

new

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pontnews&views

FREE monthly magazine for Ponteland and district

PONTELAND • MILBOURNE • MEDBURN • PRESTWICK • KIRKLEY

Masterplan for a new Ponteland

Consultation launched on ambitious redevelopment plans

People living and working in the Ponteland area are being offered the chance to influence ambitious plans for a major redevelopment of the village.

Consultants Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners have been appointed by Ponteland Regeneration Working Group, funded by Castle Morpeth Borough Council and Northumberland County Council, to conduct a feasibility study into the potential for housing, shopping, leisure and commercial redevelopment.

The Regeneration Strategy they are drawing up will set out a bold vision for the village centre up to 2021, which is capable of being delivered.

The study team will assess the potential for redevelopment, in terms of new housing, shopping, leisure and commercial facilities.

This will be complemented with schemes to improve the quality of the environment. It is expected that this will result in major new financial investment in the village, predominantly from the private sector.

Issues that have been identified to date that the strategy will seek to address include: Merton Way Shopping Centre, Meadowfield Industrial Estate, traffic congestion, quality and location of parking, limited range of shops and pedestrian access.

An initial community meeting was held on 7 October, where a number of suggestions were made on how the village could be redeveloped.

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All set for February opening for new health centre



Work set to start on new £6m first school



Aerial view of Ponteland for sale



Darras gardeners and village centre both blooming marvellous



Welcome to your new, free, monthly magazine

As you can see from the cover story, Pont News and Views is here to bring you all the latest news on the big issues affecting people who live and work in the Ponteland area.

But it is also here to serve all the local organisations, in communities from Medburn to Milbourne, from Darras to Prestwick.

The Ponteland Masterplan is an open-ended consultation aimed at gauging your views on potential future development of the village centre.

The Ponteland Regeneration Group has been set up to examine ways of improving the quality of life for residents and to enhance the physical character of the wider community generally.

It comprises local residents who are members of Ponteland Parish Council and Ponteland Community Partnership, along

with Castle Morpeth Borough Council and Northumberland County Council.

The group's aims include providing an inspirational vision for the heart of Ponteland, a clear, sustainable strategy for this vision, emphasis on a large regeneration project and integration of local opinion with the opportunities available.

Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners held their first public consultation in Ponteland earlier this month – the first in a number planned between now and February 2006.

We would urge residents and businesses in the area to attend a consultation event to have their say. Details will follow in each issue of PN&V.

And sticking to PN&V, a little about us. The idea behind Pont News & Views was the creation of a high quality successor to the Neighbourhood Watch monthly bulletin, in the knowledge the NW committee was to fold, which would also replace the Parish Council's own publication.

PN&V is funded by Ponteland Parish Council, Ponteland Community Partnership and advertising revenue. In the long term, it will only succeed if it gets the backing of readers. And that means your articles and your advertising.

If you have an event you would like PN&V to publicise or a business you want us to advertise, this is your shop window to more than 10,000 readers.

Contact: pontnewsandviews@tiscali.co.uk

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Do you know about **Ponteland's Farmers' Market?**

Come along and discover one of Ponteland's 'best kept secrets' – the farmers' market held every month in the Memorial Hall.

At farmers' markets, the producers sell only their own produce. In Ponteland, that includes farmers like Carron Craighead from Middle Coldcoates Farm selling her lamb and mutton and Ian Byatt from Stannington selling his pork and dry cured bacon.

But it also includes Lesley Armstrong from Bardon Mill with her award winning cakes and fudge and Gillian

Hunter from Callaly with her patés and game ready-meals.

And you can also get fresh fish, crab and shellfish, stuffed Greek olives, and Cumberland sausage from rare breed pork, venison, partridge, rabbit. And of course the WI, strong supporters of the farmers' market, bring along their range of home-baking, jams and chutneys, which they also sell at their own weekly market on Fridays in Merton Hall

And in the run-up to Christmas – there'll be more stalls selling traditional food, original decorations and novel present ideas such as

Karen Farley with her high class hand-made soaps.

So why leave this secret to the 200 or so regulars who stock up on fresh, local, tasty food every month?

Come and find out what you've been missing at the Memorial Hall.



