

SEDGEFIELD NEWS

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

March 2021

Deadline for April: Monday 15th March



It's a few minutes after 1pm on Shrove Tuesday. I've just walked back from an almost deserted High Street, rendered silent for the first time in the history of our famous Ball Game, by COVID-19. No longer simply a contest between mechanics and agriculturists, these photographs reveal just how significant, to every part of village society, this event has become during the last century. In the last few days, users of social media have been treated to an astonishing feast of Shrove Tuesday memories, so we decided that readers who don't use Facebook deserved a glimpse too. and that is possible thanks to Sedgefield Local History Society, who provided these superb images from their extensive archive. I hear they have attracted a few new recruits recently! *Editor.*

Clockwise from above: 1920s, 1950s, 1990s, 1950s again & below right, one from the 1980s. See more at www.sedgefieldweb.co.uk



From BUGs to BATs?

Even though the weather has been awful recently, the Bicycle Users Group has been very busy in the background! A number of group members had a useful meeting with representatives from Durham County Council to present our vision for cycling and active travel in and around Sedgefield. The main points that emerged from the meeting are:

Improvements to the A689 Cycleway to Wynyard have been included in the proposal for the A689 corridor that is to be put to the government for funding approval. If approved, this will see the cycleway resurfaced and widened to allow easy walking and cycling to the NCN1 Castle Eden Walkway and the provision of a proper cycle/pedestrian bridge linking Sedgefield to the improved cycle path – no more running across the road and hopefully no more sliding in the mud! In the short term the council has agreed to repair the muddiest sections of the existing track and to clear it back to its full width. The BUG was asked to help make businesses aware of a grant scheme that is available through DCC to provide bike parking outside individual business premises. Full details to follow of how to apply, but this would be a great opportunity for local businesses to encourage cyclists to visit. Recent research has shown that walkers and cyclists spend up to 40% more than motorists and make around twice as many visits to shops, so this would be great for our range of specialist shops and facilities when lockdown ends!

We were also asked to consult on improvements to pedestrian access to Hardwick Park. The council want to either locate a new crossing at the Sands Hall roundabout or a new gravel path to the underpass. We are waiting for the details from DCC so watch the BUG Facebook Page for more information.

Finally, if you have read this far you will have noticed much more mention of walking in this update. Because of this, we are keen to change the name of this project from Sedgefield Bicycle Users Group to Bikes and Active Travel – BAT for short! What do you think? Please follow the Facebook group and get involved! <https://www.facebook.com/groups/289867685602438>



Below: The Princess Royal meets Nancy Wells. The SCA pays tribute to a remarkable woman on page 8.



Funding to Create Resilient Rural Communities

Bradbury, Mordon, Fishburn & Bishop Middleham are all communities of the qualifying size to be able to benefit from this scheme.

Grants of up to £10,000 are available for projects from across the UK which are working to create resilient rural communities. The Prince's Countryside Fund will award funding from the Barclays 100x100 UK Covid-19 Community Relief Fund to support farming and rural communities to cope with the impact of Covid-19, to expand on new services that have emerged to support the local community during this time and to build future resilience.

Applications are encouraged from community-led organisations with a turnover under £500,000 per year, from communities with a population of up to 3,000 residents. Examples could include rolling out longer term food and medicine delivery services; social groups to support isolated people; or mental health support. The Fund will close when enough eligible applications have been received. Useful Links: How to Write a Strong Application -

<https://www.princescountrysidefund.org.uk/grant-giving-programme/grant-programme>

A volunteer's reflections

I've lived in Sedgefield for over 25 years and have always counted myself lucky to live in such a beautiful friendly place. Three years ago, I made a New Year resolution to say 'Yes' to the first Sedgefield volunteering opportunity that came my way as a thank you to the village and its folk. That opportunity turned out to be The Woodland and Wildlife Project.

A couple of weeks later, along with a small army of fellow villagers, I found myself on a snowy March morning trying to plant tiny trees (whips) into frozen ground with a random selection of garden tools we had brought from our homes. Remarkably, that day we somehow managed to plant nearly 500 whips and had a lot of fun and interesting chats about trees, gardens, birds and how achy our backs were getting.

