composted, (though possibly not in a domestic compost heap which doesn't get hot enough).

Hopefully brown packing tape will soon go through the same way, not to mention the heavy-duty plastic packaging that most online clothing orders are sent in. Could we all go back to brown paper and string?

Suzanne Stanley,SNAC

Do you fancy something to do outside on a Thursday afternoon?

This year the outdoor bowls will be recommencing on Thursday 13th April, between 1.30pm and 3pm. The all-weather surface bowling green is at the rear of Nelson's in The Park, Swarland.

Bowling is a good way to add a bit of fitness into your week without even realising you are exercising. You will bend to bowl, walk to the other side of the green to see how well you did, bend again to retrieve your bowls and then start over again. In the couple of hours or so we are normally there, you can expect to play 10 or 12 ends, have a natter and a laugh, make new friends and then finish it all off with a drink from Nelson's for those that wish to stay.

We are not particularly competitive, but it is always a good feeling when you win an end, however, we don't encourage goal-scoring type celebrations.

You won't need to buy any equipment as the club has plenty of bowls for use during the sessions. We encourage both males and females of whatever age, (but toddlers seem to have a bit of trouble lifting and holding the bowls). You don't need to have done bowling before - we will welcome you when you arrive, tell you the rules and teach you how to bowl, the rest is just down to you and practice. Few of the regulars are experts; on a good day we can be reasonable, on a poor day we can be awful, but we always have fun and a laugh. The Vyner Park Committee asks for a voluntary contribution from each player each week; we have agreed on £2 per adult.

So please, come and join us on a Thursday to see if you like the game and us, you never know, you may become one of the experts.

Either just turn up on any **Thursday from 13th April** or for more details contact John Richardson at the morning paper shop in the Club, or Roger Brunning on 07790 800269.

We hope to see you there.

News from Felton Surgery Patient Participation Group

There was a good response to the new surgery consultation event on January 31st. 115 responses to the survey were received.

You can continue to give feedback to the developer and the GPs by using the feedback button on <https://www.feltonsurgerygpbuild.com/> or, via paper forms from the surgery reception or, by emailing the developer on hello@assura.co.uk.

It is anticipated that a planning application will be submitted in March, giving you a further opportunity to comment directly to the Northumberland County Council Planning department.

Plans for Felton do not affect the service at the Widdrington Surgery which continues to operate as usual. Future plans for renovations and improvements at the Widdrington Surgery premises will be announced in due course.

Due to a staff shortage, there are currently no reception staff at Felton. Please continue to phone 01670 787 353 to contact reception / book appointments.

Staff and Clinics at Felton are as follows:

	Medicine Dispensary	GP face to face clinics	Health care Assistant	Practice Nurse
Monday	08.30 – 16.30	All day	Morning	-
Tuesday	10.30 – 18.00	-	-	-
Wednesday	08.30 – 17.00	Until 13.00	-	-
Thursday	08.30 – 16.30	-	-	18.30 – 20.00 once a month
Friday	10.00 – 18.00	Until 13.00	-	-

From March on, the Practice Nurse will be running further specialised clinics.

A full range of services are available at the Widdrington surgery Monday to Friday.

Restricted sample bottle collections means that samples must be handed in at the Felton surgery on Tuesdays before 11am or Fridays before 11am. The practice is investigating the expansion of this service. Samples may be handed in at Widdrington at other times.

Follow us on northumberland.health@nhs.net and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100083005406969

On behalf of the Felton Surgery Patient Participation Group.

**Deadline for items for the June issue of
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Lower Coquetdale Red Squirrels

It is thrilling to be able to report the continued presence of Red Squirrels in Swarland Wood, where there are a small number consistently visiting feeders. Dog walkers in the wood have been excited to report sightings of Red Squirrels very recently. Unfortunately, Swarland Wood along with most other places has been flooded with a wave of Grey Squirrels, which is not unusual for this time of year. Grey Squirrels carry Squirrel Pox which does not affect them, but is rapidly fatal to Reds. This time last year several Red Squirrels in Swarland Wood died from this disease.

Shockingly, we suffered the theft of two of our cameras from Swarland Wood. The cameras help us monitor the feeders, aiding in identification of Red or Grey Squirrel visitors to the feeders. Amazingly, Alcom, which has been doing local broadband work in the village, picked up on this and generously donated two replacement cameras, together with SD cards and some squirrel food, which was very gratefully received.

Some large areas of Swarland Wood, which is owned by Forestry England, are due for "clear felling" this summer. We will be following the plans for this closely in order to make sure that the endangered Red Squirrels are fully protected.

We rely on the eyes of walkers, dog walkers, cyclists, horse riders and local residents to keep us up to date with sightings of both Red and Grey Squirrels. Sightings can be reported using the "Report a Sighting" button on our website at lcreds.org.uk.

Wendy Fergie, for LCRS

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 12th April, **10th May** and **7th June**.

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

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.



Percy Wood Caravan Park – the final update?

As many of you know already, the appeal by Harrison Leisure to site caravans on the driving range was dismissed by the Inspectorate in February – the Inspector's report was comprehensive and gave several reasons for the dismissal. It was a victory for Swarland residents and we would like to thank everyone for their support throughout the whole process.

Two days later Harrison Leisure withdrew their planning application for park homes on the former Clubhouse site on Coast View – the timing was interesting

There is a further update however. We have now been reliably informed that HL is to clear away trees and site 40 caravans where the trees are now – this is on the left-hand side of the path between the golf course and the driving range, going up in the direction of the caravan park, the trees border the edge of the golf course – we believe the trees on the right-hand side have a Tree Preservation Order so they cannot be cleared. Obviously the land belongs to them and it is on their site, not quite so close to the village boundary. I have contacted NCC Planning to check and they emailed me to say they will look into it and get back to me.

At the weekend we had a visit from a representative of Arrowbuild, the company who is to build the 9 houses in the field at the end of the Springwood. They have now met all the planning conditions set out by NCC and have been given full planning permission, so they hope to start the building process within a few months. Arrowbuild is intending to hold a meeting with residents before they begin so that they can answer any queries/questions we may have.

Jackie and Richard Stent

**Deadline for items for the June issue of
The Column: Thursday 25th May 2023.**

17th Century Nun's Prayer – or a warning against social media

"Lord thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older and will some day be old. Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every occasion.

Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody: helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom it seems a pity not to use it all, but thou knowest Lord that I want a few friends at the end."

And there's more; - find it and read it.

