

The Column

Swarland Village Action Group Committee

Chairman: Neil Mansfield. Secretary/Editor Suzanne Stanley

Treasurer: Susan Richardson

Committee Members: Robert Brotherton, Carmen Hubbard, John Richardson

The cost of production of this issue of *The Column* has been met by
Newton on the Moor & Swarland Parish Council
and **Swarland Village Action**

Wedding Celebration at Blue House, Newton on the Moor

On Saturday 23rd May 2026 we shall be celebrating the marriage of our youngest son Ross to his partner Steph. This will be held in the field behind our house at Blue House, Newton on the Moor and there will be additional traffic arriving and departing from the event on that date. There will also be music and fireworks but these are being professionally provided to the venue and will not go on after 11pm. We apologise in advance for any inconvenience but hope you will understand and wish the happy couple a very special day. Thank you in advance.

Margie and Malcolm Davidson.

SWARLAND VILLAGE CLUB

Friendly Bar Regular events Live Sports
Membership Benefits Room Hire Non-members Welcome
Regular Quiz Nights and Music Events
Well-behaved digs allowed
Post Office Services – see elsewhere
For further information follow:
Facebook: [SwarlandVillageClubNEW](#)
Instagram: [@SwarlandVillageClub](#)

Felton and West Thirston WI welcome

visitors and new members to attend their meetings at Felton Village Hall on the 2nd Monday of the month, 7.15 for 7.30pm start. Visitors £5.

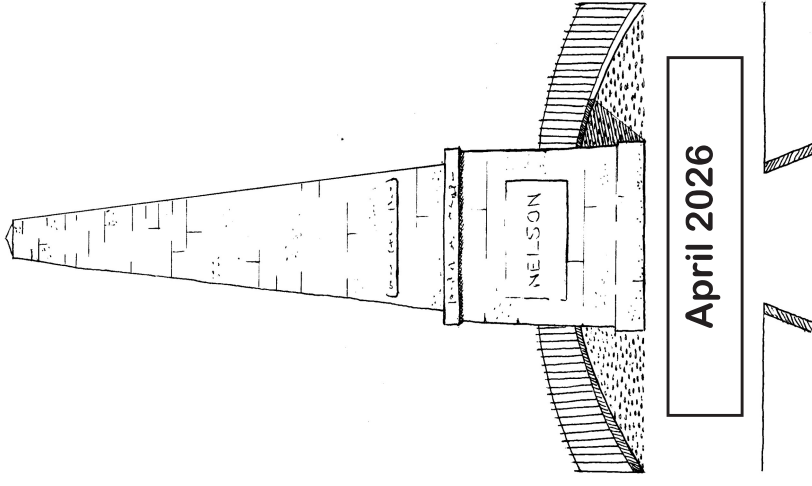
April 13th – The Oswin Project

May 11th – St. John's Ambulance first aid

June 8th – The June Cup (various competitions)

A great opportunity to meet up and make new friends

For more information please contact Maureen on 077632 28035 or email: maurent143@hotmail.com



Produced by

Swarland Village Action

Newsletter 142

Parish Spring Clean – Sunday 19th April
10.00 – 12.00. Details inside

Editor's notes

Welcome to this issue of *The Column*, and a special welcome if you've just moved into the area.

Thank you to those who said they'd like the newsletter to continue in its present form as it's useful to have the information to hand rather than having to check the various organisations online for all the different events. I've taken over Bryan's role of pulling the information together and reformatting where necessary. *But more importantly, and to my great relief, Elaine Burberry and Barry Liddell have taken on the task of setting it up for printing* (by NCC Printing Dept). Thank you both.

Please send entries for the June issue by Tuesday 26th May to The Editor, Suzanne Stanley, at maxitoby1@gmail.com, or for more information ring or text 07484 347 181.

Neighbourhood Plan – GOOD NEWS!!

