

Produced by volunteers for the people of Sedgefield, Bradbury, Mordon and Fishburn
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Sedgefield NEWS

March 2014

The Sedgefield Plan

Shaping the future of our area

A chance for young people to express their views

The recent Sedgefield Plan community survey generated over 650 responses. By the time you read this, the results will have been analysed and published on www.thesedgefieldplan.co.uk. That survey was designed for adults.

But it is essential that young people also have their say on the future development of Sedgefield.

The plan's steering group has developed a specific survey for under 16s that is available from schools, Tickety-Boo, Number Four and the council offices. It can also be downloaded from The Sedgefield Plan website to print out and complete. The youth survey includes a series of questions about Sedgefield's community, its schools, health service, traffic and parking, shops, houses, green spaces, sport, leisure and community facilities.

It asks if things could be better and whether changes could improve or spoil parts of Sedgefield for the young people who live here?

Information from both surveys will be used to inform the final content of The Sedgefield Plan and the next stage is to prepare a draft of that. Before that begins, there will be two public meetings on March 10th and 11th at 7pm in the Parish Hall, when residents can hear more about the results of the survey and the other research that has been done, and share their own ideas and thoughts about the plan and the future of Sedgefield.

The Sedgefield Plan team will welcome as much input as possible from residents, particularly from writers with technical knowledge of planning in the community.

If you would like to get involved, please email info@thesedgefieldplan.co.uk or call 621273.



Campervan stuck in the sand sets up a winning tale

When Willowdene Care Home set up a story competition for local school-children to celebrate the older people in our community, an escapade by the sea with his grandparents was Joe Whitehill's inspiration.

His story was judged the best by a panel of Willowdene residents and Joe, from Sedgefield Primary School, was awarded £20 in book tokens, a trophy and certificate. The school also received £100 in book tokens.

Runners up Freddie Wright and Joshua Warburton from Sedgefield Primary School and Kain Searle, Callie Smith and Kate Johnson from Fishburn Primary School are pictured above with Joe (*seated, 2nd from left*) and two of the residents.

After the presentations, residents, parents, grandparents and teachers were entertained by the children's readings of their stories and poems.

Organisers had hoped that this would be the perfect way for children to express how important their grandparents are to them, and the idea succeeded beyond all expectations.



Angela Penman, Activities Coordinator at Willowdene, said: "We've all had a fantastic day and it was very touching to hear the stories. I know that our residents have loved judging the competition and having the children visit and we hope to host similar competitions in the future."

The winning entries are available to view at www.mmccarehomes.co.uk

An award for Lauren

Sedgefield Players Youth Section's Lauren Easton, left, with her award for Best Supporting Actress at Richmond Festival of One Act Plays.. A full Players report is on page 3

There's news from both of our village primary schools on page 2, and more winning stories in the Sports Update on pages 6 & 7

Sedgefield News: celebrating our young people & their achievements
Contact us at sedgefieldnews@hotmail.com or Text/call 07572 502 904

Hardwick school's old reading scheme reborn in South Africa

Thanks to Sedgfield Hardwick's wonderful PTA team and their fundraising, the school was able to purchase a new reading scheme for the pupils last September. The school needed a loving, new home for the old books so when parent, Debbie Hughes said a team from Wellfield School in Wingate were heading to Africa to visit a partner school in February 2014, Head Teacher, Sally Newton offered the old reading scheme as part of their educational resources for the trip. The Wellfield School party departed on 10th February, aiming to help children aged between 4-16 years of age to enrich their knowledge of English through Sedgfield Hardwick's incredibly kind donation of their old reading scheme. Blogs and updates were being posted throughout the two week trip.

See www.wellfieldschool.net or their twitter account @wellfieldschool.

Left: some of the Hardwick School children with Mrs Newton and the donated books; Right: children in the classroom in South Africa, with teachers Debbie Hughes and Charles Skilbeck from Sedgfield, who stood in for a colleague on the trip.



Sedgfield Primary School makes a Change

On Friday 7th February, Sedgfield Primary School pupils and staff supported UNICEF's **Day for Change** by **changing** what they normally wear and coming to school in their pyjamas or onesies. Their efforts, which included some school council members selling a vast array of delicious cakes at break time, raised over £400.

Sedgfield Primary takes part in **Day for Change** every year.

This year the theme of **Day for Change** was education, so the older children took over the role of teacher for part of the day. The teachers thought that was a lovely **change**. The lessons they delivered to the younger children were well planned, interesting and kept their 'classes' totally engaged. Ofsted couldn't have asked for more!

