



Hepscott Herald



Boglife

Pages 4&5



northumberlandparishes.uk/hepscott

After 70% of residents who voted in poll say they want to see new traffic-calming measures introduced in Hepscott...

Chicanes are not an option, says council

A PUBLIC meeting has been called to allow residents to have their say on what more can be done to tackle the ongoing problem of drivers ignoring the 20mph speed limit in Hepscott. The meeting, which will take place on Thursday 21 November (6.30pm), follows feedback from Northumberland County Council that none of the measures proposed by Hepscott Parish Council - and voted on by residents in a postal ballot in June - are feasible.

More than 70% of residents who took part in the ballot voted for the introduction of new measures, with chicanes the most popular of the three options proposed.

Following a meeting of the Parish Council in July,

a walk-through of the village took place with an official from the County Council in August. It was subsequently revealed that, because of regulations regarding the installation and siting of chicanes there are no feasible sites along the C132 through the village to install them. Speed humps were ruled out for the same reasons. It was also noted that speed cushions had been shown at other locations in Northumberland to be ineffective and would not be considered. Northumberland County Council leader Glen Sanderson said he would be unable to attend the meeting in November due to a holiday but added: "I know our highways officers are doing their best to find a solution."

TrafficWatch: Page 6



Council leader Glen Sanderson, left. Right, how residents voted in June's ballot



Inside: New MP writes for the Hepscott Herald

Joe Morris on his first 100 days - Page 8

	Number	Percentage
Papers delivered	190	100
Papers returned	78	41.1%
In favour of new measures	55	70.5%
Against new measures	22	28.2%
Spoilt paper	1	1.3%
Chicanes	29	52.7%*
Speed cushions	6	10.9%*
Speed humps	20	36.4%*

*of those favouring new measures



Noticeboard



Hepscott Herald

The Hepscott Herald is a community newsletter provided by Hepscott Parish Council. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the council or the editors. Whilst every effort is taken to check the accuracy of the information contained herein, no responsibility can be taken for errors or omissions.

The Herald is published at least three times a year and is distributed free of charge to every household in the parish.

If you would like to advertise in the Herald or contribute an article to a future edition, please get in touch with one of the editors using the contact details below.

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The deadline for Edition 83 is Friday 31 January 2025

Pickle Night
Hepscott Parish Hall
Saturday 26th October 6.30pm
Bring your instruments, songs, poems and tales
of the battle of Tryfan.



Drawn in 19th century style
Bring your own bowl for
Old Salt Veg Farty Beef Stew
Flaming Grog, Sticky Toffee Pudding.

Make up a table of 6-8 and nominate a you
captain.

Tickets £10 from clairemcheith@me.com
07778079260

436 bus timetable



Monday to Friday

From Morpeth

Morpeth	07.13	09.33	11.33	13.33	15.48	17.48
Hepscott	07.25	09.45	11.45	13.45	16.00	18.00
St Mary's	07.41	10.01	12.01	14.01	16.16	18.16

To Morpeth

St Mary's	07.52	10.12	12.12	14.12	16.27	18.27
Hepscott	08.08	10.28	12.28	14.28	16.33	18.33
Morpeth	08.25	10.40	12.40	14.40	16.55	18.55

Saturday

From Morpeth

Morpeth	07.33	09.33	11.33	13.33	15.33	17.33
Hepscott	07.45	09.45	11.45	13.45	15.45	17.45
St Mary's	08.01	10.01	12.01	14.01	16.01	18.01

To Morpeth

St Mary's	08.08	10.08	12.08	14.08	16.08	18.08
Hepscott	08.28	10.28	12.28	14.28	16.28	18.28
Morpeth	08.40	10.40	12.40	14.40	16.40	18.40

Hepscott Parish 100 Club

The latest winners of the 100 club are:

June: C Gray £25; P Kidd £10; F Clark £5; M Hall £50 (six-monthly extra prize)	K MacDonal £10; A Dawson £5
July: N&T Hetherington £25; N Parker £10; A McGrath £5.	September: M MacAndrews £25; E Wilson £10; C Torr £5.
August: P Kidd £25;	For more information contact Anne Colver at pacolver@gmail.com or on 517199.

Tackling village flood risk

Malcolm Paton
Hepscott Parish Council

AFTER a particularly wet autumn, winter and spring, heavy rain on already saturated ground came close to causing flooding in the village on April 9 this year.

By early afternoon the Hepscott Burn was running full to the underside of the road bridge, likewise the water course running in front of Thornlea was also full to the top of the bank.

