

# the Village Voice

Issue No 12, Volume 24

Lanchester, December 2024

## Nearly 200 entries for the Village Voice art competition



**WINNER of the Secondary School category: Evie Garside (age 13)**

**WINNER of the year 4 - 6, category: Imogen M (Year 5)**



**WINNER of the year 3 and below category: Sophie M (age 8)**



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# HIGHLY COMMENDED



Sienna V - 9 years old



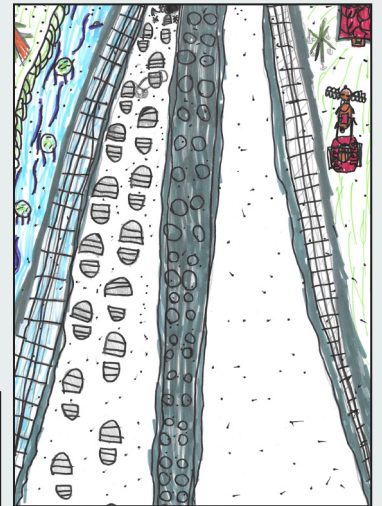
Isaac S



Elliot - 8 years old



Jacob G - 8 years old



Phoebe T - Year 4



Alexa T - 8 years old



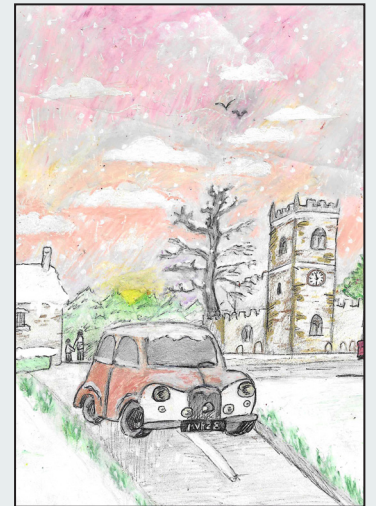
Willow B - year 1



Ella Earnden - age 12



Caitlin Livermore - age 12



Agata Kowalska - age 13



Niamh G - age 11



Lilly M - year 7



Matilda R - Year 5



Jake F - Year 5



James McN - Year 5



Emily S - Year 5



Daniel S - Year 5



Travis H - Year 5

## Nearly 200 entries for the Village Voice art competition

The art competition, launched in the October edition of the Village Voice, received nearly 200 entries. The competition was for school age pupils and the subject was "Winter in the Village". Originally there were to be two prizes, one for children up to and including year 6 and the other for secondary school students. However, the judges decided that the age range was so wide in the younger category that there would be two prizes awarded.

So there is now one prize for pupils up to and including year 3 and another for years 4,5 and 6.

The quality of the work submitted was incredibly high and the judges found it very difficult to identify the winners but after much deliberation have awarded the prizes to:

- **Up to and including year 3 - Sophie Moore**
- **Years 4,5 and 6 - Imogen (Year 5)**
- **Secondary school - Evie Garside (age 13)**

On these pages we show the breadth of work submitted which we're sure you will agree is a great reflection on the young people of the village and their teachers.

*The Editors.*

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## Christmas Lights Switch On

A heavy morning snowfall - a gift from Storm Bert - provided an extra seasonal touch to the Christmas Lights switch on.

As did a procession of around a dozen festively festooned tractors from the Lanchester Vintage Tractor Club.

The event on the village green, organised by Lanchester Parish Council, is now very much an established part of the village calendar, and was attended by a healthy audience including children from All Saints C of E church who came straight to the green from a Christingle service.

Older attendees gratefully sipped mulled wine and munched on mince pies, again provided by the parish council.

Following music from the Lanchester Brass Band and singing from the Choral Society, at precisely 6pm on Saturday, November 23 the green was lit up to cheers from all.

Those granted the honour of pressing the switch this year were Mike and Jill Gladstone, long serving and hardworking members of Lanchester Partnership, plus chosen pupils from the two village junior schools.

By the following morning the snow had vanished, but the lights will continue to bring some festive cheer to the village well into January.

Neil McKay



Top right from left to right Benny, James, Keith Harrison, Jill Gladstone, Mike Gladstone, Betsy and Lucy. Benny and Lucy are from Lanchester All Saints' and James and Betsy are from Lanchester EP. Other photos from the event including the illuminated tractors; trailer with Santa (photo Doug Oliver) and a group dressed for Christmas!

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FIND US ON...



**HAPPY  
CHRISTMAS  
AND NEW  
YEAR**

to all of our readers.

Many thanks to the advertisers, contributors, letter writers, proof readers, deliverers and everybody who has made the Village Voice happen in 2024.

*The Village Voice  
Editorial Team*

## Remembrance service on the Green

The annual remembrance service took place on the Green on November 10th. It was extremely well attended, as always, on a fine day. The memorial and garden had been decorated with poppies prior to the event.

Lanchester Band was in attendance as well as clergy from all three village churches who, as well as conducting the service, read the names of all the fallen. The silence was observed immaculately, including by the bus driver at the bus stop. The band played The Last Post followed by Reveille.

Wreaths were placed by representatives of: the Lord Lieutenants, the armed forces, the Royal Army Medical Corps, Veterans' Association, the County Council, Lanchester Labour Party, Lanchester Independent Party, Parish Council, Lanchester Partnership, Churches Together, Boys' Brigade, Annfield Plain Scouts, Thursday Club, Red Cross, WI, and a number of individuals placed crosses.



Above: Lanchester Brass Band  
 Top right: Boys' Brigade in front of the memorial  
 Right: Annfield Plain scouts going up to lay their wreath  
 Far left: Lord Lieutenant's representative  
 Left: Memorial at the end of the service



## Bowling Club donation to Willow Burn

The Lanchester bowling club has once again made a substantial donation to our local Hospice.

Mr John Halsey, treasurer of the club handed the cheque for £328 to Paul Jackson, President of Willow Burn Hospice, this will help to provide nurse care to our patients and families.

**Paul Jackson**

Left: John Halsey (right) presents the cheque to Paul Jackson

## The Creation by Haydn

On 8th November, at Lanchester Methodist Church, a capacity audience experienced a performance of The Creation by Joseph Haydn, with Lanchester Choral Society under the baton of David Hughes.

Despite the difficulty of the oratorio, the choir showed evidence of very hard work, performing with the skill and confidence required of such musical magnitude.

A large percentage of this oratorio relies on the soloists, in this case: soprano, Elizabeth Woods, sounding and looking star-like in a silver gown; tenor, Andrew Fowler, performing with easy poise and admirable musical correctness; bass, Ian Gray, with commanding authority required of such a role.

Haydn's Creation gives us examples of many musical gems, and we were presented with some powerful, dramatic renditions of mighty choruses and refined solos throughout.

Haydn's depiction of Creation was well represented in the full choir and organ movements, such as the furious tempest with dramatic, atmospheric darkness, or a soprano solo where the creation of birds was depicted by delightful trills, admirably accompanied by sensitive interpretation on the organ. The wonderful orchestral parts were superbly presented by organist Paul Conroy, who supported the singers throughout.

David Hughes continues to show what "stickability" looks like, having created magical musical events for 52 years. His PowerPoint pictures accompanying each 'creation' were magical – just another aspect of his talents.

**Pam Bygate**





## Poppy's walks

Good day readers, and this walk took place on Remembrance Day, Monday, November 11 and started appropriately at the most impressively festooned War memorial on the village green.

I was given the rare privilege of being allowed on the regular Monday Walk which starts from the green in Lanchester

at 1pm every week.

There were about 18 humans and a well behaved labrador, whose conduct was so exemplary that I heard the male Human say it made me appear like a delinquent in comparison. I don't know what that word means but it did not sound like a compliment.