On a serious note, the pupils found out how going to school gives children all over the world the chance of a brighter future. However, about 57 million still don't have access to education, but UNICEF helps in many ways. The pupils of Sedgfield Primary want to support UNICEF's pledge to ensure that every child has the opportunity to go to school.

Below: Pyjama time at the Day for Change!



Veterans badge found

If you have lost your badge it might be the one which was found in January near to St John Fisher Church, along with a mirrored compact.

Please contact David Hillerby, tel. 01740 621343.

You will need to identify the compact.

My NHS

The NHS belongs to us all. If you're interested in your local NHS and would like to be involved in our work to develop & improve local health services.

If you join My NHS you will:

- Receive regular updates about the work of Durham Dales, Easington & Sedgfield Clinical Commissioning Group
- Receive invitations to events Have opportunities to give your views about areas of healthcare that interest you
- Be able to participate as much or as little as you like

If you live in the Sedgfield area, you can join My NHS via our website at www.durhamdaleseasington.sedgfieldccg.nhs.uk or call 01642 745046 for a registration form.

Wage Incentives for Employers!

Can your business afford to miss out?

Durham County Council has a flexible package of employer incentives available to help small to medium sized companies to create apprenticeships and jobs across the area.

To find out how your business could benefit contact the Employability Team on 03000 262 009



Vacancy - Sales / Marketing Assistant (part-time - 5 hours a week) to

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Sedgefield Players - an update

Following another very successful Pantomime, the Players are already well under way for another successful year of plays.

Waiting for Gateaux will be performed at the end of this month (*details p6.*) It's set in the worst health and fitness club in the country. You can have your cake and eat it at Mo-tivators, run by Maureen, a 'big- boned' widow from a small hall in the middle of nowhere. It only attracts clientele who have nothing better to do! Jackie comes to get away from her philandering husband and she's started to bring her young sister Whitney along to keep her out of trouble. Donald comes because he secretly loves Maureen; he's lost 12 stone so far; if he doesn't ask her out soon there'll be nothing left! Things seem to be on the up when Sophie, a researcher for a reality TV programme, comes to check out the club but when a snowstorm arrives it brings with it revelations which will change their lives forever in this comedy about friendship, frostbite and French fries. For anyone who has been on a diet, this play will be memorable.

Newcomers Richard Grainger and Rebecca Nicol joined the Players last year, finding their feet in the pantomime. For their first production they join stalwarts Sarah Jacqui and Viv Jacobs, who is missing from the cast photo seen here.



Sedgefield Players Youth Section

SPYS took their award winning production of *Brutal* to the Richmond Festival of One Act Plays and were once again successful. Written and directed by Thomas Guest, the play touched on the subject of bullying and mental abuse.

It was superbly performed and the group came away with the Best Supporting Role for Lauren Easton, the group coming Second overall. There were also nominations for Best Actress for Lucy Atkinson and Ciaran Jasper. Tom was nominated for Best Director and the group nominated for the ensemble award and best set.

Cast of Brutal: L-R Back row, Lucy Atkinson, Chelsea Palfreman, Ciaran Jasper, Lauren Easton, Victoria Sirrell, Charli Devin, Rebecca Wilson. Front row: Emma Robson-Cross and Tom Guest



The SPYS were also involved in a bag pack at Sainsbury's in Sedgefield which raised a massive £700.00. Thanks to Sainsbury's and to all involved.

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WEDDING PACKAGES

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Sedgefield Village Neighbourhood & Crime Watch Panel

The first meeting of 2014 took place on a cold dismal evening (8th Feb) with the first flurries of snow to further deter attendance. It was most heartening to see that there are so many people interested enough to turn out and share views about safety and related issues in Sedgefield with the Police, and we must thank the Police (Keith Todd & Neil Langthorne) and our Town Councillor (Alan Blakemore) for making the effort too.

The good news from the Police:

- Crime is reducing again from our last report and this is in the context that it is in fact already a very low rate of crime.
- There have been no house burglaries in Sedgefield for over 6 months.
- Anti-social behaviour (previously reported here) has been better "managed" by our local Police and is reportedly less of a problem.

The not so good news:

- We are seeing less of our local Police due to altered demands causing them to be used elsewhere (Aycliffe, Shildon, Darlington etc.) Foot patrols are fewer as a consequence, giving rise to the "we never see a bobby" remark.
- We are likely to see a seasonal rise in reported crime from sheds, gardens & external areas due mainly to poor security (none usually) at the property.
- The major source of crime in Sedgefield is of a non-forced nature.
- Disappointment that the Wind-farm trust will not support a community need for Speed monitors for Sedgefield.