Both broke bank mid-afternoon and flooding was evident in the gardens of some properties. The efforts of the flood warden and residents working together avoided further issues, and in line with the Met Office weather forecast the rain eased late afternoon and river levels dropped. This is the highest river levels have been since 2008 and in 2012.

Following the 2008 flood a Flood Group was established by residents. They got together with the Environment Agency, Northumberland County Council and Northumbrian Water to get schemes actioned which would reduce flood risk. The more successful schemes involved holding ponds at Redhouse including a bund running at the back of the Orchard; an attenuation tank in the centre of the village to store excess surface water; additional drainage from the village to the sewage

works to take the strain off the drainage network; and the replacement of a bridge on the Hepscott Burn which regularly caused blockages. We also developed a flood plan to help deal with future issues. While there was a definite improvement in flood risk, risks cannot be eliminated and there was a further flood in 2012 but on a much smaller scale. Another issue was lack of long-term maintenance which meant some of the benefits may reduce in time. In 2016 the Parish Council formed another flood subgroup with the objective of looking at the whole issue of flooding again to see what else could be done. We also developed a flood plan.

The Parish Council, in conjunction with the Environment Agency, put together a flood plan which would be actioned if the village was hit again by flooding. This involves volunteer flood wardens who would liaise with the emergency services, warn residents at risk and assist where possible. We also contacted Northumberland County Council for a meeting to discuss further flood alleviation measures. The first meeting was held in 2016 with Aaron McNeil. Eight years and numerous meetings later we gained promised funding from the Environment Agency for a further £388,000 for a flood alleviation scheme. Design work for the scheme is progressing. The objective of the work is to



Hepscott Burn floods in September 2008

slow the flow of flood water from the Coalburn, Catchburn and Redhouse Burn and reduce the peak flow, from entering Hepscott village and reduce the risk of flooding.

The design is being led by Northumberland County Council with the assistance of consultants when required. It will involve work at County Hall pond which will be reengineered to hold additional surface water. Likewise, the designers are looking at the Clifton area to form holding ponds to temporarily store flood water and reduce the peak flow passing through the village. Work to improve the Redhouse Ponds has already been completed and the work on the other areas is expected to be completed in 2025. The effect of these works will be to reduce further the risk of flooding.



The ladies were once again victorious in the annual tug of war competition held as part of the summer's Hepscott Olympics

Thanks to all who support our thriving parish hall

Eddie Mulqueen

Hepscott Parish Hall Chair

THE parish hall has been very well supported this quarter with numerous activities and events. Our thanks go to both, Katie, who is our vice chair and events manager and Anne our booking secretary who have worked extremely hard in ensuring the hall is a success for the whole community.

Regular activities are well supported with those clubs always looking for new members, clubs can be contacted via the details in the panel on the right or at the northumberlandvillagehalls.org.uk website.

The hall development proposal is progressing well. We have submitted an outline planning proposal to Northumberland County Council. This has been received well with our surveyor looking at their requirements in a positive manner. Our next steps are to get a full understanding of the costs of this project.

As trustees of the hall, we are also looking at changing our trading status to become a charity limited by guarantee. Advice is being sourced, however if we have any of our readers who have experience in this field (accountant/solicitor) we would love to hear from you.

Katie McDonald

Hepscott Parish Hall Vice Chair

THANKS to all who attended the events we've held at the hall over the last quarter, including a successful film night, coffee morning featuring Carol and Anne's delicious cakes, the inaugural Hepscott Olympics and our annual quiz night.

The highlight, however, was the flower show which featured some beautiful displays, and the wonkiest veg I have ever seen - see below! Coming up, don't miss our fabulous Pickle Night on 26 October - full details on Page 2. And our Christmas programme includes the ever-popular Mulled wine drop-in - don't forget to bring your singing voice. Finally, a plug for the Friday morning keep fit class, which runs from 10.30-11.30am with tea/coffee afterwards. This is a very informal class but one which is guaranteed to boost energy levels and lift the mood. We do a variety of different activities, including exercise to music. But I have to say that the tongues get the most exercise as the ladies love to chat! It is very sociable, there are no joining fees and anyone is welcome. Keep an eye on the information boards for the latest updates.