- 1 The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group is pleased to confirm that our NP has now been examined by the independent Examiner. He has made his final report recommending that it proceed to a referendum, and NCC has approved the Plan to go to Referendum.
- 2 The 'Referendum Neighbourhood Plan' and Policies Maps, together with the Examiner's report are now online at Northumberland Neighbourhood Plans – Northumberland County Council and the Background documents are on the Parish Council website.
- 3 The changes that the Examiner recommended were to ensure that the NP was compliant with various regulations and relevant case law. His report sets out in detail all of his reasoning.
- 4 Many of the Policies in the NP have passed without either any adjustment or with minor adjustment. Two Policies, 6 – the Protected Open Space designation of the Percy Wood Golf Course and 12 – Road Safety, have been removed. All of the changes were not unexpected but, with the help of the NP team at NCC and also, in the last stages of the draft Plan being prepared, Jenny Ludman our planning consultant, we created multiple layers of protection so that if one policy did not get through, another, we hoped, would. Consequently, the Steering Group believes that the Examination report and recommendations are fair.
- 5 There will be a Swarland Buffer along the west side of Swarland to protect the village from development of the caravan park resulting in the merging of Percy Wood with the village either on the area of the driving range or south of the Bari Bar site.

Walking Netball

Wednesdays, 6–7pm in the MUGA court next to the tennis courts in Vyner Park. A fun, sociable game of walking netball – no previous experience necessary. Come and have a try! Contact Kerry on 07752124889 or just turn up.

NotM & Swarland Parish Council

Following our meeting last week we have news on the NCC Planning Dept. on the planning application for an additional 180 caravans at the holiday park to take it to 680 units. The following is an extract from the report:

25/04076/FUL Proposal: Reconfiguration of the existing golf course, change of use of the 7 northernmost golf holes to accommodate up to 180 additional new static caravans/lodges and creation of a new leisure hub building with associated access, parking, drainage ponds and landscaping works

Recommendation: That this application be GRANTED permission subject to conditions and a S106 agreement securing a financial contribution towards Coastal Mitigation and Biodiversity Net Gain.

There is a final meeting next Wednesday where we have an opportunity to put our case so it is not over yet. If anyone wants to read the full report then it is available from NCC or I can send the PDF to anyone who wants to read it.

On a brighter note, David Francis and I met with the NCC on Monday 30th about the Swarland back roads and we have some good news. I will report on this as I get more information.

Mark Whiteley, Chmn

PC Clerk Jan Anderson, clerk@newtonswarlandpc.org.uk or 07775 060 430.
Website: www.newtonswarlandpc.org.uk .

**It's time to give the parish its annual spring clean!
Sunday 19th April, 10-12.
Litter pickers, gloves and sacks will be provided.
Meet at 10am at The Square in Swarland**

News from Northumbria Primary Care

Your local NPC Felton and Widdrington surgery is a research-active practice and Northumbria Primary Care is keen to promote studies that are relevant to long term conditions or acute conditions that patients may have.

You may be invited to take part in these studies but there is no obligation to do so, and you can decline any invitation that you get if you are not interested.

As a research active organisation we have our own webpage dedicated to research <https://www.northumbriaprimarycare.co.uk/research-at-npc>.

On here you will find information on past and present studies that we are running across all 9 of our regional practices.

There is also a link on that page to let us know if you would like to find out more about potential research opportunities

Dr Justine Norman

SWARLAND VILLAGE HALL 200 CLUB

To join please complete the form on the Hall's Facebook page or contact lin88.svh@gmail.com

To all who have joined the 200 Club: the money raised for the hall will be put to good use, so a big 'Thank You' to you all.