Crime Prevention urge that you ensure your shed is secure, tools out of sight and that you keep your house doors locked at all times, or at least secure with a door bar or chain used. Please report to the Police on 101 all out of place or suspicious vehicles and persons that cause you concern – from these reports we will make our village & our homes even safer.

Next N/H/Watch Meeting – 8th April in Fletcher Room

Jottings from Sedgefield Residents' Forum

There was no scheduled meeting in February but there is lots going on in the village. Developers have held their first consultation event on proposed housing on land to the south of Eden Drive. **IT IS NOT A DONE DEAL**, as some say, but it will be if we don't show our objections as a whole community. For those who object to hundreds more houses in the village it is really important that you take every opportunity to express your objections by attending any meetings in the village, signing petitions and sending letters particularly to the Inspector when the County Durham Plan is submitted for approval, in the next few months. Residents who do welcome more housing should attend meetings too, and let people hear why you think hundreds more homes would be of benefit to the village (it could actually be thousands of houses if we don't make a stand.)

- Already 330 caravan/lodges approved which can potentially be occupied most of the year.
- 470 houses proposed for the Eden Drive area with plans to close off the current road exit/entry to the village and create a main road from the A689 roundabout through the proposed new estate.
- Closing off the current exit/entry to the east of the village will open up further area for housing development. There is currently an expression of interest on building on the field to the left as you leave the village.
- Another developer has plans drawn up for hundreds of homes on land between Old Beacon Lane & Butterwick Road (down the side of the Orchard/Beacon Ave estate).
- 40 homes proposed on the farm area of the Community College, Butterwick Rd to raise funds for more classrooms.
- The owner of the site known as Filmco at Winterton roundabout, which has been to let for a long time, wants the area taking out of the Industrial Estate category presumably it would then be building land.
- The potential size of NetPark is not understood by many, the future impact needs to be addressed.

So if we want to retain the character of Sedgefield we have to defend it; if you care, play your part. The Forum has written again to DCC Planning and requested to be provided in simple language not 'policy speak', why they say Sedgefield needs hundreds more homes and the evidence to support that view. On a point from last month, the funding application submitted to the Eon wind farm fund for a portable speed monitor was turned down, as the fund does not finance things they see as a statutory responsibility. But as we know, provision from DCC is getting less & less. We will now submit the application to the AAP.

The next Forum meeting is in the Fletcher Room, Parish Hall on March 3rd at 7pm. We will obviously be discussing housing but the Neighbourhood Planning Group will be holding public meetings on **March 10th/11th** in the Parish Hall at 7pm, to give feedback on the questionnaire and discuss ways forward.



PC Todd

Once again crime remains very low in Sedgefield, but as the cold winter nights remain, spare a thought for our milkman. He is out in all weathers, delivering a multitude of types of the white stuff for our daily breakfast.

Unfortunately for some residents of the Trees Estate, some low life has been nicking the milk from the doorstep. One male youth has been spoken with but sadly there was another theft recently. Whoever you are, we will catch you if you continue to steal from your neighbours, and you will be named and shamed.

Other crimes reported to police include; copper cable taken from the sewage works; an unattended wallet taken from a shop and a plastic goalpost taken from a grassed area in Winterton.

Pub Watch

Due to unforeseen commitments this month's meeting was cancelled. No incidents were reported to police this month.

P.A.C.T. meeting

A meeting was held directly after the recent Neighbourhood Watch meeting. Members want to highlight the speed of traffic coming into Sedgefield along Salters Lane/B1278. This is a 40mph road. Please drive with care. We will be monitoring the road for the next few months and action will be taken against offenders.

Local Police - 101

CPO Duncan Gill 01325 742714

Neil Langthorne 01325 742755

Parking Shop 0191 3846633

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DIDO

Days In, Days Out remains as popular as ever with a programme for events for the year including a trip on the Teesside Princess and to Millstones who celebrate a Golden Anniversary this year.

Last year we were well supported by residents and businesses alike and we raised much needed funds of over £400, from our coffee morning. We were also very grateful for a grant of £1200 from the Sainsbury's Fund, and as ever, our thanks to Sedgefield Charities for their support, which ensures we can run the Town Trip. We also would like to thank Margaret, landlady of the Golden Lion who has raised money for our project for the second year running and presented us with £90.

Although the project is run by volunteers and supported by Sedgefield Development Trust, our main expenditure is on Coach Hire, so these funds will ensure that we can offer a varied programme of visits to all of our members.

If you live in Sedgefield, Mordon, Bradbury or Fishburn and you would like to join us please come along to our next meeting on March 10th, when Adam Prest demonstrate his wonderful flower arranging skills. We would love to see you and hopefully you will want to become a member of DIDO. We hold our Days In once a month in the Parish Hall, and somewhere in the country when we are having a Day Out. For more details call Gloria on 622447

New blood at Sedgefield Development Trust AGM

The AGM of the Sedgefield Development Trust attracted an encouraging level of support from residents. The meeting in the board room of the Parish Hall was held on Monday 10th February.