What's on at the Parish Hall

Pickle Night | Saturday 26 October, 19:00 - see Page 2

Women's Institute craft fair | Saturday 23 November 14:00-16:00

Residents' meeting re traffic issues with Fred Dye | Thursday 21 November 18:30

Parish Council meeting | Friday 29 November, 18:30

Advent/nativity service | Sunday 8 December 15:00

Mulled wine drop-in | Saturday 14 December 15:00-18:30

Carol singing in the orchard (weather permitting) | Sunday 22 December 15:30

Regulars

Mondays

Quilters 10.00-14.00 *For details contact Helen 01670 735316 or Carolyn 01670 515308*
Tai Chi 18.30-19.30
Amanda 01670 820464

Tuesdays

Village Tea 14:00-16:00 (last Tuesday of month)
Women's Institute (3rd Tuesday of month)
Margery 01670 515049
Line Dancing 19.30-21.00
Carol 01670825050

Wednesdays

Yoga 18.30 - 19.30
Gordon 07703 581171

Thursdays

Hepscott Art Group 9.15-12.15
Ted 01670 829989

Bridge Practice 13.30-16.30

Ray 01670 730930

Hatha Yoga 18:00-19:00

Shalini 07476998090

Parish Council 18.30-21.00

bi-monthly

Parish Clark 01670 503883

Fridays

Keep Fit 10.30-12.00

Katie 01670 514031

Bridge Practice 13.30-16.30

Garry 01670 825050

Pilates 18.00-19.00

(fortnightly)

John 07981 170123

Occasionally: Film, Quiz & Drama Nights from 19.30

Saturdays

Chatterbox Quilters 10.00-

15.00 (second Saturday of

the month)

Liz 01670 715172

Hire the hall

Private hire available Sundays and at other times subject to availability. Hourly rates: Regular repeat bookings £11; Parish residents £13; Non-residents £17
Contact Anne on 01670 518888. These rates include £2 per hour electricity supplement



Glimpse of life inside the bog

We are fortunate not just to have a fabulous private nature reserve in the parish, but also a hugely talented wildlife photographer, in the form of Clark's Bog owner Peter Matthewson.

His latest selection of images from inside the bog include, clockwise from top left: Tiddles the mute swan; a pair of mallard chicks; a nuthatch songbird; a male great spotted woodpecker; a badger; a male southern hawkker; a pair of battling dragonflies; and a smiling female southern hawkker.





Nature notes
by Peter
Matthewson



It has been a poor year for insects on the reserve; they were badly hit by the cold and wet spring. Our dragonflies have been late in emerging and only in smaller numbers than usual.

The same applies to our birds; cold and wet weather at hatching time significantly hit brood sizes, especially the smaller birds such as the tits.

The badgers seemed to have fared better with regular visitations to the reserve usually after dark but as you can see from the picture I did see a juvenile out for a stroll in the afternoon.

For the story of Tiddles our mute swan cygnet from last year you will need to visit my blog!
www.petesbogblog.com



 **Paws for Thought**

How do I get on with the little one? I'm having a ball

PEOPLE often ask how I'm getting on with the little human, now that he's a bit less little than he was and he has developed more than a passing interest in his hairy older brother. Well, I must admit I'm not a huge fan of him sitting on my bed or chucking his toys at me. But it is also true that our friendship is blossoming and (don't mention this to him) I think he's *changing me*.

We ex-racing greyhounds, you see, don't do a lot of the things that most other dogs do, like carrying sticks, jumping in puddles or chasing balls. And that was true for me too. Until recently.

The little one is obsessed with balls of all shapes and sizes. He has to have at least one in his possession at most times, especially when out on a walk.

At first I thought this was a bit odd as I've never understood why humans throw things away only for us dogs to go and pick them up. If they really want them back, they should go and get them themselves. But I've changed. The little one gets so excited about these balls that I've begun to get in on the act. It started with playing at home, but now I've even taken to chasing after them on a walk - and especially on my favourite walks on the sandy stuff. It turns out it's quite fun and dad seems to really appreciate it (i.e. it earns me an extra treat). So a win-win really.

I wonder if the little one will pick up any habits from me in return? I might see if I can get him interested in sniffing lampposts. Now that IS my idea of fun. But not sure mum and dad would be too pleased.

Walter



Highways chief to look at options following village walk-through

Fred Dye and Malcolm Paton update residents on measures being considered to address speeding concerns in Hepscott village

THE results of the residents' ballot for further traffic-calming measures were posted on the Parish Hall noticeboard on 3 July. The main points were:

- 70.5% of those who returned their voting slip voted for further traffic-calming measures;
- of these, 52.7% voted for chicanes; 10.9% for speed cushions; and 36.4% for speed humps.

A meeting of the Parish Council was held on 18 July, which was attended by Councillor Glen Sanderson and two officers from Northumbria Police. At the meeting, Fred Dye gave a presentation on the result of the ballot and all the issues raised by residents regarding road safety concerns in the village, with particular reference to the article printed in the Morpeth Herald on 9 May which highlighted one resident's safety concerns about persistent speeding. Coun Sanderson said he would arrange a 'walk-through' of the village with himself, the Highways Delivery Manager, Fred Dye, Malcolm Paton and David Cowans from the Parish Council.