February draw:

1st – Sue & John Richardson, no. 3, donated to the Hall
2nd – Helen Morgan, no. 161, donated to the Hall
3rd – prize Ralph Dinsley, no. 39

March draw:

1st – Robert Cowen, no. 125. No. 15
2nd – Richard Higgs, no. 92, donated to the Hall.
3rd – Sue & Pete Short

Congratulations to you all, Come and join us.
You never know – it could be your number next

- 6 The Percy Wood golf course and Swarland Wood are designated as part of the green and blue infrastructure of the parish giving them an increased level of importance and thus protection. There are other areas in Swarland designated as Local Green Space.
- 7 The Plan will guide the planners as to the type of development that will be acceptable in the five designated housing areas of Swarland and also in Newton on the Moor, both in the conservation area and the remainder of the village.
- 8 The proposed designation of currently unlisted heritage assets in the parish has been accepted as has the designation of our assets of community or recreational value such as Swarland School and the playing fields there, the village halls at both Swarland and Newton on the Moor, Vynner Park, Nelson's cafe and The Cook & Barker.
- 9 The policy to address local housing needs has been approved.
- 10 The policy to allow cycle paths to be made between Newton on the Moor and Swarland, also between Swarland and Felton has also been approved.
- 11 The NP is now at a stage where it carries considerable weight with regard to planning applications. There are many provisions in it that will assist with regard to applications currently with NCC, including the proposed major development at Percy Wood Golf Course.
- 12 The NP team at NCC will now commence the process of setting up a referendum. We will find out the date that they set in the coming days.
- 13 All parish residents who are registered to vote will be invited to vote at the referendum to confirm your agreement that the Plan becomes a document that NCC has to consider with regard to each planning application in the parish. There will be at least one, if not two, polling stations. There will be notices advertising this and the Steering Group will be encouraging people to vote and offering a lift to anyone who needs help getting to the polling station.
- 14 We very much hope that the Neighbourhood Plan will pass the referendum stage with a resounding 'yes' vote.
- 15 **The making of the Neighbourhood Plan now depends upon all of us exercising our right to vote at the referendum. If we do not get a majority vote in favour of it then it will not be made and all of the hard work of the last three years will be wasted. So as soon as the date of the referendum is known, please put it in your diary and please do go along and vote.**

Donna Corbin

Chair, Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Swarland & Newton Action on Climate – SNAC

Swarland Wood

Nine enthusiastic SNAC volunteers spent five hours in the spring sunshine on 21st March cutting back rhododendron and laurel from around the old boating lake in Swarland Woods. This will let more light in and encourage the growth of a biodiverse wet woodland. This was our second day of action working with Forestry England at the boating lake and there may be a final day's work sometime in the future.

Forestry England plan to start re-planting in the felled area this month.

Pond Power

Dr Mike Jeffries gave an interesting and entertaining talk on 'The Power of Ponds' on 17th March, all the more impressive for being in semi-darkness and without visual aids – thanks to power distinctly lacking in the Club (thank you Northern Power)! He talked about how ponds spring up in the most unlikely places and support a wide range of quirky and sometimes unexpected species, while also capturing and storing carbon.

Later in the year, we hope to have a talk on the importance of pollinating insects and how to encourage them, which will be open to all – watch this space.

Bus Service

Please continue to support the Saturday bus service throughout the Spring and Summer months. If you haven't already tried it, consider giving the car a rest for the day and let the bus take the fuss! Look out for changes to the 415 timetable later in the year. We'll aim to keep you informed as soon as we know exactly what these will be.

SNAC now meets in Swarland Club every two months, with ongoing activities in between. If you are interested in all things climate and biodiversity, why not come along to our next meeting at **6.00pm, Tuesday 19th May?** To find out more, visit www.snac.online or email talktosnac@gmail.com

Carolyn & Liz

Events

Saturday 11th April – Monthly coffee morning and plant sale. If you're sowing and propagating right now and have any extras you could contribute, please email us at notmjubileehall@yahoo.com. We can collect.

Saturday 18th April – Spring Crafting. Join Lorraine Griffiths of the Northumbria Basketry Group to make two willow bird feeders. Two sessions to choose from: **10am–1pm or 2–5pm. £30 per person** to include all material and tea/coffee with home-made cake. Please email notmjubileehall@yahoo.com to reserve your place.

Saturday 9th May – Monthly coffee morning.

