

Whinstone Times

Community Magazine for Embleton and
Christon Bank



March/April 2023

Edition No. 84

THE GREYS INN

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Welcome to the 84th edition of the Whinstone Times

As the days grow longer and fresh green shoots emerge from the ground, we can finally say that Spring is on its way!

Compiling the WT brings home just how much there is to do in our small community. Readers will learn more about the transformation of our quarry house and nature reserve, exciting new business ventures, our growing village school and the numerous clubs at the Creighton Hall & Parish Rooms...along with updates from our local councils & notes on the tireless work to protect our delicate natural habitats with all the flora and fauna they support.

It takes real energy and diverse talent to keep this community alive and we'd like to thank all of you who host, organise and participate in all our active local groups. Covid was such a challenging time and finding the energy to get back on track can be hard, but as we move into a new Spring, let's make the most of all our village community has to offer.

Thanks, as always, to everyone for their support for the WT.

Please send articles and ideas for content or fundraising to whinstone.times@gmail.com or call Jan Ainsley, 01665 576019.

Please send any items for 'What's On' to Shelagh Coxon, 01665 576791 or: gorshel1@outlook.com.

The deadline for material for the next edition is Monday 11th April 23
N.B. The editors reserve the right to alter or reject material and the views expressed within these covers are solely those of the contributors.

Earlier editions are available online at the Embleton community website: www.embleton-northumberland.co.uk/publish.html

Advertising Rates Per Issue: £15 for a quarter page, £30 for a half page and £50 for a full page. A discount of 5% is applied for 3 editions and 10% for 6.

The Council is concerned about the lack of action/information from NCC regarding highway matters and planning enforcement. Officers from NCC will be invited to a PC meeting to explain the reasons for delays etc. After the Standing Orders review in Nov 22, certain changes were proposed to the Tendering document. These have been agreed and both the Tendering document (revised) and the Complaints Procedure have been incorporated into the Standing Orders & will be added online.

The Council received reports on forthcoming projects to be carried out in the Nature Reserve by the Quarry Working Group. These included spoil removal from around Quarry House, improved footpaths, information boards and nesting boxes.

The precept for 2023/24 has been set at £12,500. The table below shows how the precept was dramatically reduced at the time of the pandemic to reduce cost to households. It was always foreseen that the charge would have to be slowly increased to bring it back to its pre pandemic level.

2019 - 20	2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24
£18,000	£20,000	£5,000	£10,000	£12,500

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County Councillor Wendy Pattison's report for Embleton Parish



E-mail: wendy.pattison@northumberland.gov.uk

Tel. 07779 983072

Facebook – Cllr Wendy Pattison

Four Way Junction at Stamford

The four way junction at Stamford has always been a concern, due to indecision by drivers, especially in the Summer months when tourists are not familiar with who takes priority on the road.

Work to ensure the crossing is made safer for everyone will commence at the end of February 2023.

Electric buses & EV chargers coming to region

The council has welcomed news that a fleet of new electric buses are coming to the region. The vehicles are on the way alongside 92 more charging points, after the North East successfully secured £19.5m of investment in a Transport Decarbonisation package.

The investment will deliver up to 52 new high-quality electric buses which will travel on some of the region's most heavily congested routes, alongside the new Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers – many at key destinations such as Park and Ride sites – to encourage multimodal journeys.

It is hoped expanded EV charging infrastructure will encourage more people to consider switching to a zero-emission vehicle where possible.

This funding will boost the availability of zero carbon transport options for local people, enabling cleaner, greener journeys to work & education, improving air quality, and reducing our carbon emissions from transport. The aim is to work towards Net Zero bus fleets by 2035.

New Northumberland Stop Smoking Website Launches

A new website has been launched to help Northumberland's smokers quit. Supporting people to stop smoking is a priority for Northumberland County Council - www.stopsmokingnorthumberland.co.uk unlocks help and advice for people on their journey to quitting.

More than 80% of people in Northumberland are non-smokers, yet smoking is still the main cause of preventable illness and death in the county. The new website will allow people to access lots of help, information and encouragement to stop smoking for good from the Northumberland Stop Smoking Service - a friendly, experienced team of advisers and specialists. With expert help from the stop smoking service, people are three times more likely to succeed than those who try to quit without support.

Wendy Pattison, Cabinet Member for Adult Wellbeing at Northumberland County Council, said: "Smoking is a leading cause of health inequalities and is responsible for much of the difference in life expectancy between the rich and poor. "

"We want to give our residents all the support we possibly can in their journey to stopping smoking. We know not everyone can access websites easily, so we also want to remind our residents that help and advice from the Northumberland Stop Smoking Service is available by calling 01670 813135.