The Chairman reported a busy and relatively trouble free year and steady achievement, with the reservation that he felt that with more volunteers the Trust could bring many more benefits to the communities it serves. The full report can be read at www.sedgefieldweb.co.uk. The Treasurer's report also showed a picture of consolidation.

The reports lead to some lively discussion particularly regarding the continued loss of facilities for young people and the need for a youth club. The Town Council representative present confirmed that this was one of its priorities and it hoped to bring together other organisations to resolve things together. The lack of engagement from County Councillors was felt to be unfortunate.

The main item of interest however was the possibility of the Trust leading a collective energy buying project and the prospect that it has to reduce people's bills for electricity and gas (heating oil might also be pursued). A number of people at the meeting had been attracted by the coverage this idea had received in Sedgefield News and had realised the Trust needed more volunteers in order to run such a project.

After the formal part of the meeting eight new volunteers had agreed to help support the project and the Trust resolved to pursue it. They were all invited to a meeting on Feb 24th, at which the detailed work was to start. Sedgefield News will keep you up to date on progress.

During the formal part of the meeting the Trustees whose term had come to an end were all re-elected for a further period. However there is space at board and Trustee level for some of the new volunteers to step up, should they wish.

Sedgefield Farmers' Market

At the March market two more stalls are expected to return - Pattersons' Fish and Durham Venison & Game. Posters and advertising are being refreshed - naturally enough, the market would like more customers as well as more stalls!

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March Events Diary

Saturday 1st

Cricket Club Quiz Night Question master: Sean Henderson. 8 pm start

Sunday 2nd

Sedgefield Farmers' Market from 9.30am on the Village Green

Monday 3rd

Local History Society

Ceddesfeld Hall, 7.45pm. Anne Heywood on The Lindisfarne Gospels.

Methodist Wives & Friends Beauty from your kitchen Cupboards.

Tuesday 4th

Chair-based Exercise Class Parish Hall 11am.

Sedgefield Garden Club 7.30pm Ceddesfeld Hall. AGM and Pie & Pea Supper. All welcome

Wednesday 5th

Sedgefield WI Parish Hall, 7.15pm "Doodling in 3D" Shona Duthie, woodcarver & musician. Members' competition - a wooden item. Fairtrade Fortnight Display. Visitors always welcome; fee £3.50 inc. refreshments

Friday 7th

Sedgefield Village Veterans Coffee Morning, Parish Hall, 10am. All welcome.

Sedgefield & District U3A 2pm Parish Hall. Anne Quigley: The Tall Ships Races (Anne has done four Tall Ship Races) Members free. Guests £3 at the door. We look forward to seeing you there. For info call Brenda on 629574

Saturday 8th

Sedgefield Area Churches Together Quiet morning. Sedgefield Methodist Church from 10am. Lenten discussion, ecumenical worship and a lent themed art workshop for young people. Shared lunch at 12.30. All welcome

Monday 10th

Meditation Group In St Edmund's Church. 7 - 7.30pm. All welcome.

The Sedgefield Plan Public meeting 7pm in the Parish Hall

Tuesday 11th

The Sedgefield Plan Public meeting 7pm in the Parish Hall

Ladies' Club Boyes Shop. Talk by Mr M. Fawcett

Thursday 13th

Sedgefield Show meeting 8pm in the Nag's Head. All welcome

Friday 14th

Country Market Parish Hall 9.30 - 11am. Coffee, Cards, Plants, Gifts

Sedgefield Rock & Blues Club Parish Hall, doors open 7pm. This is just a reminder to ticket holders. The Paul Rose gig is a sellout.

Irish Night 7.45 pm at Sedgefield Cricket Club. Main guest Steel Strings. Also featuring Broad Band and John Wrightson Band. Admission £10, inc buffet. Tel 621347

Monday 17th

Methodist Wives & Friends. Meeting topic to be announced

Sedgefield Family History Group (branch of Cleveland FHS). Ceddesfeld Hall 7.45pm. "The Surname Vayro, following the footsteps of Grandfather Thomas" by Rennison Vayro. www.sedgefieldfamilyhistory.org.uk or call 620367. Visitors welcome.

Tuesday 18th

Ferryhill, Sedgefield & District Flower Club Parish Hall at 7.30pm.

Lynda Fraser, NW demonstrator: "Razzle Dazzle".