Since then, lots more whips have been planted and a hedge is being established. We've had a botany group walk us round the site pointing out the kinds of flora in the woodland. We've had wildlife experts showing us where to build bat boxes and nesting boxes for birds. In the spring and summer, we do some targeted weeding to allow the trees to grow and in the winter we turn discarded Christmas trees into mulch and wildlife habitats.

I'm glad I made that New Year resolution – being involved has got me out in the fresh air in all weathers and helped me appreciate the beauty of all the seasons. I've learned so much about woodlands and wildlife and I've benefited from the exercise too! I've had some lovely and interesting chats with fellow woodlanders as we've hacked back weeds and created pathways.

From our woodland site, we have watched some new houses being built in the distance and just recently we have seen young families moving into the houses. I love to think that by the time the children are grown, they will have an established woodland to walk through and maybe they'll think how lucky they are to live in this village too.

Maura Banim

If you'd like to get involved with the project, please contact Melissa at

woodland@sedgefielddevelopmenttrust.co.uk

or join our Facebook page "Woodland & Wildlife - Sedgefield".



Express Yourself

In February, we celebrated Children's Mental Health Week. The theme was 'Express Yourself' and we decided a few of our favourite dance moves were in order. We enjoyed throwing some shapes and showed that you can't be moody when you start to boogie! Once we began, we couldn't stop!

We showed how we felt about the world around us by creating collages of our likes and dislikes, dressing up in our favourite clothes that make us feel happy and busting a groove to some of our favourite songs. We all realised how important it is to express our feelings - especially during these difficult times and to always remember who we are and how important it is to stay positive and never give up.

As part of the Sedgefield Hardwick community, looking out for each other's wellbeing is something that we all do on a daily basis especially during these tough times. "It felt good to help raise awareness about the importance of children's mental health and it makes me happy to spread a message to those that need it most," revealed a Year 6 pupil. You can see some of our best dance moves on the school Facebook page – hopefully it will bring a smile to peoples' faces!



Vaccinations for housebound residents

Thousands of people across County Durham who are unable to leave their homes, are receiving their COVID-19 vaccination thanks to the district nursing teams from County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust. Not everyone is able to attend one of the vaccination centres set up across the County, so working with GP practices and Durham County Council as part of the County Durham Care Partnership they are ensuring that people in the top priority groups are able to have their vaccine as quickly as possible, in the safety and comfort of their own home.

District nursing teams are based in local community hubs and are involved in caring for many of the people now being vaccinated. Most are in high risk age categories and many have had limited contact with loved ones for almost a year. Having the vaccine will help protect them. It can be an emotional experience for many older patients, who remember a time before national vaccination programmes and are incredibly appreciative and grateful. It is humbling for staff, but rewarding to be involved in something so positive.

Beware of the dog

Just a warning to dog walkers who use the field at St Luke's Crescent. I was walking with my young son and our little dog, who is of a nervous disposition after being attacked, so is always on a lead. We stay away from other dogs because of this.

A Rottweiler came bounding over, clearly wanting to play, but my dog growled. The dog did not respond to its owner and continued to run at us and jump at my dog. An altercation ensued, my 3 year old son was jumped all over by that dog. I had to grapple to get my dog, who escaped from his harness in the panic as the two dogs went at each other. I fell during the incident but managed to protect my dog.

If your dog does not respond to you, it should not be off the lead! It's so unsafe for all other dog owners. We should be able to feel safe walking outside our own house. This would not have happened if the dog had been on a lead OR had responded to its owner!

A heartfelt thank you to the woman who came to check I was OK. The police have been notified.

Lauren Banks

Your LETTERS The letters column was a regular feature of the News before social media jumped in as a place to stir up controversy! But some readers miss it. Maybe **you** have something to say. Ed.

ARTS UPDATE with Geoff Millichap

email: sedgefieldartsandevents@outlook.com

New Panache Dance Fitness classes

There's a brand new dance fitness class in town, featuring iconic music from the stage and screen, now brought to you online by Sedgefield resident Sharon Gooch who, in normal times, teaches Clubbercise at The Hub.