**9am till 12 noon on Saturday November 26
and Saturday December 17.**



Site plan courtesy of Anthony Walker and Partners, Killingworth Village.
Overall design by Waring & Netts Architects working for Northumberland County Council.



Work set to start on new Ponteland first school

Work starts next month on Ponteland's long awaited new £6m first school.

As you can see from the plans here, the new school will be located on land to the south of the Richard Coates Church of England Middle School currently used as playing fields and will accommodate around 300 pupils and a 26-place nursery.

A hard surface games area, improvements to the playing fields that currently flood in the winter and cannot be used after rain, new changing rooms and an agreement ensuring the wider community can use the new facilities, were agreed in consultation with Sport England to mitigate against any loss of existing playing fields.

Changes to the original plans passed in February 2004 include an extension to the middle school, providing a Year 5 block, accommodating an additional four classrooms and associated cloak and toilet facilities.

The location has also changed – the new school building will be located 25m further into the site and 30m closer to residential properties at 22-32 Thornhill Road.

The need for the new school has been well documented. The current first school was built in 1914 with additions from the 1950s of mobile units to accommodate increased pupil numbers.

The existing main building is in need of a significant upgrade and repair and mobile units are severely dilapidated. Children accommodated in the mobile units have to acquire a key from teachers and walk across the play yard to the main school building to use toilet facilities.

Headteacher Lynn Blain said: *"This school has been crying out for a new build for 10, maybe 20 years. We have 'temporary' buildings erected around 1950. At the moment we haven't got the necessary ICT facilities to deliver the ICT curriculum.*

"The new school will be specifically designed to ensure that everyone has

access to everything they need for a 21st century curriculum. This is a brilliant opportunity for the staff, children and local community – something which should be celebrated."

A School Travel Plan will encourage walking to school and other alternative methods of getting to school to reduce reliance on the car, while a footpath link and shelter will allow parents to park in existing car parks and use the footpath to pick up and drop off children. A parking area is also provided for visitors and staff within the new school grounds.

Planning conditions imposed by the County Council's planning and regulation committee included a landscaping scheme and details of materials to mitigate any potential visual impact.

The existing first school's grounds are expected to be sold off for housing, while the new school is scheduled for opening in January 2007.

15 year vision for Ponteland

Views sought on regeneration plans for village

People living and working in the Ponteland area are being offered the chance to influence ambitious plans for a major redevelopment of the village.

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The Regeneration Strategy they are drawing up will set out a bold vision for the village centre up to 2021, which is capable of being delivered.

The study team will assess the potential for redevelopment, in terms of new housing, shopping, leisure and commercial facilities. This will be complemented with schemes to improve the quality of the environment. It is expected that this will result in major new financial investment in the village, predominantly from the private sector.

The Strategy will predominantly focus upon the area defined on the plan above. However, the potential for redevelopment in the



surrounding area will also be explored.

The village has a significant number of strengths which the strategy needs to capitalise on. These include: a strong community spirit; good quality open space; unique buildings of architectural and historic importance; high levels of business and retail satisfaction; low levels of crime; high quality environment and a good range of community facilities.

There is however, also scope for improvement and potential for redevelopment.

Issues that have been identified to date that the strategy will seek to address include: Merton Way Shopping Centre, Meadowfield Industrial Estate, traffic congestion, quality and location of parking, limited range of shops and pedestrian access.

An initial community meeting was held on 7 October, where a number of suggestions were made on how

the village could be redeveloped.

These varied from a new well designed shopping centre, a one stop shop for community services, a supermarket, e-cafes, units for craft/design outlets, informal green spaces, affordable housing, housing for the elderly, community facilities for young people, changes to the road layout and improvements to public transport provision and information.

If you have any ideas on your vision for Ponteland Village in the future then please contact Vicky Cuthbertson, from Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners, on the number below.

Your ideas will be used as the basis for a number of options.

Vicky said: "Consultation events will be held in November and January to enable residents to comment on a range of options for redevelopment prior to the production of the final vision and strategy for Ponteland Village in February 2006. This is a unique opportunity for Ponteland and we are keen for the community to be involved."