Sunday 23rd

Charity Breakfast 10am - 1pm. at 3 The Square, Sedgefield. Tickets £6.50 from Mel Carr - 01740 629070, Council Office - 01740 621273 & The Post Office

Tuesday 25th

Ladies' Club Talk on RSPB Saltholme

Thursday, Friday & Saturday 27/28/29th

Sedgefield Players present "Waiting for Gateaux" In the Parish Hall. Tickets from members of the Players or from Tickety Boo. Synopsis on page 3.

Regular meetings

New Generation Church

Service on Sundays, 11am, Parish Hall

NECP Concertina Workshop

Every 2nd and 4th Sunday at 1pm in Ceddesfeld Hall. Contact 01642 588197

Eddies@4

4pm, Welcome Room, St Edmund's. Informal service for 2-6 yr olds. 621125

Winterton Wayfarers

Walking Group - Weekly Sunday walks, 5 - 10 miles. Contact 620034 or 620434

Bridge Club

Sunday & Tuesday, 7.30pm, Ceddesfeld Hall. Beginners welcome. Jen 620434

Sedgefield Players

Parish Hall, 7.30pm Sundays & Weds. SPYS: 7-17 yrs Sunday 6.30pm. 620091

Sedgefield Playgroup

Methodist Church, Mon-Thurs 9:15-11:45. Spaces for 2+ yrs. Call 620923

Fishburn Art Group

Youth & Community Centre, Butterwick Rd. 9.30am -12 noon, Mondays

Community College Bowls

Mons 6-8pm. Carpet Bowls/Short Mat Individual coaching. No age limit. 623198

Sedgefield Mags

1st Monday of month in Nag's head at 8pm. Contact 07966029434

Chair based exercise

for flexibility & independence; posture, muscles, joints, Tues 11am Parish Hall

Sedgefield Carpet Bowls

Ceddesfeld Hall. Tues & Thurs mornings 8.30-12 Beginners welcome. 622532

Sedgefield Pop In Club

for elderly & disabled. Ceddesfeld Hall Tues 9.30-12 Wed 10-12.30 Thur 1-3.30

Craft Club

Swinhoe Rm, Ceddesfeld Hall, 2nd/4th Tues 7.30-10pm. 620656. All welcome

CAB Advice Sessions

Sedgefield Advice & Information Centre Fortnightly Wednesdays 10am-1pm

Toddler Club

Wednesday term time 1.15 to 3pm, Ceddesfeld Hall. Joan Brennan, 622385.

Sedgefield Handbell Ringers

Wed 7.45pm Ceddesfeld Hall (Mon1st wk of m'th) Beginners welcome 621292

Rotary Club of Sedgefield

Wednesdays, 7.30pm. Contacts, Bob, 07831270892 - Mel, 07530315331

Sedgefield Acoustic Evenings.

Ceddesfeld Hall, 8.30pm 1st Fri & 4th Wed. Informal singaround, all welcome.

Round Table

1st, 3rd & 5th Thursdays. New members welcome. Contact Carl on 07775644598

Ceddesfeld Hall Art Group

Small friendly group 10am -12 Thursdays

Café@St Catherine's

Friendly chat & Fishburn gossip! Fridays 9.30am-12noon: Tea/coffee/ toast & chat

Lyrics Choirs

Fridays in Ceddesfeld Hall. SLYC 6pm Adults 7.30pm New members welcome.

Sing for Health

This welcoming group meets in the Methodist Church Hall, fortnightly on the 2nd & 4th Wednesdays from 1 - 2pm

Sedgefield Social Club March Entertainment Guide

Saturday 1st: Will Marx

Saturday 8th: Stephz

Saturday 15th: Ryan King

Saturday 22nd: JoJo

Saturday 29th - to be advised

Cover charge £1.50 per person

Members & Guests Welcome

Country Night

Monday 17th: Colin Mee

Cover charge, £3 pp

Concert Room available for functions.

Tel: 01740 620591 for bookings

Sedgefield Library in March

Tel: 03000 269521. Opening hours

Wednesday 9.30am - 12.30pm

Thursday 10am - 6:00pm

Friday 1pm - 7pm

Saturday 9.30am - 12.30pm

Craft Club

Thursdays 13th & 27th, 10am - 12 noon

Saturday 1st, 9.30am-12.30pm.

Durham Wildlife Trust

Wildlife gardening - build a bee or butterfly craft for children. Recycled pot making activity. Attract wildlife to your garden and build wildlife homes.

Thursday 27th 10.30am - 1pm

In association with Age UK

Stay Safe online

Web security and online shopping advice for 50+and carers. Places are limited so book early!