As you will know by now, I am Poppy, a Patterdale Terrier who enjoys sharing with you readers the walks I lead my Humans on.

To be fair, this one was led by Noel, our esteemed guide.

We crossed the road opposite the King's Head and walked along Station Road in convoy before turning left along the railway path in the direction of Malton.

There are always a lot of interesting scents and sounds to explore along that route, but I was kept on my lead because the pace was quite brisk. We turned off into Dora's Wood and walked along a path closest to the beck before rejoining the railway path by - in the case of the humans - ducking our head under a metal pipe and walking up some steps.

We diverted again along the river where the waters meet near the Malton picnic area and walked along the path. I was allowed off my lead to have a paddle in the river, but I am always careful not to get out of my depth as I have never managed the art of swimming.

At the end of the river path, we came to a road bridge which we crossed and walked towards the row of houses known as Malton.

We turned right and walked in front of them, then left at the end of the row and along a path which took us to a stile which I was able to slip under. This brought us to Malton nature reserve, a former colliery site reclaimed by nature.

As you would expect, there is an abundance of scents and paths to explore in the reserve, but when I am with the walking group, I am unable to wander too far off track.

At the end of the nature reserve, we cross another stile and turn left. This takes us on a narrow footpath which in turn leads us to yet another stile, which is again easily navigable. And we return to the railway path.

We turn left and head back in the direction of Lanchester, but not before another diversion along the riverbank at Malton. I manage another paddle in the River Browney before catching up with the group and heading back home. The walk took exactly 90 minutes, but I would have added at least another 15 minutes to it if I had not had to keep up with the group.

By the way, I overheard the humans talking about a Christmas lunch the group was planning at the King's Head after one of the December walks. It would appear I am not invited but all is not lost. I plan to sulk on the sofa wearing my most mournful hangdog look which rarely fails in shaming my Humans into bringing back a doggy bag. **Merry Christmas readers!**

## Thursday Club

At our last meeting we were treated to a delightful afternoon of song from the combined choirs of Lanchester EP School. Brought over by and conducted by their lovely choir mistress Janet Knighton.

The music was mostly very modern up to date songs that most of us hadn't heard - but we thoroughly enjoyed hearing them - and hearing them sung so well.

They closed their repertoire with a compilation of songs from the First and Second World War period - songs they felt we would be able to join in with. Which we could - we tried not to feel too old and ancient!

Once the children had had some refreshments and gone back to school, we finished our afternoon with a faith nibbles session as we got ourselves sorted out for our December Christmas meal and paid 2025 subs ready for the coming year.

What a lovely afternoon we had.

*The Thursday Club sends all good wishes for 2025 to all Village Voice readers. Olive Simpkins*



## From the House

I'd like to start this month's update with a thank you to those who attended my advice surgery in Lanchester. Thanks also to everyone that has introduced themselves when I have been out and about in the village. It is great getting to know you all.

In light of representations that I have received from residents, I have written an objection to the Greencroft Holiday Lodge planning application. I agree with the Parish Council that the application does

not fulfil the requirements of the County Durham Plan as there are no major tourism attractions located within walking distance of the site. Furthermore, the scale of the proposed development is not appropriate in an area determined to be of High Landscape Value. The proposals would cause significant damage to the character, identity and heritage of the area. The objection is now with the Council's Planning Committee.

In the wider constituency I have been focussing on visiting local schools such as Burnhope Primary whose pupils entered my first Christmas Card competition and produced fantastic winning entries. I will continue to make my way around North Durham schools; if you work in one of our schools and would like me to visit, please email me on the address below.

The Budget has consumed the work of the House of Commons, and the Government has had to make some very difficult decisions. I am pleased however that former mineworkers, including 630 North Durham residents, will rightfully receive money that has been kept from their pensions. I was also pleased to see a big boost to NHS spending.

I met with the Prime Minister recently and took the opportunity to raise issues such as anti-social behaviour and improving our town centres on behalf of North Durham. I was moved to have been asked to attend so many Remembrance events throughout the constituency and thank the communities for organising such thoughtful services.

If you are a constituent in need of help or advice, then please do not hesitate to contact me on [luke.akehurst.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:luke.akehurst.mp@parliament.uk) or go to my new website:

[www.lukeakehurstmp.co.uk](http://www.lukeakehurstmp.co.uk)

Best wishes

**Luke Akehurst**

**Member of Parliament for North Durham**



## Martin Matthews' CD Launch

In the November edition we had a feature on Martin Matthews' CD. Maria Matthews has let us know that the launch of Martin's CD went really well; "a packed event and a fitting tribute to Martin". It was covered by the regional press. Maria has said that the Sir Bobby Robson Foundation has asked permission to use one of Martin's paintings, 'Greymare Hill', as the image on their Christmas card this year; a real honour and Martin would have been delighted. One of Martin's friends, Nicholas Till, has written a poem as a tribute to Martin – this is reproduced (right) as part of this article.

*Below: Maria with Sean Taylor. Sean recorded and mixed the album; he also features on many tracks.*  
*Bottom: Sean Taylor, Tom McConville, Dan Hands, James McLoughlin, Damian Caisley and Andy McLoughlin some of the many musicians who played on the album.*  
*Right: Sid Hibbert, banjo player and Paul Martin, piper who also feature on the CD with Maria Matthews (centre).*



### Martin Matthews - A tribute

*From Lanchester the quiet land  
 Rises on up to cloud and fell;  
 It had no music I could tell,  
 It might have lost it out of hand.  
 In my wanderings there I'd mark  
 The pensive trees lining the swamps,  
 Inexorably deserted camps,  
 The transience of things, the dark.*

*Gone Consett ironworks' ruddy cloud  
 And gone the steel and anthracite;  
 Then after came the cattle-blight,  
 The grislier fires, the deeper shroud.  
 A notion came: "No good forebodes  
 Across this land." But in my thought  
 I hear your music travel out  
 Along its stave of lonely roads.*

*It leaps the lines, the gates, the bars,  
 The bounds of the A68:  
 It spangles over Salter's Gate,  
 Its busy streams reflect the stars:  
 Blue shine the reservoirs and burns:  
 To those immired in mud and sleet,  
 In derelictions small or great,  
 A novelty of life returns.*

*In far-off lands with plectrocrats  
 Whose talents win them grace and space,  
 In many a bright and tuneful place  
 You drank and played with famous cats.  
 Historic dreams you followed through,  
 Taking each chance our era gave:  
 Not everybody crests the wave  
 Such chance affords: thank God, some do.*

*And back there over Lanchester,  
 Upon West Durham's quiet stone  
 Do your notes and tunes live on,  
 And in the birch and conifer?  
 Such sentiment may have no base,  
 Yet it might be that Martin's choice  
 Gifted these tracts at last a voice;  
 I'd like to think this is the case.*

*(In memory of Martin Matthews, musician  
 of Lanchester, County Durham, d. 2023;  
 by Nicholas Till, November 2024.)*





# MERRY CHRISTMAS

**Christmas Opening**  
 Dec 24th - 10am-12pm  
 Dec 25th - Closed  
 Dec 26th - Closed  
 Dec 27th - 10am-4pm  
 Dec 28th - 10am-12pm  
 Dec 29th - Closed  
 Dec 30th - 10am-4pm  
 Dec 31st - 10am-12pm  
 Jan 1st - Closed  
 Jan 2nd - 10am-4pm  
 Jan 3rd - 10am-4pm

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## Lanchester Partnership future in your hands!