The classes are a lot of fun as Sharon brings her passion for enjoyable exercise to each session, to lift your mood and boost your mental, as well as your physical health.

Classes are held at 6pm on Thursdays and the 18th March class will be a charity class for both Red Nose Day and in support of local resident Liz Norman, who has challenged herself to run every day for 365 days to raise funds for Cancer Research following the loss of her uncle.

Bring back your dancing days, join the class that makes you feel like a cast member in a rehearsal, and learn routines that feature dance moves from the Jive, Charleston and Salsa to songs from hit musicals such as Mamma Mia and Grease!



For more details, look for Panache Sedgefield on Facebook, visit the website - www.panachedancefitness.co.uk or call Sharon Gooch on 07766 700892.

Sir Anthony Gormley's Great Big Art Exhibition

Sir Anthony Gormley's work has made a big impact on the North East landscape and now he is using his influence to harness the creativity of communities across the UK to create a large-scale national arts exhibition throughout March & April.

Inspired by the rainbow paintings we saw during the lockdown of March 2020, the ambitious project aims to encourage us to create our own masterpieces & exhibit them in the windows & gardens of our homes. Whether it be painting, sculpture or drawing, anything goes & we are all invited to participate & to take part in the biggest art exhibition in Britain. Sir Anthony hopes that the initiative will help to foster hope & optimism while the catastrophic economic & social costs of lockdown are felt by millions of us, and that "every window sill or garden or balcony will suddenly become a gallery or a plinth...".

The event is hosted by Colchester-based visual arts organization Firstsite. They are providing free activity packs to help the creative process. To receive a pack, visit www.firstsite.uk/download-artist-activity-pack

Beamish Museum Lectures

While Beamish open air museum is currently still closed, we can still attend the lively and educational sessions hosted remotely each Monday during March, and learn more about the history & culture of the North East.

The free afternoon sessions ran successfully during February, and covered topics including Victorian Schooling & pit village living. This month will cover local topics of art & historical interest, such as the work of Norman Cornish (March 8th) & an examination of the life of Mary Ann Cotton (March 15th). Attendance is free of charge, and is hosted via Zoom. Visit the link below to register in advance:

www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/beamish-museum-registration-137581571183?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch

Norman Cornish is the focus of one of this month's Beamish sessions.



Diary & Events: please send details to diary.sedgefieldnews@gmail.com

Sedgefield in Bloom

April sees virtual judging by Northumbria in Bloom, and there may be another event to support, depending on the latest Covid-19 rules, and that's our hoped-for stall at Sedgefield's Farmers' Market in April.

SEDGEFIELD LIBRARY

Tel: 0300 026 9521

Sedgefield Library remains closed and the 'Pick and Collect' service has stopped for the time being due to the current lockdown. Fines will not be charged while this is in place, and all books that are currently out on loan will have their return date extended. If you are a library member, you can borrow a huge range of e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines, e-newspapers and e-comics free of charge. All you need to access these is your library card and an internet connection. For more information visit www.durham.gov.uk/ebooks

Durham Youth Council Young People's Awards

This year, Durham Youth Council have been asked to plan and host an awards event to recognise and celebrate the achievements of young people and those who support and advocate for young people. The event is planned for the Easter Holidays, so the nomination processes have now started. Anyone can nominate a person or young person for the awards and there are several categories. The winners will receive an award and a gift box which will be posted to them after the event. Nominations close on 19th March. More details and to nominate, go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/TWZTSTW>

Ferryhill, Sedgefield & District Flower Club

The committee has decided to cancel ALL flower demonstrations up to May 2021. If restrictions allow, we hope to resume in June 2021 with a demonstration and our AGM. We will advertise as, when and if we can proceed with our programme. Thanking our members for their patience, understanding and valuable support through these very difficult times. Stay safe everyone.

Sedgefield Area Churches Together

is running a discussion group for Lent, via Zoom. Everyone is welcome to "Our Common Home: Caring for God's Creation" at 7pm on Wednesdays 24th Feb & 3rd 10th, 17th & 24th March. Please contact sedgefieldact@gmail.com for the Zoom link and discussion materials. As so many of us walk each day, you might like to pray for the people and businesses in the area as you stroll! Email sedgefieldact@gmail.com for a map and suggestions for prayer. Instead of the usual Good Friday Procession we plan an online event sharing the hope embodied by Easter. Keep an eye on Round Up, Facebook and Twitter for details.