Hardwick Hall Hotel

Sunday 2nd March

Wedding Open Day

View the suites dressed for a wedding and civil ceremony. 11am -4pm

Saturday 22nd March

Night Fever at the 70's Disco

Two course buffet & Disco
£11.95 per person

Sunday 30th March

Mothering Sunday Lunch

Treat Mum to a traditional Sunday lunch plus a little gift for the mums
Adults £24.95 Children £13.50

www.hardwickhallhotel.co.uk

01740 620253

A Charity Breakfast

The Mayor & Mayoress of Sedgefield and the Inner Wheel Club of Sedgefield invite you to a ticketed Charity breakfast in aid of Parkinson's UK on **Sunday 23rd March**. Ticket details on the Diary page opposite.

St. Mary Magdalene's Church Thursford Trip 2014

We are going to see the Christmas Spectacular 2014 in Norfolk on the weekend of 28/30th November. The cost of the weekend will be £225. Pickup points will be in Trimdon Village and Sedgefield. It is a show not to be missed. If you would like to go and would like more details please phone Suzanne on **01429 882250**

Slimmers losing weight for good in more ways than one!

A group of big-hearted slimmers from Sedgefield are doing their bit for the local community and their own health by taking part in a sponsored slim to raise money for **Cancer Research UK**. Members of the Sedgefield Slimming World group are taking part in a national Slim for Good campaign running across all 11,000 Slimming World groups in the UK and Ireland. The aim of the six-week drive is to help people lose weight and improve their health while raising money for a good cause in their local area. The 96 slimmers in the group voted for the worthy charity they wanted to support throughout the campaign and chose Cancer Research UK because it's a cause close to a particular member's heart. Anyone wanting to take part in the six-week Slim for Good campaign can do so any time from Tuesday 25th February. Sponsorship forms are available from the Sedgefield Slimming World group - see advert on right.

Community space on offer

Willowdene Care Home on Lizard Lane would like to offer the use of their facilities to any local community group or voluntary group for their classes or meetings. There are lounge areas which may be suitable, as well as tea and coffee making facilities. If any groups are interested, please call 01740 771310 or email willowdene@mmcg.co.uk for more details.

Farmers Market Community Stall

If your group would like to promote itself or raise funds you can have our **free** community stall on the village green **for one Sunday only**. The scheme begins on April 6th at the relaunch of the market, when local band, CeddesFolk will take the stall to entertain the crowd. For more details or to reserve a stall, please call Angela on 1740 621273 or email angela.simpson@sedgefield.net

Ladies Afternoon tea at Auckland Castle

Butterwick Hospice is staging their ladies afternoon tea event at Auckland Castle on **Wednesday 26th March**. Guests are invited to arrive from 1.30pm to view the spectacular St. Peter's Chapel with its heraldic ceiling and magnificent carved altar. Then there is shopping in the Gentleman's Hallway, where stalls include scarves, handbags, shoes, art, crafts, jewellery and much more. One of the guest speakers 'Hilda Hodgson' will recite some humorous poems from her original repertoire that have entertained audiences over the years.

Tickets are £18, including sumptuous afternoon tea and a tour of the Castle, viewing the new installations, artworks and the premier viewing of the latest acquisition, Henry VII four poster bed, as well as other refurbished areas. Call 01388 660644 or email lynnaibury@butterwick.org.uk for tickets. Places limited.

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Sports UPDATE with Sports Editor CHRIS LINES

As I write this, the Sochi Winter Olympics have reached the half-way point. If the temperature had been a few degrees colder in the UK recently, we would have probably had more than enough snow to host the event here – I'm sure that Ceddesfeld Hall bank would make a good venue for snowboard slopestyle in the right circumstances! In fact, there has been more real snow in parts of the Scottish highlands than in Sochi. However, that doesn't mean that Team GB has aspirations to be near the top of the medal table, in sharp contrast to London 2012. The official team target is three medals and two have been secured so far. Will the curlers, speed skaters or a bobsleigh team deliver any more? We will know the answer by the time you read this.

Meanwhile, away from winter sports, English cricket is writing headlines of its own, most of them fairly negative. After a disastrous Ashes tour of Australia (who now appear to be putting South Africa to the sword too), the men's team has lost its coach and "moved on" from its leading run scorer. It's not all bad news. The England women's team confidently retained the Ashes in their three format competition and the ECB has since confirmed that the team will become full time and professional, which is great news. Meanwhile, Durham and England stalwart Paul Collingwood has been added to the coaching team for the forthcoming short tour to West Indies. I really hope he proves to be a big success and secures a more permanent role in the England set up. If nothing else, he should sort out the fielding, a part of the game that England improved in massively while he was in the team, but started to decline in since he retired from international cricket.