For more information contact Vicky Cuthbertson at Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners on (0191) 261 5685 or email Newcastle@nlplanning.com

£2.6m surgery taking shape

On schedule for February opening

Work on Ponteland's long awaited new health centre is on schedule for opening in February.

Killingworth-based contractors Metnor started work on the £2.6m PFI-funded health centre, which will house the Ponteland and White Medical Groups together with community and social care services, in February 2006.

The 2,145sq m Swedish timber framed two-storey health centre will serve 18,000 patients and boasts an operating suite for minor surgery and a podiatry suite.

The new building in Meadowfield Road will replace the area's existing health centre in Thornhill Road.

Janet Boakes, Ponteland Medical Group practice manager, said: "Patients have been waiting years for a new building. At present we have nine doctors and only three consulting rooms.

"The new centre will be an enormous benefit for local people as it will bring together a wide range of health and social care services on one site.

"It will revolutionise our lives. The difference both to staff and patients will be truly unbelievable."

The pictures here, courtesy of Metnor, show the scheme progress, from the demolition of the former Dobson's Sweet Factory to the erection of the roof timbers.

Pont News and Views will keep you posted on further progress over the next few months in the lead up to opening.



Prestwick Pit landfill site gains one year extension

Landfill operations at Prestwick Pit have been extended until September 2007. Northumberland County Council's planning and regulation committee agreed to the 12-month extension after being told the site was running behind schedule because of a shortage of inert waste.

If the void was not filled to the levels agreed it would lead to a lower landform which would only be appropriate for a wetland based scheme, likely to attract birds in the vicinity of the airport.

No objections were received from Newcastle Airport, the Environment Agency or the Borough or Parish Councils.



Bird's eye view of Ponteland for sale

It's a stunning view of Ponteland many of you won't have seen before.

And framed prints are being sold by the Castles, Woods and Water regeneration project, which jointly commissioned the photography.

They could make an ideal Christmas present.

For more details contact Morpeth's Chantry Museum on (01670) 500717.

Aerial picture of Ponteland courtesy of Castle Morpeth Borough Council

What's ON

Up and coming events in the area include:

Sunday October 30 – Seasonal soiree, Wallington Hall. Time: 7.30pm. Cost: Adults £20. Contact: Box Office (01670) 773939/email wallington@nationaltrust.org.uk

Saturday November 5 - Bonfire Party, Matfen. Family bonfire and fireworks with refreshments. Time: 6pm. Cost: donations on the night. Contact: Matfen Summer Fair Committee (01661) 886930.

Sunday November 20 – Kirkley Hall Christmas Fayre. Opportunity to buy gifts from a wide variety of stalls. Entertainment and refreshments on offer. Contact: Blanche Johnson on (01670) 841235.



Ann scoops £250 prize in borough garden competition

We all know that there are hundreds of impressive, well maintained gardens in this corner of Northumberland.

But it's always nice to have some recognised. Our congratulations should go to neighbours Ann Winter and Marion Prince, both finalists in Castle Morpeth Borough Council's 2005 Summer Best Garden Competition.

Ann, of 1 Meadowvale, Darras Hall, won the Best Large Garden category and scooped £250 in Heighley Gate vouchers.

Marion and her husband Tony, who live at number 3, were among the five other finalists out of dozens of entries, and were presented with a professional photograph of their garden and a Heighley Gate 'goodie bag'. They had won the same category last year.

Meanwhile Mr W Graham, of Dunsgreen, Ponteland, was another finalist in the Best Small Garden category.

Other neighbours working together to improve their local environment in Darras can be found at Old Station Court, whose joint entry came second in the competition's 'Best Street' category. The street had also won last year.

Winner, Main picture top:
1 Meadowvale, Darras Hall – winner of the Best Large Garden category

Runners-up:
Right top, 3 Meadowvale, Darras Hall
Right middle, 79 Dunsgreen, Ponteland
Right, Old Station Court, Darras Hall



Pictures by Bob Huggins courtesy of Castle Morpeth Borough Council

Northumbria in Bloom 2005

Ponteland Parish Council is pleased to report that at this year's awards ceremony, Ponteland was mentioned as one of the most improved areas, and just missed out on a merit award.