Readers of the Village Voice may have an idea of what the Partnership is and does across the village. In this our 25th Anniversary year we want to take the opportunity to discover how you currently view the Partnership and if there are ways we can better serve the village. So, the Trustees have set up a "Renew and Refresh Group" and we've put together a questionnaire to gather your feedback and ideas. We'd really appreciate a few minutes of your time to complete and return your response.

Anyone can respond. Once we've reviewed your feedback, we'll initiate focussed discussions with various groups and organisations around the village and draw up plans to be shared at the AGM in July 2025. You can respond in various ways:

**1. On paper: copies of the questionnaire and boxes for your responses are located in:**

All Saints' Catholic Church  
All Saints' Parish Church (Anglican)  
Lanchester Library  
Lanchester Medical Centre  
Lanchester Methodist Church  
Lanchester Community Centre

**2. Online: you can complete the questionnaire online using this link or QR code.**

<http://lanchesterpartnership.org.uk/questionnaire/>

If you have any questions or comments, you can contact us directly at: [contact@lanchesterpartnership.org.uk](mailto:contact@lanchesterpartnership.org.uk)

**Marian Morrison  
Lesley Sutherland  
Keith Brown  
Helen McCree  
Henry Edwards**



**SCAN ME**

## Boys' Brigade

November is always a busy month for our boys and this year was no exception. Our normal Wednesday activities started with Willow Weaving a bird feeder which everyone found enjoyable. We then tray baked for our coffee morning at the Methodist Church as well as having a quiz in anticipation of the national Masterteam event on the following Saturday at Teesside. We came fourth out of seven teams represented which was a



good result for our very young team. We then had a French evening where the "Can Can" was performed in various fashions but all in good spirit and then we tasted several different French cheeses. These received mixed responses, but everyone at least tried each one. It was fair to say that some blue cheeses did not go down too well. Unfortunately, our antiques expert could

not make it due to a health issue, but we still discussed antiques: what to collect, how to look after them and stressed the importance of keeping the boxes they come in. We were due to help at the Willow Burn Nurses Fair, but the adverse weather caused the cancellation. In the national competitions we won our table tennis match against Teesside and look forward to visiting Leeds in the next round. Our young chess team did very well at Hartlepool but just fell short of winning through to the next round.



The highlight of November as a company was our participation in the Remembrance service on the Village Green and a big thank you goes to all the boys who attended. We are now looking forward to our enrolment service and of course our Christmas Party.

**Eric Hepplewhite**

*Top: Willow weaving  
Above: Company section sampling French cheese  
Left: Junior section sampling French cheese*

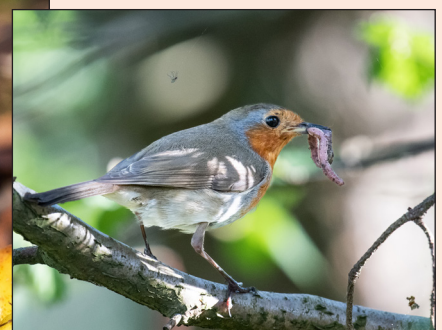
## Wildlife Notes

Christmas is just round the corner and this little bird is certain to get you in the festive spirit! However, there is more to the European Robin or *Erithacus rubecula* (its scientific name) than meets the eye.

These seemingly sweet little birds are actually extremely territorial. They are very feisty under their cute exterior! Robins have been known to attack clumps of red feathers, dead birds and even models of robins.

As well as this, the Robins you might see in winter could be different to the ones you see in spring and summer. Some robins migrate from Scandinavia and other parts of Eastern Europe to spend the winter in England. You can sometimes tell the difference, as the birds who stay here all year round are often tamer, whereas the ones that just come here for winter are often more shy. Robins are the UK's favourite bird and have been associated with Christmas since Victorian times. Robins are one of the very few birds that still sing during winter. They are often the first bird heard in the dawn chorus and the last to stop at night. In Lanchester, it's not hard to spot one flitting around. You can pretty much find them anywhere from gardens to hedgerows. To ensure it stays this way, try putting out a mixture of bird food, like sunflower hearts and mealworms, to help our feathered friends survive during the winter months. And by doing this, you will not only be helping Robins but giving other birds a chance to thrive.

**From our wildlife correspondent family**



*All photos are taken by Ian Appleby*





## Community Centre News



*Well, that's another year almost gone, here is a reminder of all the things your Community Centre has done this year.*

### Grants & improvements

Flat roof - replaced with a warmer flat roof.  
"Post it lockers" available in the car park.  
Tarmacked part of the car park.  
New windows to part of the building.  
Decorating of both halls and meeting rooms 2 and 3.  
New carpet to meeting room 2 and new flooring to meeting room 3.  
Landscaping in the car park.

### Fundraising events

Two successful raffles.  
A fun Elvis evening.  
A great evening with Terry Deary.  
Our well attended Christmas Fayre.  
Did you know you can hold birthday parties in the centre?  
We have two large halls  
Hall 1 has a stage, colour changing lights, table and chairs, a small kitchen area and free parking all included in the price.  
Hall 2 has table and chairs, a small kitchen area and free parking all included in the price.  
We can give you information on catering and bar facilities or you can bring or organise your own.  
521275 or drop in and have a chat it will be good to meet you!  
*The office is staffed Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am-1.15pm. On Tuesday and Thursdays, it's 9am-3pm. If you have any enquiries about any of the activities or clubs available or you want to know more about hiring our brilliant venue, please get in touch on 01207 521275 or drop in and have a chat it will be good to meet you!*  
*To keep up to date with what's going on check out our Information Point; follow us on Facebook 'Lanchester Community Centre' or check out our website - <https://lanchestercc.co.uk/> or scan the QR code for our website.*

## Ladies who lunch

Last time out we re-visited the Owl and Otter at Dipton. It was very busy, which considering where it is, is not surprising. But there are lots of different areas to accommodate everyone. We were given a warm welcome, furnished with menus and had soon made choices.

Now, it could have been the weather, but we were unbelievably boring - 5 of us had the mince and dumpling option, which came with mash and buttered green veg and we all agreed - it was absolutely delicious.

They actually have really good menu choices with a Main menu, Lunch menu and a Specials option. Other meals were, for starters, pork belly bites - crispy pork belly in teriyaki sauce with pak choi, roasted red peppers topped with sesame seeds and crackling. Mains were, steak and ale pie with mash, buttered greens and red wine jus; chicken tikka wrap with sweet chilli sauce, tomato and lettuce served with homemade chips and salad.

Desserts were raspberry pavlova ice cream; After 8 and chocolate ice cream; Nutella brownie.

We also indulged in cappuccinos and a mocktail - Gordon's alcohol free gin, spicy mango syrup, lime juice and soda. Just right for autumn and when you don't want to drink alcohol if driving.

We all enjoyed our meals and fabulous dessert except for the steak and ale pie, which didn't go down very well.

We felt the service was a little relaxed, but they were busy and we had plenty to talk about.

All in all a most pleasant afternoon.

## The Gourmet Girls



## Lanchester Parish Council

### Notes from the Ordinary Meeting held in Lynwood House on Tuesday 12th November at 7.00pm

**Minutes** - Annual Meeting, Ordinary Meeting 8th October - approved.

#### Police Reports

Members were updated on the recent PACT report for October.

**Willow Burn** - Councillors considered a request to build a wishing well on the Village Green - the Clerk to investigate if this is possible.

**Trees** - ash dieback on roadside

Councillors received an update from DCC that all assessments on ash trees have been completed in July/August - received.

#### Christmas Light Switch on Event

Councillors received a request for 5-6 tractors to attend the Christmas Light Switch on Event and switch their lights on at the same time as the Village lights - approved.

Planning Application - Councillors considered the planning application 'Retrospective application for an internally illuminated fascia sign DM/24/02575/AD' - the Clerk to write a letter to DCC to make them aware that the Parish Council did not approve the sign as it states in the application.