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Sedgefield u3a

Sedgefield u3a made a very positive start to 2021 when, in part due to the success last year of their book of short stories about the history and time of Sedgefield, the Photography and Creative Writing groups were asked to join a DCC Community Arts project based on the design, architecture and history of Hardwick Park.

They will be working with Ed Carter, a local musician, and other local community groups a who will be researching the park and developing a range of ideas with the aim of a series of events and exhibitions in 2022.

We were also delighted to be commended by the Regional Chair of the u3a for managing to keep so many of our groups active and maintaining our monthly meetings throughout last year. Very much bucking the trend in the North East, apparently.

We are still very much open to welcoming new members who should be retired or semi-retired and who would like to learn new skills, increase their knowledge, and enjoy making new friends. Perhaps you received a new camera for Christmas and might like some help in fathoming out all those pesky shutter speeds and new features. Join our *Photography Group*, who would be delighted to help.

Perhaps you'd like to start reading a wider range of books this year; our *Book Group* would be thrilled to hear from you. You may, of course, like to make a start on writing one of your own. I'm sure the *Creative Writing Group* could give you some useful pointers.

And the *Wine Appreciation Group* would love to hear from any one who enjoys trying an ever widening range of wines and learning more about the process of wine culture and manufacture.

See our website (Sedgefield and District u3a) for contact details or to send us an email sedgefieldu3a@gmail.com

Currently all our meetings are held via Zoom and we can, of course, help anyone who may need a little guidance to get up to speed with this valuable resource. Hopefully it won't be too long before we can all meet again in person!



SEDGEFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

No reports this month, but please do join our Facebook page and voice your opinion on what concerns you most and what we should prioritise at Neighbourhood Watch.

To report anything suspicious in your area call Durham Constabulary on 101, or 999 in an emergency.

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MP meetings

Recently I have had the opportunity to visit Parish Council meetings virtually and it would be great to talk to any other groups who are having online meetings.

If you would like me to come along to any meetings, either just to talk or for you to raise an issue, please drop me an email or call and if I can I will join you.

The Covid-19 lockdowns have prevented us from continuing the pop up surgeries we had started earlier in the year but hopefully we will soon see restrictions start to lift.

Once we are allowed, we will visit in person again, but if you want to raise a more personal issue with me before then, please contact us.

Stay safe.

Paul Howell,

Member of Parliament for Sedgefield
Paul.Howell.MP@Parliament.uk

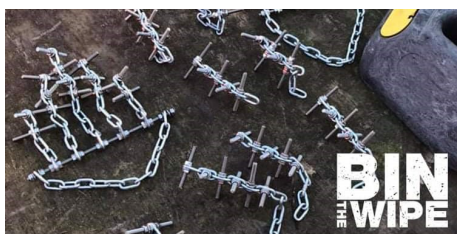
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GREENER SEDGEFIELD

In 2020 Northumbrian Water found that in around 60% of blocked pipe and sewer cases, wet wipes were to blame. Such blockages cost the industry around £88 million a year, money that could be better invested. Wipes can be used in various ways - household cleaning, toilet wipes, removing make-up, potty training and it's estimated that the UK uses over 10 billion wipes a year.

Wipes by their nature are made to be durable, most are made from a blend of natural and synthetic or plastic fibres such as polyester or polyethylene. The plastic is what makes them longer lasting. As they break down very slowly these wipes cause clogging in the sewers resulting in flooding and potentially hazardous consequences both in and out of the home. Even so called flushable ones are suggested to be flushed one at a time to avoid blockages, perhaps a sign that the design isn't flawless. Those that escape filters or due to flooding make their way into our waterways and beaches are often mistaken as food by wildlife. Additionally, the tiny plastic fibres holding the wipes together are released, they escape filters and go on to harm fish and other marine life forming part of the food chain, sometimes with deadly consequences. Some manufacturers have tried to make wipes easier to breakdown but this is not the same as it being friendly to our environment. The plastic particles are just released sooner.