That meeting took place on 16 August. Coun Sanderson and Mr Cowans were unable to attend. The 'walk-through' was from the level crossing to the A192. The major issue of speeding and the feasibility of the installation of a chicane at either end of the village and speed cushions or speed humps through the village were discussed.

Other concerns discussed were:

- Narrow/missing pavements and 'line of sight' issues caused by encroaching hedgerows, which were inspected.

- The entrance/exit to the public footpath to Coalburn Terrace which is on a 'blind-bend' with no pavement.

- At the junction with the A192 the possibility of installing a 'traffic island' to stop traffic 'cutting the junction' and to assist in slowing down vehicles from the Cramlington direction onto the C132.

The NCC Highways Delivery Manager noted that, unfortunately, because of regulations regarding the installation and siting of chicanes, there are no feasible sites along the C132 through the village to install them.

He also noted that speed cushions have been shown at other locations in Northumberland to be ineffective and will not be considered.

As with chicanes, regulations and environmental concerns have ruled out the installation of speed humps through the village.

We discussed the siting of the interactive radar speed sign at the south of the village.



A stretch of the C132 road running through Hepscott village where residents have complained of persistent speeding

The Highways Manager agreed that the sign is in its most effective position as it has been shown, not only in Hepscott but in similar locations, that most speeding occurs as vehicles are leaving a village. For completeness, below we have included text from the report received from the Highways Delivery Manager which outlines the actions Northumberland County Council Highways will take following the 'walk-through'.

As discussed today I will look at refreshing and adding road markings to the areas near junctions and the main junction to the A192/C132.

I will need to discuss A192 options with the traffic safety team, as mentioned on site, there will be a need to allow for HGVs and large articulated vehicles to enter the junction from the Cramlington side.

Other items discussed:

- Review land ownership at one location.
- Investigate the existing kerb line along identified sections.
- Sweep the area along the channels where verges have encroached.
- Written response on traffic speeds along the C132 and the council's criteria.
- Supply traffic speed data.
- Explore the further cutting back of the two main hedge lines raised during the walk through. (Work with the Parish Council to agree the best time to complete this work).

The Parish Council has decided to hold a residents meeting on Thursday 21 November in the Parish Hall at 6:30pm to which all residents are invited to attend. The results of the ballot and a presentation regarding road safety issues will be given and residents' concerns can be aired and discussed.

**Public meeting: Hepscott Parish Hall,
Thursday 21 November at 6.30pm**



Celebrating magnificent floristry - and region's most notable women

Sandra Armstrong
Press Secretary, Hepscott W.I.

AUTUMN days again and from October our meetings will revert to afternoons from 2pm to 4pm.

Back in June our guest speaker was Stannington member Sandra Dickinson who demonstrated flower arrangements which could be made at home. All of her flowers and greenery are cultivated in her own beautiful garden, which some of us have been able to visit. She showed us how to create four arrangements naming the everyday flowers she used as she went, the most surprising being "Gone to seed leeks"! The eye-catching "Over the garden fence" was followed by a beautiful table arrangement, then a stunning basket of roses and finally a hand tied bouquet to place in a gift box. She then kindly offered the arrangements as raffle prizes which thrilled the four lucky winners.

In July eminent historian and archaeologist Professor David Breeze brought his newly edited book *Hadrian's Wall in our time* to illustrate his talk. As it would be impossible to avoid, he began by discussing the event that made national news last September - the felling of the tree at Sycamore Gap. He then showed us lots of photographs and pictures from the early 1800's onward. A fascinating journey along the wall was made by aspects offered by contributors from all around the world, which are included in the book. We all enjoyed reliving our own memories of visits to this historic monument.

The local history theme continued after the summer break when Michael Gatherer came in September to talk about Notable Women of the North East. He gave a brief life story of about 20 women, some familiar such as Grace Darling, and others less well known. The subjects ranged from novelists, reporters, medical pioneers and entrepreneurs ending with the youngest to date - footballer Lucy Bronze - who was awarded the MBE last year. It was a fascinating collection of local women to be proud of.



The outfits that were designed for the Blue Light Babies by Sandra Dickinson. Members snapped up the patterns to create them.

A few days later, having won last year's Federation Treasure Hunt, Hepscott W.I. set the clues and hosted this year's event. It began in our village hall and, following a route taking in Morpeth, Bedlington, Sheepwash and Northumberlandia, ended up at Stannington Village Hall where a delicious tea awaited the contestants. The winning team was announced as Bedlington Babes so the pleasure of setting next year's event falls to them.