**National Pay Award 2024/25** - Councillors received an

update on the pay award - approved.

**Poppy Wreath** - Members considered a donation to The Royal British Legion - £100 donation approved.

**Alderside Crescent** - Members considered the request for a 'no ball games' sign to be reinstated and the bushes to be cut from Alderside to Newbiggen. The Councillors agreed that they wouldn't reinstate a 'no ball games' sign as we didn't install the original sign. The Clerk to contact DCC about cutting the bushes - approved.

**Dora's Wood** - Councillors received an update from both the Countryside Rangers and the Woodland Trust who confirmed they don't have any issues with the entrance to Dora's Wood being blocked off by nearby residents - received.

**Articles Village Voice** - Councillors discussed an article for the Village Voice on The Community Emergency Plan - approved.

**Kitswell Football Field** - Members discussed concerns a resident had about the football matches that take place on a Sunday at Kitswell football field - the Clerk to find out who the football team is.

**Financial report** - approved.

**Accounts for Payment** - approved.

## From our councillor -

### Mental Health and Durham County Council

Few writers have reached more profound depths of the human mind than George Eliot. In *Middlemarch*, she explored the complex and hidden emotional challenges hidden within her rich and superficially contented young heroine, Dorothea Brooke:

"If we had a keen vision and feeling of all ordinary human life, it would be like hearing the grass grow and the squirrel's heartbeat, and we should die of that roar which lies on the other side of silence."

Today, we would describe her concern to be mental health – but its date, published back in 1871, is a reminder that problems over the "human condition" are not new. However, Eliot was arguably Britain's most exceptional ever writer and an exception that proved the rule of coy Victorian emotion.

It is good, in my view, that concern about depression and anxiety has risen up the political agenda over the past decade or so – across the spectrum.

Back in 2014, the Conservative-Lib Dem Coalition spearheaded the equalisation care for mental health within the NHS. Others have spoken openly admirably about mental health, including local MPs Kevan Jones, who used to represent North Durham, and Richard Holden who also highlighted the issue in our old constituency. It's been inspiring in my time as a Councillor to learn more about the work of David Friesner, Marian Morrison and Mike and Jill Gladstone on the Welcoming Lanchester project aimed at tackling loneliness locally, which received national attention from the BBC in 2020.

But mental health remains as pertinent than ever following the dislocation and isolation of the lockdown and the subsequent cost of living crisis – alongside the superficial impression of other people's happiness given by social media that often leaves us wondering why we're not as fulfilled.

There is a hidden comfort in Eliot's melancholic observation on hidden emotional suffering: we all experience it from time to time, and there is some reassurance that the difficulties we sometimes feel aren't unique and in many ways as natural part of the human experience as respiration or perspiration.

To that end, I would encourage all those interested to read about local groups serving many locally including the Mental Health Alliance, Stamp it Out Partnership, Locate, Talking Changes, Family Hubs (which I mentioned last month), Kooth, If U Care Share, Waythrough, as well as national groups like Samaritans (116 123) or NHS (111 option 2), MIND, National Suicide Prevention Helpline. At Council level, DCC offers self-help guides and documents that can be read by local residents or families at the [durham.gov.uk/adultmentalhealthsupport](http://durham.gov.uk/adultmentalhealthsupport) or [durham.gov.uk/familiesmentalhealth](http://durham.gov.uk/familiesmentalhealth)

We should also consider small steps we can take to boost ourselves through physical exercise, learning new skills and giving to others.

But, more than anything, we all of us – myself included – can do more to reflect on what lies on the "other side of the silence". This is especially at this hopeful but challenging time of Christmas and New Year – when we can give more time to each other to find out what people really feel, never being complacent about how much we know of what others feel, whilst being confident about what we can usefully share together.

**Doug Oliver**

## Christmas Services in Lanchester

### Lanchester Methodist Church

Sunday 22nd December

10.30am – Carol Service with a contemporary 'feel'

6.00pm – Carols by Candlelight

Christmas Eve Tuesday 24th December

4.30pm – 5.30pm Come & Go as you wish - Reflective Holy Communion

Christmas Day Wednesday 25th December

10.00am – All Age Celebration

Sunday 29th December

No service

### All Saints' Catholic Church

Tuesday 17th December

1.30pm - Mass

Thursday 19th & Friday 20th December

9.30am – Mass

Sunday 22nd December

9.30am – Mass

Christmas Eve Tuesday 24th December

7.00pm – Vigil Mass of Christmas

Christmas Day Wednesday 25th December

9.30am – Christmas Mass

Thursday 26th & Friday 27th December

9.30am – Mass

Sunday 29th December

9.30am – Mass

### All Saints' Church Lanchester

Thursday 19th December

11am – Eucharist at Lynwood House 7pm – Longest Night Service

Friday 20th December

2pm – Stoneleigh Care Home

Sunday 22nd December

8am – Eucharist

10.30am – Joint Eucharist

3pm – Nine Lessons and Carols

Christmas Eve Tuesday 24th December

11pm – Midnight Mass

Christmas Day Wednesday 25th December

10am – Joint Eucharist

### Churches Together Events

Christmas Eve 24th December 6.00pm – Carols on Lanchester Green with Lanchester Band

## Police Report

A teenager has been charged following a number of sexual offences in the Lanchester area.

Police issued an appeal in May following reports of a man indecently exposing himself along the former railway line between Langley Park and Consett.

Following the appeal, officers from Consett CID and the neighbourhood team launched an investigation and arrested a teenage boy.

The boy, who cannot be named for legal reasons, has since been charged with sexual assault, indecent exposure and public order. A Durham Constabulary spokesperson said: "I would like to thank members of the public who assisted us with our enquires throughout the investigation.

"If you or someone you know has been a victim of a sexual offence, please report it to the police online or via 101. Always call 999 in an emergency."

**Connar Milner (30136)**

**Police Community Support Officer**

## Monday Art Group

It was heads down and concentrate for members of the Monday Art Group this month as we copied Malcolm Coils's techniques and colours to make watercolour landscape pictures. The subject was Warkworth Castle, with Malcolm demonstrating how he creates his paintings. Malcolm is a long-term member of the Group and has given us many helpful demonstrations, always happy to help.

The MAG meets at the Community Centre on Monday mornings. New members are very welcome. For further information contact: [tojimrafferty@yahoo.com](mailto:tojimrafferty@yahoo.com)

**Jim Rafferty**

*Malcolm Coils on the left of the photo*



## Changes at the top for the Willow Burn Board

A new chair of trustees has been appointed at a County Durham hospice following the retirement of its long serving board member.

Paul Jackson has represented the board of trustees at Lanchester-based Willow Burn Hospice for the past two decades and was bestowed with the honour of becoming the charity's first honorary president after stepping down at its recent AGM.

Jane Robinson, who has worked in health and social care services across the North East for the last 35 years, replaces Paul as chair.

Paul, known affectionately as 'Mr Willow Burn', was key in persuading care home entrepreneur Helen McArdle to invest in Willow Burn Hospice in 2016 when it was in dire need of urgent refurbishment.

He said: "There have been some very difficult times over the past 20 plus years as funds were often never there and we were very close to closure, but I refused to let that happen and I contacted Helen McArdle and drew up a business plan.

"I'm proud that we were able to work together and design this 5-star purpose-built hospice which I genuinely think is the best around, and we are delivering the highest level of care and support to people who need to use the hospice during the most difficult stages of their lives.

"It's an honour that the role of honorary president has been created to mark my service at the charity, and I will serve this role by continuing to promote Willow Burn Hospice at every opportunity."