Rugby Union

Sedgefield District Rugby Union Club has made significant progress this season. In competitive matches, they are enjoying a great run of form, with eight recent victories (bonus points coming from all of them, thanks to scoring four or more tries in each match). The team still lies fifth in the league, but is only two points behind fourth place team Newton Aycliffe, their next opponents.

The team is known to have a very strong front eight (probably the strongest in the league) and with an influx of backs, Sedgefield are scoring tries from all positions, which isn't the norm. A major factor of the club's success is the high calibre of coaching it has been able to attract this season, with input from specialists for forwards and backs starting to pay dividends. This adds a sense of professionalism to the squad, albeit until the final whistle when equally renowned social commitment takes over and victories are enjoyed to the full.

As has been reported, the club had the misfortune of having its costly portable lighting stolen from the pitch at the cricket club, resulting in a return to the 3G facilities at the community college. Training is on Thursdays at 7.30pm. The club's success is making it an attractive proposition to new players and has added significant numbers to the squad, alongside the return of key players who have been out for lengthy periods of time due to injury. In any sporting arena, competition for places is essential, which Sedgefield now knows very well, so players are more likely to attend training and fight for their position than ever. But, being a small village team with a smallish squad, Sedgefield is always keen to welcome new players, irrespective of age, ability or prior experience. It is hoped that these new arrivals may also appreciate the social element of rugby. Sedgefield is an extremely warm and welcoming club. Contact is via Facebook, Pitchero, mobile phone (07732 399541) or the "Northrfu" website where all past and future fixtures can be found.

The club also wants to express its gratitude to Sedgefield Cricket Club, which has totally embraced Sedgefield District RFC since the pitch was established behind the cricket ground. That is reflected in the new signage that the cricket club has allowed to be placed alongside its own at the entrance to the site. The cricket club bar is always open from 2pm on the day of a home match and is of course within easy walking distance of the rugby pitch.

In the latest game, Sedgefield continued their run of great form with a 27-7 victory over Chester-le-Street. On a cold, windy and wet day, the team took to the park wanting to secure the win and a bonus point, in the process recording a double over the opponents. After scoring first, Sedgefield briefly went behind, but soon eased into a comfortable lead and went on to earn the desired bonus point.

Athletics

We'll have a full round up of the winter senior and junior winter season next month, including details from some muddy cross country races and numerous indoor track and field events. Meanwhile, it's worth reporting on a great turnout from Sedgefield at the Royal Signals Relays, which took place on 15th February in Hetton and were the region's annual road relay championships. In recent years, Sedgefield Harriers has fielded teams in both the men's and women's events, but this time sent a record nine teams in total, including an amazing six in the women's event.

In the men's event, the senior Harriers team finished highest in the overall field, while the V40 team were ninth in their category. Notable individual performances included great times (over a 2.2 miles course) for Paul Weir, 12:32, Geoff Hill, 13:00, Kieran Walker, 12:32 and Sean Haycock, 13:14. Kieran and Sean are only 15 years old and were comfortably 'mixing it' with some seriously fast runners from clubs all over the North East. Their achievements are just an indication of the potential of the junior Harriers.

In the women's event, Paula Warwick, 15:30, Jane Spink, 15:45 and Ellen Guest, 16:2, recorded the fastest times, but the real story was the amazing number of runners from Sedgefield. Most of the ladies who ran in the Sedgefield vest weren't runners at all not so long ago. Then Harrier Louise McAlpine founded the Sedgefield Happy Feet Joggers and has since helped beginners from all backgrounds to start running, and enjoy it! Happy Feet Joggers filled most of the places in the women's teams from Sedgefield at the relay events and they can all now say that they ran in the same event as Olympic athlete, Laura Weightman, whom it has to be said was very fast! Find out about Sedgefield Happy Feet Joggers on their Facebook page. On Thursday 6th March, Sedgefield Harriers will host 'A Marathon Evening with Ian Bloomfield' at Sedgefield Cricket Club. Ian, from Chester-le-Street Athletics Club, is a veteran marathon runner with a personal best of 2 hours 17 minutes from Boston, and is a former GB marathon team captain who continues to run very good times. The event is supported by England Athletics and is open to anyone who wishes to attend and find out more about the world of marathon running. For more information, call Ean Parsons on 07771 828 568. There is a nominal cost of £3 per person to cover facility hire.