Fortunately there are ones that are considered Fine to Flush, in a UK water industry standard. The **Fine to Flush** logo lets consumers know that these products don't contain plastic and will break down in the sewer system. They're basically a thicker toilet tissue made from natural materials. Sadly, at present, there are not as many wipes which carry the Fine to Flush logo as those claiming to be flushable. Northumbrian Water have a basic but clever means of identifying an offending property by using chains that catch the wipes, they pull these up the sewer until the source is found. To avoid a blocked drain or a knock on the door from the water company, the best way to dispose of wipes, household or otherwise, is in the waste bin, not down the toilet - even if they are labelled flushable.



STEVE'S NATURE DIARY MARCH 2021

As I write this, the recent snow is still on the ground and the thermometer reading last night was minus five, pretty chilly! I am working from home and there is a Cherry Tree just outside my window: on it is a Blackbird and a Song Thrush fighting over the last of the cherries. The tree looks bare but when I look closely there are still a few cherries left, it shows how important hips, haws, berries, cherries and other fruit are in winter. As I pop downstairs to make a coffee, in the time it takes a kettle to boil, I have seen Robin, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Dunnock, Tree Sparrow, House Sparrow and Chaffinch on the variety of feeders I have in the garden.

If you don't feed the birds in the garden it is well worth thinking about doing it. Not only do the birds benefit, especially in cold weather, but so do you. Seeing birds in the garden can give you an uplift and lighten your day. And you never know what is going to turn up - last week it was a flock of Siskin and the week before a lone Great Spotted Woodpecker.

As spring approaches, it's time to look forward: the landscape will change and new life will be emerging. On your local walk keep your eyes and ears open. Great Tits will be making their distinctive "teacher teacher" call and Great Spotted Woodpeckers will be drumming. Male Blackbirds and Robins will chase off other males to ensure they look after their female.

Early emerged queen bumblebees, butterflies such as Commas and Peacocks will be looking for nectar. In the woodland and grassland, flowers begin to stir and emerge including Wood Anemone and Primrose, brightening up any spring day. Or as John Clare, the poet put it:

On a Lane in Spring

A Little Lane, the brook runs close beside
And spangles in the sunshine while the fish glide swiftly by
And hedges leafing with the green spring tide
From out their greenery the old birds fly
And chirp and whistle in the morning sun
The pilewort glitters 'neath the pale blue sky
The little robin has its nest begun
And grass green linnets round the bushes fly
How Mild the Spring Comes in; the daisy buds
Lift up their golden blossoms to the sky
How lovely are the pingles and the woods
Here a beetle runs; and there a fly
Rests on the Arum leaf in bottle green
And all the Spring in this Sweet lane is seen.

Still supporting Macmillan

With the cancellation of hundreds of traditional fundraising events due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, it's more important than ever to find safe ways to raise money to support Macmillan to provide emotional, practical and financial support to people living with cancer.

These best friends from Sedgefield are taking the Macmillan Hike to raise money for this Charity. They have all unfortunately lost or known someone close, who has been affected by cancer and they're raising money in their memory, but more recently for George Alderson. The family of this much loved Sedgefield gentleman, who has recently lost his battle, would have found the time even more of a struggle without support from Macmillan.



If you would normally attend a Macmillan coffee morning or other event which is now cancelled because of the Pandemic, but would still like to donate, please follow the link below to donate.

<https://www.justgiving.com/team/TeamSedgefield2021>

Thanks in advance, Angela, Kelly, Deanne, Leanne, Julie, Karen and Hannah.

Project News from SEDFIELD DEVELOPMENT TRUST

Homework Help

We continue with on-line sessions, so if you would like help or could offer some, contact homework@sedgefielddevelopmenttrust.co.uk

Sustainability

There is still time to get involved in the proposed short course on sustainability. Contact us via email to Sedgefield News or on the News Facebook page.

Farmers Market

We would like to express our thanks to everyone who has helped to keep our market running through a hard winter and the Covid-19 lockdowns. Thanks also to our faithful customers, who have so willingly adapted to the rules we had to apply in order to keep going.