Willow Burn Hospice welcomed three new members to its board of trustees with Kathryn Bullen and Patrick Morton joining Jane. With 35 years of experience in health and social care services, including the past 10 years working for Durham County Council, Jane has a wealth of experience in care in the North East.

She has also been the county council's Corporate Director, Adult and Health Services for the past eight years and the chair of the North East Association of Directors for Adult Social Services for three years.

Jane has a personal reason for wishing to support Willow Burn Hospice too as her mother spent the last few weeks of her life there in 2022.

She said: "I am absolutely thrilled and delighted to be appointed chair of the board of trustees, an organisation which provided such amazing care to my mother in her last days. She couldn't believe what a great facility it was and wanted me to do everything I could to support the hospice in the future which I'm delighted to do.

"I want to thank Paul for all his great work and all he has achieved for the hospice over the past two decades, and he leaves a great legacy for us all to follow."

After six years of service, Richard Bennett, the chair of the hospice's fundraising sub-committee, stepped down.

Willow Burn Hospice provides end-of-life and palliative care for people with life-limiting illnesses through a range of holistic day care, in-patient services, family support and bereavement counselling services. **Rachel Quince**



*Above: Outgoing Willow Burn Hospice chair of trustees Paul Jackson welcomes new chair Jane Robinson to the role.*



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## Lanchester Curiosities - *By Matthew James*

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Lanchester Curiosities opens once again for business. Last time, a woman purchased her dream childhood Cherry doll toy for just one penny...

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But Irene stuffs the receipt away, too taken by the doll to pay any close attention. She practically skips from out my shop and back onto Front Street without another word, amazed she got her doll for just a penny.

Why just a penny? Aren't I an entrepreneur? I hear your cry, dear reader! Please, not so loud. Yes, I am a business person. But I am not in the market for taking mere coins like you would expect me to. The payment I seek is worth much more than just money. It's worth more than most can comprehend...

The word soon spreads in Lanchester as others learn of my shop and the amazing things found inside. Soon, I am packed with people wanting whatever I would be willing to sell to them and for any price. But I charge very little, to the amazement of my buyers.

I always give them a receipt and make sure to mention the Terms and Conditions.

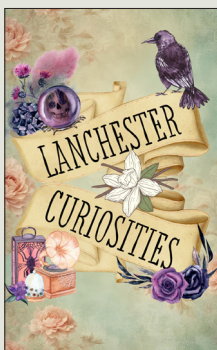
But people never read them, do they?

Soon they will wish they did.

I'm afraid I must close the shop for now.

Won't you pop in again, same time and same place, next month?

**All of Matthew James' work can be purchased on Amazon or via [www.matthewjameswriter.co.uk](http://www.matthewjameswriter.co.uk)**



## Lanchester Medical Centre: Patient Participation Group

### Care Navigation, what is it?

Care navigation is a process that helps patients get the right care at the right time and place and is a key part of modern general practice.

When a patient contacts the practice, the receptionist will ask for a brief outline of the problem, this isn't about being intrusive, it is aimed to identify the patient's need and provide information about services in the practice, other NHS providers and the wider care and support sector. Where appropriate, they will direct the patient to these services.

Receptionists receive:

Training to understand patients' needs and direct them to the right services.

Information to tell patients about local health and wellbeing services, including those within and outside of primary care.

Guidance to help patients find the best member of the practice healthcare team or connect them with other appropriate services.

Prioritization guidelines to identify patients with the most urgent needs.

This training enables receptionists to identify potentially serious problems and bring those to the immediate attention of the correct clinician, e.g. GP, Nurse Practitioner.

For less serious problems they can negotiate with the patient and identify an appropriate timeframe for them to be seen, and the appropriate professional to see them.

Benefits of care navigation- helps patients overcome barriers so they can receive the medical care they need, and it addresses practical issues like appointment scheduling and transport. The scheme allows front line staff to provide more information about local health and well-being services and is designed to give patients more choice.

Please remember you don't have to take up any options offered or discuss your medical issue with a receptionist if you don't want to.

Ref: NHS England <https://www.england.nhs.uk/north/care-navigators-h...>

**A warm welcome awaits you at:**

**The Patient Participation Group Annual General Meeting will be held at Lanchester Medical Centre, Wednesday 8th January 2025 10am.**



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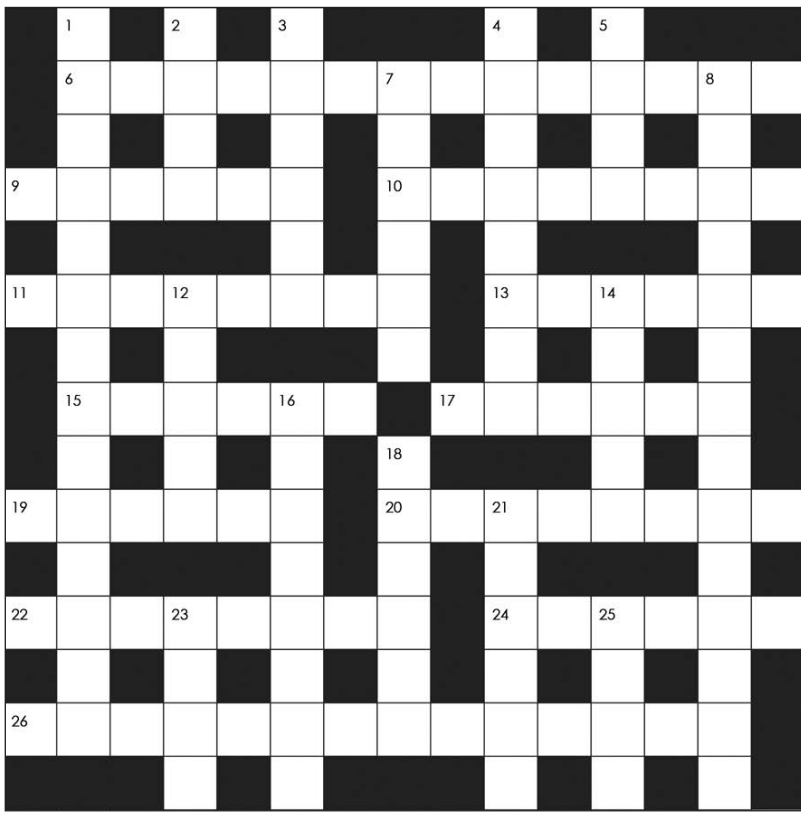
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**Call/ Text/Whatsapp**



# CLUES CROSSWORD 203



**Across**

- 6. Ballroom dance style (8,6)
- 9. Dairy product (6)
- 10. Disappeared (8)
- 11. Rare event (4,4)
- 13. Record label founded in Detroit (6)
- 15. Way to end a stalemate in snooker (2-4)
- 17. At the rear of a ship (6)
- 19. Type of hound (6)
- 20. Angry speech (8)
- 22. Angry exchange of views (8)
- 24. Ian, creator of Inspector Rebus (6)
- 26. Selling off the best bits of a business (5,9)