We're always looking for volunteers to help us run the hall and our events. We are a dedicated group of unpaid trustees and volunteers. If you have any of the following skills and have a few hours to help, we'd love to hear from you:

Graphic design using Canva software
Social media and online marketing
Website development
Food prep and service
Hospitality 'front of house' skills
Event planning and management
Engineering and project management

If you would like to have a chat about how you might get involved, drop us a line at notmjubileehall@yahoo.com

Alison Cowan

A Celebration of the Life of Joyce Snaith

To be held at the Jubilee Hall, Newton on the Moor on Friday 24th April, from 12 o'clock noon until 7pm.
Everybody welcome, pop in and pop out, or stay awhile.
Service and Prayers at 4 pm led by Reverend Helen O' Sullivan.
Music, Songs and Singing encouraged.
Victuals provided.

Swarland Moor Local Heritage Group (SMLHG)

The 2025/2026 season recommenced in February with a talk by Peter Reed on Alnwick's history and how it reflected the County's history. In March, John Davidson from the Northumbrian Language Society gave a talk about the Northumbrian language, how it came into being and what the future holds for it. Both talks were informative and entertaining.

On **14th April, Linda Bankier**, from the **Northumberland Archives** will talk about **The Ford Estate** at the time of the Waterford family, 1820s-1907. The talk will explore what the estate was like during this time, improvements that were made and the role of Lady Waterford in transforming it.

There has been a slight amendment to the published programme. On **Tuesday 10th May, Marie Dooley** will deliver a talk on **'Blood Brothers' – the Northumberland Clans**.

On **9th June Andy Griffin** will talk about **Lancelot 'Capability' Brown** of Northumberland, asking whether he was England's greatest gardener.

SMLHG meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:30 in Swarland Village Club. Everyone is welcome, members, new members and visitors – please come and join us. Further information and updates can be found on our Facebook site or by emailing: swarlandmlhg@gmail.com

Lesley Selfe / Phil Eastlake

What's going on in Newton on the Moor's Jubilee Hall?

Thank you to the National Lottery Community Fund

The Trustees of the Newton on the Moor Jubilee Hall are delighted to share the news that we have been awarded £7,683 of National Lottery funding to help improve accessibility for our community. The money will help bring our building into line with modern building codes, and improve accessibility for hearing aid users and visitors with mobility issues.

We will be installing a hearing loop in the main hall, adding an automatic door opener to enable wheelchair users and visitors with mobility issues to access the building, and purchasing chairs with arms, which will assist people to rise more easily.

Less effort, more gain – No Mow May

Don't forget to let your lawnmower rest up during May – and even beyond. Let all or some of your grass grow to give wildflowers a chance to bloom and wildlife a place to hide and forage.

More flowers, even 'just' humble buttercups, daisies and dandelions, means more insects means more birds (and hopefully increasingly scarce hedgehogs). But other wildflowers such as birds' foot trefoil, selfheal and even orchids are probably waiting patiently in your soil for a year when they don't get their heads sliced off by your mower! Our houses were built on meadow, and despite the upheaval, some plants survive.

Go wild! Let your grasses (there will be a variety) develop their full potential and flower, as well as providing ideal habitat for moth larvae. And even when you do cut your grass (or cut paths through your long grass), during the hotter summer months a height of 5–7cm will help it to stay green and healthy.

Suzanne (on behalf of SNAC)

Swarland Village Hall

The Hall is run as a community facility and is available for Hire. Bookings can be made online using our Hallmaster Booking System. Please visit our website www.swarlandvillagehall.com to get further information on activities and facilities available and to make a booking enquiry, or contact Anne Raine, Booking Secretary at anne.raine.svh@gmail.com.

SVH Regular Activities:

Monday:

Swarland Carpet Bowls: 1.30–3.30pm – All equipment provided, please contact Harold on 07713 097250 for further information.

Archery Practice: 7–9pm. The Club can supply all equipment. Contact Steve on 01670 787883 for more information.