Somewhat surprisingly in the circumstances, it still feels like a happy market and the first appearance of **Hopper House Farm** at the market will make sure of that for beer drinkers! They have kindly agreed to stand in for the Roundhill Brewery, until recovery from last year's devastating fire allows them to start brewing again.

So, we hope to see you again on the village green, weather permitting, on **Sunday 7th March**.

Woodland & Wildlife

Our volunteers are still working away, though always at a safe distance, to look after the site and our young trees and to encourage wildlife.

Maura Banim has been one of those volunteers from day one, and you can read her reflections on being part of our group on page 2.

SEDFIELD OUTREACH CITIZENS ADVICE IS HERE TO HELP

Are you struggling with bills?

Are you worried about heating costs this winter?

Do you need help with benefits?

If you need help, call Barbara on 07736 910350

If your call isn't answered, leave a message with your name, postcode & contact number and Barbara will call you back

OR send Barbara an email to outreach@citizensadvicecd.org.uk

Please leave your name, postcode & contact number and Barbara will contact you.

Ceddesfeld Hall Home of Sedgefield Community Association



Nancy Wells

This article is dedicated to Nancy Wells, who very sadly passed away on Tuesday 9th February. Nancy had been poorly for some time, but remained at home until recently, caring for her husband, Keith.

Nancy was a remarkable lady, who dedicated her life to the community of Sedgefield. She had many attributes; helpful, hardworking, well organised, reliable, practical, great cook...to name but a few. Most of her work was based at Ceddesfeld Hall, where she was a long serving Trustee and Housekeeper. Both Nancy and Keith were founder members of SCA in 1970 and Nancy has been part of and involved with many of the sections for 50 years. She was treasurer of the gardening group and the catering section, as well the Twinning Association. Nancy was an excellent treasurer for the Twinning Association and there were always enough funds to provide for a successful visit when friends from Hamminkeln came to stay. Keith and Nancy often visited Germany and kept in touch with friends there.

Sourcing food, preparing and serving a three-course meal for more than sixty people was all in a day's work to Nancy - the food was always freshly cooked and served piping hot! In fact, Nancy has catered for royalty and other important people, including for Prime Minister Tony Blair's son's christening and for Princess Anne. Nancy was presented to the Princess Royal during her visit for the Sedgefield 700 celebrations. Following this, she and Keith were invited to and attended a garden party at Buckingham Palace.

Nancy was also Sedgefield Citizen of the Year (2006) in recognition of her service to the life of the village. "She's there (at Ceddesfeld Hall), most days of the week, sorting out one problem or another." "She does a tremendous amount of unseen work". "If she grumbles from time to time, she is dedicated!" "This 'behind the scenes' person must have nearly as many responsibilities as the keys she carries." These quotes, from her award presentation, give an insight into her work.

For John Nicholls, Chairman of the Gardening Section, Nancy was not only the secretary and treasurer but also their 'personal caterer'. She made the most delicious sausage rolls and pie and peas. John once asked her why her pastry was so highly regarded, and her answer was that it was "all down to the lard!"

Latterly, well into her 80s, Nancy continued to provide tea and coffee on Thursday mornings, as well as refreshments after the Remembrance Day service at the church. She also catered for the annual SCA Chairman's Evening and the Christmas meal for the Northumbrian pipers and until recently, she provided hot suppers for the squash club match nights on a very regular basis. Sedgefield has lost a great and loyal friend. Nancy's contribution to village life has touched many people and generations of families within the town. There really will never be anyone else like her, and she will be greatly missed. Nancy's funeral will unfortunately be a quiet affair, due to the current Coronavirus pandemic restrictions. In normal circumstances there would have been a very special celebration of her life and her contribution to SCA at Ceddesfeld Hall.

*A full list of SCA sections and activities is on the website sedgefieldsca.org.uk
For more information on Ceddesfeld Hall events, regular activities, room hire and bar opening times, contact Wendy on 01740 620206, Pat, 01740 620607, John, 620042, Sarah, 622185 or visit our website on www.sedgefieldsca.org.uk*