Our little jars of 5p's collected for the RNLI were handed in and we hope to visit the Newbiggin Station next year.

We heard about Blue Light Babies, these are children undergoing cancer treatment who are given a cuddly "chemo duck" at the onset and can choose a new outfit for it on subsequent hospital visits. Sandra brought a range of outfits to show and members eagerly snapped up the patterns to create them.

In October Rebecca Thompson of the Seaglass Company will tell us about collecting glass from the beach and using it to make jewellery. In November we will be exploring local wildlife with a team from the Hancock Museum and the December meeting will be Christmas Party afternoon.

Following our very successful Craft Fair in 2022 we are looking forward to repeating this event on Saturday November 23 in the parish hall. It will be a great opportunity to shop early for Christmas with lots of handcrafted articles to buy (and eat!) and a craft table where children can create their own works of art. Everyone is invited and we look forward to welcoming you all.



Send us your snaps!



Don't forget to send us your photographs of life in Hepscott and the surrounding area. These two horses were enjoying a lovely recent frosty autumnal morning when this photograph was taken. Send your snaps to andrewrhebden@sky.com and we'll feature them in the next edition.



Joe Morris

Focusing on issues that matter in our region's rural communities

SATURDAY 12 October marked 100 days since I was elected as the new Hexham constituency's first Labour MP. As a government it is clear that we are already enacting change that will make a tangible difference to lives across our constituency, which of course now includes Hepscoth, and as your MP I remain committed to the pledges that I made to you throughout my campaign. Since being elected as your MP I have made it my mission to be a strong and vocal advocate for the people of this constituency, contributing in Parliament ten times and leading two adjournment debates with high importance to the area.

My first debate focused on addressing the decline in high-street banking provisions and the effect this has had on rural areas. Issues with bank access are consistently mentioned to me with elderly constituents having to travel long distances to access in-person banking support and small business owners facing a loss in profits during the time it takes to travel to banks in larger towns. For our rural communities, elderly, and small business owners, bank closures are a serious barrier to financial inclusion and financial autonomy. The second debate I led was on the future of sheep farming highlighting the pressures our farmers face, from rising costs to concerns over post-Brexit trade policy. I remain in constant dialogue with local farmers, most recently visiting Goodfellows Farm in Morpeth, whose livelihood is affected by these concerns and continue to champion their voices in Parliament.

More recently in Parliament I made my speaking debut in Prime Minister's Questions calling upon the Prime Minister to outline his plans to better support children with special educational needs and disabilities in our rural communities. My questioning was informed by the high volume of emails I have received from concerned families around the constituency who are struggling to access adequate SEND provisions and case stories provided to me by schools who have had their SEND resources significantly reduced in the past 14 years. I have secured a meeting with Catherine McKinnell MP, Minister for School Standards, and plan to discuss these issues further.

October has been a great month for the constituency office as we are now fully staffed and the team is working hard to support residents

across the constituency. We have had casework success stories from securing backdated pension payments to obtaining a blue badge for a constituent who had been waiting for five years. In addition to which, myself and the team continue to push Northern Rail on the issue of train cancellations.

So far I have held four advice surgeries in various towns across the constituency and I am incredibly grateful to those who have attended and shared their experiences with me. Assisting constituents with the issues they need help with is a rewarding and important part of the job and your input enables me to better represent our constituency in Parliament. My office is in the process of organising the next advice surgery. Please keep an eye out on my Facebook page, Joe Morris for Hexham constituency. On the national scale, the Government is already making strides in plans to address the current housing crisis with a scheme to provide affordable housing for first time buyers and the introduction of the Renters Rights Bill which will transform the experience of private renting.

Our manifesto pledge to launch the publicly owned GB Energy is also in motion with the location of its headquarters being announced as Aberdeen and work is underway to bring clean energy solutions and lower bills to households across the UK. Workers' rights continue to be at the centre of our plans, with the new Employment Rights Bill seeking to ensure that workers across the UK are able to have a healthy work-life balance. And while North East Mayor, Kim McGuinness, already has plans underway to bring buses in this region under public control, this Government's Buses Bill will speed up this process and make sure our transport services return to serving people rather than profits.

I look forward to meeting more residents from Hepscoth and the surrounding areas in the coming months and will ensure that the voices of constituents here are heard in Parliament. If you would like to contact me about any issues you may be facing, please don't hesitate to reach out to joe.morris.mp@parliament.uk

Joe Morris is MP for Hexham

YOUR *name* HERE

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