Photo: Paula Warwick in full flight



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Football

With the season entering the final third, St. Edmund's FC still has work to do to maintain premier league status with seven teams still in the mix in the bottom half of the table. On present form, the club remains confident. The team reached the quarter final of the county cup defeating first Witton Park 3-1, then Blackhall Hardwick 1-0. They were unfortunate to bow out, losing 4-3 to Greenside in extra time in an epic match. Holders of the Heart Foundation Cup, the side has achieved a semi-final place against Pelton, after a 4-0 win against Chilton WMC and has also reached the final of the Ramside Hall Cup. So, with lots to play for, hopes remain high that this will be another successful season.

parkrun

On 1st February, Sedgefield parkrun celebrated its 100th event. This remarkable phenomenon has really taken hold here and the 100th run saw a record turnout, 192 runners completing the 5km route around Hardwick Park. Sedgefield parkrun takes place every Saturday at 9am, starting outside the visitor centre in the park. It is free to take part (all you need to do is register at www.parkrun.org.uk) and is entirely organised by volunteers. A quick scan of recent Sedgefield parkruns reveals that the majority of runners are not members of any athletics club; parkrun is genuinely inclusive and has succeeded in helping people from all parts of the community to lead healthier, more active lifestyles. It really is a wonderful 'thing' to be part of, and I say that with the evidence of the personal experiences of me, two of my sons and my wife!

That's all for this month. As always, please send any sports news to
chrisjlines@aol.com.

Local History

This photograph from our archive shows recruiting powerfully under way in Sedgefield in 1914.

We believe the shorter of the two men standing in the car may be Thomas Dudley Lowes, cousin of Cecil, who was featured in the January edition. We are very grateful to all those generous people from Sedgefield and

beyond who have kindly loaned us precious photographs and memorabilia from the Great War, helping to build a wonderful collection of materials for our exhibition on July 12th.

We are struggling to find information on five men named on the war memorial - Robert William Acomb, Reginald Wheeler Hines, John Welford, R Macdonald and Richard Rainbird. If you could help with information about these men or others from Sedgefield who served in the Great War, we'd love to hear from you.

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At last! Superfast Broadband is in the pipeline

Ian Walton reports

I never understood why Sedgefield residents could not have access to Superfast Broadband, given the size of the village and the development of the NETpark on our doorstep, so I decided to do some research to find out when the faster broadband service will be available.

Good news! According to the latest DCC "Durham Digital Programme – High Level Deployment Plan Update", British Telecom has been awarded the contract to deliver fibre broadband to Sedgefield in phase 2 (July - September 2014) and phase 3 (October - December 2014) of the plan.

These dates are a guide; there may be delays if BT finds unforeseen issues when it carries out further survey work but hopefully most of Sedgefield will have access by the end of the year.

The other piece of good news is that the contract with BT is for an "open access network" which means other Communication Providers such as SKY, TalkTalk, BT Retail, Redstone, Plusnet etc., will have access to the network and its services.

Your Letters

Cricketing visitors looking for temporary home

We have a young Australian, David Miller (24), hoping to stay in our village for 5 months, arriving in mid-April. David would play cricket for Sedgefield and is expecting to work while he is over here.

He would like to be situated in Sedgefield so he can commute more easily, however at present he has nowhere to stay so if you, or anyone you know, could offer any type of accommodation then please contact me on 07790 335 202.

Regards David Icton

Parking riposte

I feel I must challenge your correspondent Phil Smith over his views on parking enforcement in the village (February 2014 edition).

The respect shown for parking regulations by some residents, or visitors, to our village is frankly disgraceful and is just another example of the total selfishness which permeates our society. For Mr Smith to criticise enforcement in the way that he does is just the same as those public officials who believe that if anti-social behaviour has the prefix "low level" then it does not matter. If we accept this premise then we accept law breaking. There is no such thing as low level crime. A crime equals a victim, it is that simple.

The solution to the parking problems in our village is simple. Make the 10 or so parking bays between the Coop and the Black Lion public house half an hour only, with no return within 2 hours. These 10 bays are continually occupied by the same vehicles, as I'm sure Mr Smith has noticed. The bays on the southern side of Front Street could then be 3 hours which would facilitate visitors to the Church.

It may worthwhile to canvass the opinions of the whole village on this matter. If we are to have another 400 homes, which probably means 600 cars, then the situation will become much worse.

A. R. Fletcher

Food Bank: Let's get cooking

We are hoping to run a let's get cooking course session in April / May time, in the Trimdon Sedgefield area. It would be a four week course and our aim is to make cooking more pleasurable. We are looking for volunteers to help. If you are interested and would like more details please phone me, Suzanne Hopper, on 01429 882250. Thank you.

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World War 1 centenary

You will find this month's feature on page 11, with a request for information on a number of local participants in the conflict.

Please keep your contributions coming in to the Sedgefield Local History Group as they prepare their exhibition. Thank you.

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