**Down**

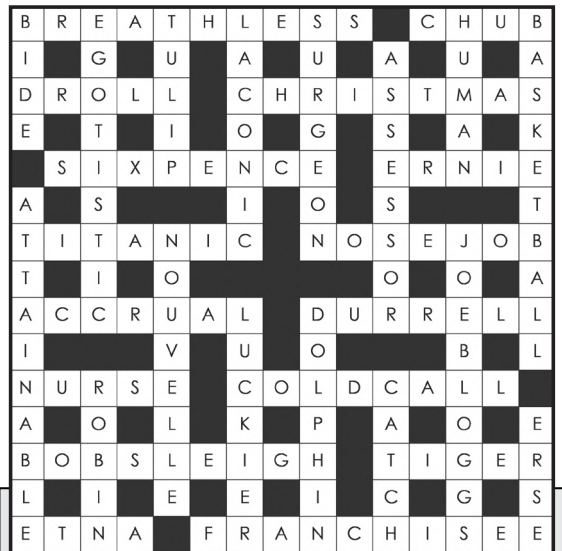
- 1. Type of degree (8,2,4)
- 2. Patron saint of historians (4)
- 3. Football sweeper or volley ball defender (6)
- 4. Giant waves (8)
- 5. Person in charge (4)
- 7. Beginning of the Liturgical year (6)
- 8. Armstrong's adjustable spanner (3,5,6)
- 12. Third rock from the Sun (5)
- 14. Associated with them (5)
- 16. Make more concentrated (8)
- 18. Newspaper chief (6)
- 21. Sudden and unexpected (6)
- 23. Second-hand (4)
- 25. Surname adopted by actor James Bradford (4)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please send your completed entries for the £10 prize draw by **Wednesday 8th January 2025** to the Village Voice, c/o Lanchester Community Centre, Newbiggen Lane, Lanchester, DH7 0HY



**Crossword Solution 202**

There were 20 entries, all of which were correct.

The winner drawn out of the hat is Rosemary Naylor.

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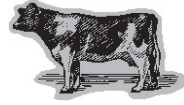
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We would also like to thank the Jackson Family; they have helped us a huge amount over the years. Unlike other landlords we have had they are understanding and always there to help. Thank you.

A lot has changed since 1999, however our ingredients and cooking methods will remain the same. Fortunately, we will have new dishes and other items on the new long awaited menu in 2025.

Once again, thank you all for your continued custom over the years, we hope you have a great festive period and a prosperous new year.



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### Paradiso Social Club

Sunday 12th January 2025: The Mercy  
This biography drama starring Colin Firth and Rachel Weisz is the incredible story of amateur sailor Donald Crowhurst and his solo attempt to circumnavigate the globe. The struggles he confronted on the journey while his family awaited his return is one of the most enduring mysteries of recent times.

Lanchester Community Centre, 7pm refreshments and raffle. Film starts at 7.30pm. Members: £4, Non-members: £5. Annual membership: £5

### Lanchester Library

#### Library Book Club

On Monday January 27th at 2.30 to 3.30pm, this group will be reviewing 'The Gardens of Lost and Found' by Harriet Evans. A tale told by three generations of women set in the Twentieth Century. Will the group have divided opinions so we will have a lively discussion, time will tell. You never know what topic will emerge in our discussions!

#### Thursday Book Club

On Thursday January 16th from 4.00-5.00pm, this group will be discussing 'Passage across the Mersey' by Robert Bhatia. If you have read 'Twopence across the Mersey' by Helen Forrester, her son now continues the story of her life. Sounds interesting... If you would like to join this group, pop into the library and speak to the librarians. *Pins and Needles* will meet up on January 2nd from 10-11.30am. Bring along your wool, thread needles and patterns and share your makes and get advice too. Do you like knitting, crocheting? Everyone welcome, enjoy.

*Scrabble Group* meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 1.30pm to 3.30 pm. Do you enjoy this word game and want to get on the Triple Word Square? Come along and enjoy the company. *Rummikub Group* meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month from 1.30 to 3.30pm. A great strategic but simple game with tiles that are always changing. It is a very enjoyable game. *Children's Crafts* are available every afternoon and Saturday. Different crafts, ideas and materials are set out in the library for

children to be creative, pop along with your children and enjoy.

*Borrowbox* now has newspapers and magazines, click ePress, look for extra news and comment and find the magazines that fit your lifestyle.

*Happy New Year!*

### Musical Memories

Join us to welcome in the New Year with music, refreshments and fun activities. January 2025 (exact date to be confirmed - see posters in the village or email us at the address below), Lynwood House, Durham Road, Lanchester. Musical Memories is a fun, friendly and stimulating music group using the ability of music to improve your brain activity, wellbeing and mood. We welcome people living with conditions that affect memory. For further information email [lanchesterdfc@gmail.com](mailto:lanchesterdfc@gmail.com).

### Lanchester Methodist Church Coffee Mornings

Coffee mornings are held every Saturday at the Methodist Church between 10 and 12. If you would like to organise a coffee morning for your organisation, please contact Judith Brown on 521898.

### Wellbeing walk

Every Monday at 1pm on the village green next to the war memorial. Walk lasts up to 90 minutes, all welcome. To book please visit [www.durham.gov.uk/walkdurham](http://www.durham.gov.uk/walkdurham) or call 03000 262539.

### Lunch Club

The next meeting of the lunch held at Lynwood House will be 7th January 2025, 12pm start, all welcome.

### History Society

Our 3rd January meeting will be our annual Show and Tell. Members bring an item to either tell us about its history or to get us to guess what it is. Over the years we have had some fascinating items and lots of laughter guessing about the items presented to us. Then on 7th February Paul Heatherington returns with 'Cor! King Arthur, Ben, Con and Mug: Myth, Legend and Fact' all based on an 1886 report in the Evening Chronicle that a man more than 9 feet tall had been found buried in the Saint

Put, Delves Lane Consett. We start at 7.00 but please try and take your seats earlier to ensure entry via the locked security entry system.

### Lanchester playgroup

Every Friday at 9:30 at Croft View Halls. Please check the Facebook group ('Lanchester's new playgroup') for opening dates over the Christmas period.

### City Theatre

'And Then There Were None', the classic 'whodunit' by Agatha Christie will be on at The City Theatre Durham, DH1 3 RA, from Sunday 2nd February until Sat 8th February 2025. "10 strangers are invited to a remote island by a mysterious host, but could they all actually have something in common?" Tickets available now from the Gala Durham on 03000266600 or [www.durhamcitytheatre.co.uk](http://www.durhamcitytheatre.co.uk) and follow the link for tickets. Performances Sunday and Saturday matinee only at 2.30. Monday to Friday 7.30. Tickets £9.50 with concessions £8.50 Sun/Mon/Tues.

### The Lanchester Community Orchard Work Sessions

We meet regularly to maintain and care for the orchard. Come and join us to find out more and help look after the trees. There are jobs for all ages and we always stop for coffee! New members are always welcome. For all our work session dates please visit the What's On page of our website [lanchesterorchard.org](http://lanchesterorchard.org)

### Lanchester Hiking Group

Meets at 10am on 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of every month. Walks are about 5 miles long within a 30 minute radius of Lanchester - lifts provided. For further details please call Helen Thomas on 07712425623 (or email [hdbthomas@live.com](mailto:hdbthomas@live.com)).

### Flower Club

Flower Club  
We have no meeting in December. Our next meeting will be Wednesday 22nd January 2025, when we will be visiting Beamish Park Hotel for a belated Christmas lunch. Hotel for a belated Christmas lunch.

### Monday Art Group

We are a small friendly group who enjoy painting and drawing, and come together to learn, and give each other support in making art. We meet each Monday in the Community Centre from 10.00am to 12pm with an occasional demonstration by visiting artists or our own members. New members are most welcome. Contact [tojimrafferty@yahoo.com](mailto:tojimrafferty@yahoo.com) if you would like further information.

### Lanchester Partnership Friends of Longovicium

There will be no meeting of the Friends in December as the regular monthly day falls within Christmas. As an experiment, the October meeting was held in the afternoon instead of the evening. Unsurprisingly there were very few attendees so we've decided to go back to evening meetings. As some of us are now finding it difficult to travel in the dark it has been suggested that we cancel January and February meetings. This idea is yet to be discussed so watch this space. It would give us all more time for private research. Information on the Friends of Longovicium and our work may be obtained from Mrs. M. Williams, tel: 01207 520063, or from Rodney Hawkins email: [hawkins\\_15@sky.com](mailto:hawkins_15@sky.com). Much of our work is published on our website [www.longoviciumcounk.wordpress.com](http://www.longoviciumcounk.wordpress.com). (Note no dot in 'counk') You can also find us on Facebook.