The judges were impressed with the entrances, described as "colourful and eye-catching" and it was gratifying to note that the Parish Council's work to clear the weeds from the roadside verges and gutters was mentioned - thanks to the Council's Contractor, Michael Champion of K9 Cleanup.

The Parish Council would like to thank businesses and volunteers who contributed:

Peter Lomas of Horton Grange Nurseries who plants the flower bed on Coates Green

Rotary Club of Ponteland who plant and maintain the flower bed and memorial seat on Main Street

Neil Mackley of Mackley & Studdert Opticians who provides planters and sponsors hanging baskets

Merton Hall Recreation Centre who fund hanging baskets outside the Hall

PC J Gray who pays for the hanging baskets outside the Police Station

HSBC Bank - sponsors of hanging baskets

Newcastle International Airport - sponsors of hanging baskets

Friends of Ponteland Park - for their commitment to improving areas of the Park

The judges were also impressed with the efforts made by Ponteland Bowling Club and Ponteland Tennis Club to enhance the area, and by St Mary's Church for creating and maintaining the memorial garden, and to the Methodist Church for its floral displays.

Ponteland Parish Council was also praised for its efforts with the Coates Institute garden and the planting in Merton Way - thanks to our new Gardening Contractor, Iain Clough.

The Parish Council also thanks the Green & Clean team at Castle Morpeth BC for their support, and special thanks to all those residents who continue to plant beautiful gardens that are enjoyed by everyone.

**Remembrance
Sunday
November 13**

'Face to face' service by videolink

**Hi-tech link to Borough Council opened at
Verger's Cottage**

People living in the Ponteland area will avoid a 20-mile round trip yet still speak 'face to face' with Borough Council staff in Morpeth using a new video conferencing facility.

The new service, launched last month, offers a video link from the Ponteland Parish Council offices at the Verger's Cottage, Main Street, Ponteland, to the One Stop Shop 10 miles away in Bridge Street, Morpeth. Residents will be able to discuss their queries on screen with a customer services representative, who will be able to give advice on services ranging from refuse/recycling and planning to Council Tax, benefits and environmental health.

Castle Morpeth Borough Council has described the move as one of a number of new initiatives being introduced to improve access to the services it provides to nearly 50,000 people. The One Stop Shop in Morpeth is open on Saturdays from 9am to 1pm until early December in a three month pilot to gauge public demand and some Council meetings are now being webcast.

The video link will be available during the Parish Council office normal opening hours - 9.30am-12.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Two minutes' silence will be observed at the War Memorial, Ponteland, at 11am on Sunday November 13.

Wreaths will then be laid by civic leaders, including the Chairman of Ponteland Parish Council, representatives of HM Forces and the Royal British Legion.

Representatives of Ponteland Clergy will take the service and members of local organisations are invited to attend - in uniform where applicable, along with all other members of the public. People wishing to parade will assemble at the Leisure Centre at 10.30am, departing at 10.45am to arrive at the Memorial Hall by 10.50am.

After the service, the parade will march back to the Leisure Centre, where light refreshments will be laid on for local organisations by the Chairman of the Parish Council.

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PONTELAND UNITED REFORMED CHURCH CHRISTMAS FAYRE

**Saturday, 12th November.
In the Memorial Hall, Darras Road,**

**Doors open at
1.00pm.**



**Admission
Free.**

Bric-a-Brac

Raffle • Santa Claus and Bran Tub • Plants • Gifts • Jewellery
Home-made Cakes • Preserves • Afternoon Teas
Floral Decorations • Books and Records • Linen and Toiletries
Face Painting • Games • Children's Tombola • Toys • Sweets
Hot Punch • Ice Cream • Mince Pies • Bottle Stall • Christmas Cards

DO JOIN US FOR AN ENJOYABLE FAMILY AFTERNOON

Contributions to all stalls welcomed.

Contact J & E Gatenby on 823406 or L Donald on 872728

BRIC-A-BRAC SALE: PART 2 OF THE CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Saturday 26th November
Ponteland United Reformed Church, on the Broadway, Darras Hall
From 9.00am until 12.00 noon

Do Come!