Tuesday:

Zumba: From 14th April, 10–11am. For further details please contact Magda on email trigirl_magda@hotmail.com

Pilates: 5.30–6.15pm. For details contact Alix on 07940 009150 or email alixwestgarthtaylor@hotmail.com

Adult Ballet: 7–8.15pm. Interested in giving it a go? Then contact Alison on 07703 154777 or email alison.allensunlimited.net

Wednesday:

Qigong for Health (Chinese Energy Exercise): **10–11am** (Class full) and **11.15am–12.15pm** (waiting list for this class). For further information please contact Anne on 07934 425844.

Swarland Craft Group: 1.30–3.30pm. New members welcome. All enquiries to Kathryn on 07718 201859.

Swarland Voices: 5–6.30pm. Our local choir; for further details contact Donna on 07506 036255.

Coquet Concert Band: 7.30–9.30pm. Band practice night; contact Andy Taylor (Conductor) 07832 249699 or Derek (Band Secretary) 07891 245201 or email coquetconcertband@gmail.com

Thursday:

Conversational French: 7–8pm. Contact David on 07775 934847 for more details. (Please note the Thursday Yoga classes run by Alix are on hold for the time being)

Friday:

Irish Dance Class: Children 4.45–5.45pm. Contact Julie on 07838 535131 for further information.

Swarland Village Hall Monthly Quiz Nights: Doors open 7pm for 7.30pm start & entry is £3 per person. Purchase your drinks from the SVH Bar, nibbles are provided. All welcome, make a team (max size = 8) and come and test your knowledge against our various Quiz Masters! **Next two dates are Sat. 11th April and Fri. 1st May 2026.**

Saturday:

Swarland Village Hall Coffee Mornings: 10am–12noon, 4th Saturday of every month. Entry: £3.50 including Hot beverage & savoury or sweet treat, or **£4** including Hot beverage & Bacon or Sausage bun. Raffle! All welcome – your support is very much appreciated. **Next 3 dates: 25th April, 23rd May & 27th June.**

Crafty Friends: 1.30 – 3.30, 4th Saturday of every month. For more information, please contact Linda on 07789 887424.

One-Off SVH Events:

Many thanks to all who supported the **Swarland Voices Concert** on Saturday 14th March. Your generous support raised £362 towards Hall funds. Thanks also to everyone in Swarland Voices for not only the brilliant a cappella singing but for organising the whole event, including the delicious homemade cakes! This was SV's first ever 'just them' full-length village concert and the audience were treated to a varied and entertaining programme of songs. Well done everyone – thanks again.

The next SVH music event will be on **Saturday 18th July** when the **Coquet Concert Band** will be entertaining us with their amazing sound and musicianship – a date not to be missed, make a note of it now!

In the meantime how about giving your own vocal chords a try out at our first **Karaoke Night on Saturday 9th May**? Something a bit different and we're aiming for a fun, friendly evening where singing a song will be actively encouraged!

Further details on all SVH events can be found via the Village & SVH notice boards and Facebook pages – please keep a look out. Your continued support is very much appreciated.

That's it for this SVH update but before I sign off I would just like to say on behalf of the Hall Management Team how very sorry we all were to hear the sad news about our good friend Bryan Stanley. He was a great advocate for the Hall and many of us got to know him through his volunteer work as the Hall's Secretary / Booking Clerk, dual roles that he held for at least 20 years, maybe more! Bryan's knowledge and experience of the charitable sector and how things should be done was invaluable to the many SVH Committee members he helped and supported throughout this time. Personally I will always remember Bryan's kindness and support in helping me get my Qigong classes up and running in the Hall and then his gentle persuasion to join the Committee! That was 10 years ago, and now I'm the Booking Secretary and proud to say that Bryan's guiding hand is still evident in the Hall Hire documentation that I still use today.

Thank you Bryan for your service and dedication to our unique community space, you are greatly missed.

Anne Raine (on behalf of the SVH Team)