### Wildlife group

The next meeting is on 14th January at 7:30pm. There will be a talk on Beavers by the National Trust. Room 3, Community Centre. Please be early due to the new security system.

### WI

The next meeting is Monday 6th January in the Community Centre, 7.15 pm. The speaker is Dawn Knight, Community Safety Co-ordinator for the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office. We always welcome visitors and new members who would like to join us. If you would like any further information please contact us at [lanchesterwi@talktalk.net](mailto:lanchesterwi@talktalk.net).

### All Saints' Concert

All Saints' Catholic Church is holding a "Christmas Concert" on Sunday 15th December at 6pm with Consett and Lanchester Band, all are welcome.

### Thursday Club

The next meeting of the Thursday Club will be in the New Year, in the Main Hall of the Community Centre on January 16th 2025 at 1.30pm. Our speaker will be local author Pat Barker.

### Choral Society

Christmas Charity Concert in aid of Willow Burn Hospice. Friday 20th December 7.15pm, Lanchester Methodist Church. Christmas readings, carols old and new with audience participation. Guests - Anna Foster, Paul Smith, Ian Gray. All welcome, donations to Willow Burn gratefully received.

### Carols by Candlelight

Sunday 22nd December 6pm, Lanchester Methodist Church. Service led by Rev Stuart Earl. **Everybody is welcome!**

### Vintage Tractor Club

Meets on the first Wednesday of every month at 7:30pm in Lanchester Social Club. The next meeting will be 8th January (as the 1st is New Years' Day).

### Patient Participation Group

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Lanchester Medical Centre, Wednesday 8th January 2025, 10am.

### Winter Market

Saturday 14th December, 10am-3pm, Lanchester Community Centre. Over 30 local traders.

### The Lanchester Partnership Christmas Trail

A free fun event for all the family. Collect an answer sheet from the Premier newsagents or the Kings Head, complete the trail and claim your free prize from The Kings Head. Running 23rd November to 31st December.

### Social Club

1st January: The Kelly Harrison Band plus karaoke. Tickets £6 or pay on door. **Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**

## St Bede's Catholic School and Sixth Form College

We've had so many fantastic opportunities at St Bede's this term to partake in different experiments and trips. Here are just a few of our highlights.

### A Christmas Carol Performance

Quantum Theatre Productions again visited St Bede's with their amazing version of Charles Dickens' classic A Christmas Carol. Year 10 students are studying the text for GCSE English Literature, and the opportunity to see a live, professional performance really brings the text to life! From the booming Ghost of Christmas present to the chaos of the Cratchit family Christmas dinner, they presented students with the best of this festive tale.

### Science Fun!

In Science we have been extracting DNA from fruit! This experiment can be completed using household substances. The students demonstrated amazing practical skills and managed to extract a good amount of DNA!

### The Source

In November students from various year groups attended The Source at St Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle upon Tyne.

The band was fantastic and the guest speaker Fr Chad from Ampleforth provided an insightful food for thought. Bishop Stephen gave us all a Blessing before we all enjoyed a sausage & chip supper. Next stop FLAME...

**Catherine Hammill**

**Head Teacher**



## Lanchester All Saints' Catholic Primary School

It was anti-bullying week earlier in November which we always participate in as a school. This year's theme was 'Choose Respect' and our School Council led an assembly reminding pupils about what respect means and looks like. On the Tuesday, we all came to school wearing odd socks; this was to demonstrate the fact that, like a pair of odd socks, we are all different yet all equal. We always celebrate our uniqueness and individual gifts and talents in All Saints'.

Our House Captain leaders took this opportunity to implement a whole school Child Safeguarding Policy which, in suitable language, outlines what safety means to be a child and how they should keep safe. Our House Captains worked hard to transfer the policy into an assembly, translating it into a presentation and then explaining it to the whole school. Some of the topics they covered were definitions of safeguarding, certain concepts that may make any child feel upset or uncomfortable and what to do/where to go if you need help.

The House Captains then explained where the policy would live and outlined what you could do if you needed to talk to a trusted adult. This then led to a conversation surrounding what a child could talk to a trusted adult about and, thankfully, our pupils understood that there are no words or topics that cannot be discussed: a child can go to a trusted adult and talk about ANYTHING that is making them upset or worried. Finally, some of our House Captains (Izzy, Maddison, Aleesha and Emelia) reminded the school who our Designated Safeguarding Staff were (Mrs. Stephenson, Mrs. Conlin, Mrs. Pearson and Mrs. Dunn) and reiterated to our pupils that all adults in school are here to help. We are extremely lucky to have such conscientious pupil leaders at All Saints' who work hard to keep our children happy and safe!

**Frances Stephenson**

**Head Teacher**



Top: The House Captains  
Below: The School Council

## All Saints' Roman Catholic Church

On Friday 1st November the church social committee organised a social event in Lanchester Social club, an "All Saints Feast Day Celebration". Over sixty of us along with Father Charles and Deacon Peter enjoyed a lovely evening, featuring music from The Whistle Testers. A very enjoyable buffet was provided by Hanley's delicatessen. Laughter, chatter, music and dancing was the aim of the evening. All enjoyed a lovely social night. We had a very good raffle, and of course many happy winners. Thank you to all who contributed, attended and worked on the night.

**Lestrine Kelly**

### Note for your diary

All Saints R.C. Church will be holding on Sunday evening at 6pm on 15th December a Christmas Concert by Consett Brass and Lanchester Band. Just come along to the Church and join us, no tickets needed. Enjoy a chat and a cuppa, maybe a glass of ginger wine and a mince pie in our Parish Centre after the event.

**All are welcome.**



## Lanchester Endowed Parochial School

For the first time (I think in the history of the school), we have appointed Head Girl/Boy and their Deputies. We decided to put them through a really rigorous process and applications had to be submitted in writing, supported by a member of staff and their parents or carers. The interviews then took place in front of four members of the Senior Leadership Team and a parent governor. We were absolutely astounded at the confidence, eloquence and maturity shown by every single child interviewed – all 32 of them! I will be honest to say we laughed, we cried, and we felt immense pride in them all.

However, after two very long days, we finally made our decisions and appointed Betsey and James as Head Girl and Head Boy with Eleanor and Jackson as their Deputies. Read all about them below!

*Hi. I am Betsey. I'm 11 and am head girl. I am so proud of our school. As head girl, I would like to be seen as a link between pupils and teachers. Also, I really want to help the school as much as I can.*

*Hi. I am Eleanor and I'm 10 years old. I am*



*Pictured: Head boys and girls and their deputies: left to right Betsey - head girl; Eleanor - deputy head girl; James - head boy; Jackson - deputy head boy.*

*deputy head girl and I can't wait to help make the school a better place. I love animals and have 8 pets. My favourite subject is Science and I love doing gymnastics on the grass with my best friend. I am very excited to be able to thank the teachers for making me the mature and responsible girl that I am!*

*Hello. I'm James and I am head boy for Lanchester EP. I am extremely excited to represent the school the best I can. I am 10 years old and I enjoy playing the piano. I have lived in Lanchester all my life. I can tell other people to rely on me to help them if they need it. I will take my role as Head Boy seriously and am good at listening to other people.*

*Hello. I am Jackson and I am deputy head boy at Lanchester EP and I am 11 years old. I am very proud and would like to help represent my school. I would like to help Lanchester EP and the pupils and staff in it. I have lived in Lanchester for 6 years and I enjoy living here and going to this school. I would like everyone to flourish here.*

**Mrs Jane Davis , Head Teacher**

## Lanchester Bowling Club - Dedication

On Saturday, 9th November, over fourteen years since it was erected, a dedication ceremony was held at the bowls pavilion. Almost twenty people attended including a representative from Bowls Durham and three guests of honour. With the pavilion being dedicated to both Ron Cole and Ken Raper, the plaque was jointly unveiled by Catherine Ayers and her son Isaac, the daughter and grandson of Ron, and Marjorie Raper, the widow of Ken. Ron, our Honorary President, was a huge driving force behind the founding of the club. By all accounts he was a very good bowler, a fact backed up by the frequency of his name on the honours boards. He was also President of Bowls Durham in 1990. He currently lives in a care home in Melksham, Wiltshire so was unable to attend in person but was well represented by his family members.

Ken, also a good bowls player, was at various times club Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer; he was Secretary when the present pavilion was inaugurated. In 2013 he too became President of Bowls Durham, and we were extremely pleased to welcome Marjorie to the unveiling.

The current pavilion is actually the second to stand on the site. In 1981 on a field in front of the old secondary school the council provided Lanchester with a bowling green. There was no pavilion, so facilities within the school building were used by members. Malcolm Laverick, a current member, was responsible for the Parks section of Derwentside Council at the time and had to liaise with both Ron and the caretaker of the school re joint usage. The caretaker had an apt name for bowling - Mr Jack High! In bowls this is a term meaning your bowl is up to the jack.

It was not until July 1984 that a pavilion was built when the club financed the demolition, transportation and erection of a demountable classroom from Red Rose Junior school, Chester le Street at a cost of £1200 and a further £200 for connection to mains water.

The building had no toilets, so the school facilities were still used. This arrangement lasted until 2004 when Derwentside College acquired the school building and decided they did not want us to use their facilities so financed the building of our current toilets. In 2010 adverse weather caused the roof of the first pavilion to collapse. Insurance money, Council grants and donations

(including one from the Voice) raised the £35,000 needed for J Lillie and Son of High Spen to build the current building on exactly the same spot as the original. The doors, windows and the toilet block being the only original parts of the first building. Ken (along with Joe Newton) was heavily involved in instigating the new build. Thanks to Malcolm Laverick, Paul and Christine Monaghan, and especially Joe Newton for their help in researching the history of the club. Any mistakes are purely down to me. That just leaves me to wish all our current and past members and their families a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

**Bob Cuthbertson**



*Top left: Plaque  
Below: The Pavilion  
Above: Bouquets for Marjorie Raper and Catherine Ayers  
Top: Isaac Ayers, Marjorie Raper and Catherine Ayers*

## Cricket News

It's normally the quietest time of the year at the Cricket Club, but there has been a lot of work done to sign up new players for the 2025 season. Three first teamers have been signed so far and the overseas player is still to be decided upon. Pasindu Madushan has been with us for the past four years and has done a great job. He is considering spending some time in Australia so we do anticipate getting someone new. Pasindu scored 2500 runs across his four seasons, scoring two hundreds. His main role was as a bowler and he took 220 wickets, featuring in a high position in the league averages over the past three seasons and took two hat-tricks.

Jamie Dass has been signed from Wellington, Johnny Meadows from Consett and Jordan Grosert from Brandon. Jamie Dass was a Durham Academy player for three seasons before returning to his home club Wellington where in the past season he scored 1100 runs and took 29 wickets. Johnny Meadows has played locally for several teams and in the 2024 season also scored over 1000 runs and took 33 wickets. This will be his first venture into the Premier League. Jordan Grosert skippered Brandon and comes in as a right-hand bat who bowls off spin.

We do have a second signing from Brandon, which is the returning Darren Wingfield, known as DJ, who will be coming 'home' to his boyhood club, having moved to Brandon in 2022. His Dad, Jeff is still treasurer at the Club so DJ is no stranger and may well lead the second team in 2025.

We do have a bit of a Christmas do, at the club on Friday 20th December, with a Christmas themed quiz, bingo and a bran tub.

*All welcome. - Andrew McConnell*

## Tennis News

"Best laid plans of mice and men" is a phrase occasionally used at Lanchester Lawn Tennis Club and that was certainly the case at the beginning of the 2024 season as the weather intervened in any thought of an early start to play in April. However, following some sterling work and several cuts of the grass, the courts were marked and ready for activity eventually.

Fundraising is vital to a club of our size but, following a coffee

morning at the Methodist Church in the village at which over £200 was raised, our premises were broken into on the eve of our Big Tennis Day in May and the money was stolen from inside a locked cabinet. At the open day, the sight of a uniformed police officer taking fingerprints etc., was rather disconcerting for the participants. Happily, this did not interfere too much with the wonderful turnout for the event. Indeed, several new memberships were gained to add to our number. Sadly, nothing came of the police investigation. However, the club has taken steps to protect the premises with the acquisition of a security camera and secure locks.

The social committee worked hard in 2024 to organize the BBQ and Strawberry Tea. Referring to my opening line, the Tea was actually postponed one day due to the inclement weather! A second coffee morning occurred in October when £250 was made. Needless to say, it went straight to the Treasurer this time!

With new ladies and men's captains in place for 2024, two teams were entered into the league. A full report will be forthcoming from the captains, I'm sure. Although reduced in number, the club tournaments were hotly competitive and duly completed. Congratulations to all the winners and finalists.

Club coaching continued with a strong programme of sessions and none more so than the adult lessons that were well attended and provided some of the funniest coaching moments for Adam and myself throughout the season. Not forgetting our junior sections who continue to inspire and keep the coaches on their toes.

Heartfelt thanks to all of the participants for their support. The clubhouse had its fair share of problems in 2024. Along with the break in, the roof was in need of repair following severe winds and rain requiring urgent action on the roof. A new carpet needed to be purchased and was fitted by the well-known firm Laverick and Laycock! Thanks to all who came to the rescue and helped with clean-up.

As far as the courts are concerned, it was business as usual. The grass courts are our main asset of course and require constant attention to maintain their playing integrity. Following the award of a substantial grant, new equipment was purchased to replace the outdated machines etc. Mowers, line marker and water sponge roller were acquired and should continue to keep our playing surface in top condition, weather permitting!

An excellent work weekend duly took place at the end of the season and a good turnout of helpers ensured the work progressed satisfactorily. It is vital to do this work to keep the courts in tip-top condition.

Our social media presence increased greatly in 2024, thanks to Barbara for all her work in this area of expertise.

And finally! This is my final Secretary's report as I am stepping down from the post at the AGM. After 30 years, I think it is time to step aside and let someone else take the reins of our club with possibly new ideas and a fresh approach. In 1994, when I succeeded Astrid Reeve as Secretary, there was no coaching available, very little junior participation and not a lot of fund-raising. I hope things have improved slightly in my time as Secretary.

I can't sign off without a few words about certain people who have been a massive help to me.

I would like to thank my wife, Jane, for her constant support and encouragement...and doing all the work at home whilst I was at the club! Sally and Ursula for putting in the hard

graft when needed. Very much appreciated, thank you.

And last but not least, you the members, for your patience and understanding when those "best laid plans" did not always come to pass! Thank you.

**See you on court next year**

**Dennis Laycock**



### Thank you "Dennis Tennis"

*The tennis club committee would like to thank Dennis for leading the club so well, and for his commitment and dedication which many villagers have benefited from over the years. We are very pleased that he's not disappearing from the club completely!*

**LLTC committee**