Embleton School News

Over the last month Embleton Primary School has been featured in the March edition of the BBC's Countryfile Magazine, where the article explored the school's use of the beach as a learning environment.



Starfish class have also been in a photoshoot for Spotty Otter, promoting a range of children's outdoor clothing. You can read the article <https://spottyotter.co.uk/blog/beach-school/> .

Away from the cameras, children in school have been busy with their learning - the Year 6 children have been to the High School for a Careers Day; Key Stage 2 are going swimming in Alnwick every week; the whole school have had a visit from the Dogs Trust to learn about safety around dogs; and everyone has taken part in Internet Safety Day; to name but a few of the activities that we have got up to!



Parents are busy raising money for school with an Easter hamper raffle, which will offer some fabulous prizes for just £1 per ticket or £10 per book - the draw will be on the last day of Spring Term.

Tickets can be bought from school, contact Melissa Gilroy:
admin@vincentedwards.northumberland.sch.uk / 01665 576612.

Winter might seem like a quiet time of year, but there's still lots happening in the quarry.



Stabilisation of Quarry House is complete and work will soon begin on a new accessible footpath and groundworks to remove part of the nearby building spoil.

It's wonderful to see the old floor of the stables, and hard to imagine that the house was still habitable by people 40 years ago!

These days, it's home to a regionally important colony of tree sparrows. An interpretation board will provide information on the history and wildlife.

Thanks to Northumberland Coast AONB for funding the project and to the Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club for their financial support.



The Exmoor ponies are doing a great job of grazing. Yes, the ground is churned up and muddy in places, but this creates wonderful seedbeds for wildflowers to flourish later in the year.

It also prevents rank vegetation overwhelming all those lovely orchids and the nectar plants that are all-important for insects. We've now reached the milestone of 800 different species of plants and animals in our database and are looking forward to more sightings this year.



To find out more about the quarry, there'll be an open evening in the Creighton Hall on **Friday March 31st**. We'll aim to bring everyone up to date on wildlife, history, next steps and how you could help. Keep an eye on social media and local posters for details of times. If you can't make it to the meeting, our ten-year management plan is available online.

We're always in need of new volunteers. Whether it's stacking surplus bricks from Quarry House, cutting back brambles or gravelling paths, we need you! Contact us at embletonquarry@gmail.com or talk to one of the volunteers.

Embleton Quarry Northern Lights & Aurora Watch

Cold and clear winter nights have offered glorious sightings of the Aurora Borealis and the Milky Way. To find out more about our fantastic night skies, why not come along to our next Dark Skies evening, details below...



NORTHERN LIGHTS AT EMBLETON QUARRY

**Saturday 18th March 2023
18:30 - 20:30**

Join experts from Northumberland Astronomical Society (NASTRO) for a Northern Lights evening. Hunt for the elusive Aurora Borealis, look through telescopes & take a laser guided tour of the Milky Way !

**Location - Creighton Hall, Embleton.
Guest Speaker - Adrian Jannetta (NASTRO).
Followed by a visit to Embleton Quarry Dark Sky Site (optional).**

**Note: Outdoor sessions are weather dependent,
please wrap up warm and bring a torch (red light if possible).**

**This Event is FREE but spaces are limited.
Reserve your seat here - <https://tinyurl.com/2xsm3ba3>.**



A reminder that the new Embleton Quarry Aurora WhatsApp group alerts people when this amazing phenomenon appears. If you don't mind being woken in the night, contact embletonquarry@gmail.com with your mobile number and name. By doing this, you consent to us storing your information.

Embleton Village Shop and Post Office Update

Following roughly 10 weeks of extensive renovation, we are very proud to announce that the village shop and post office will re-open its doors again around mid-March.

Having undergone a complete transformation, The Village Farm Shop (as it will now be known) will bring the best of Northumberland to Embleton; with fresh, local produce at the centre of the new shop. There will be a wide range of seasonal fruit and vegetables, alongside exceptional meat from local farms and butchers, as well as freshly baked bread.

We will be offering a delicious selection of takeaway food including fantastic homemade sandwiches, sausage rolls, pies, quiches, cakes and sweet treats. Ideal for a grab and go lunch or a summer beach picnic.

Alongside local ales and spirits you will be able to enjoy a range of carefully selected wines, and of course we'll have exceptional cheeses and chutneys to go with them.

Importantly, you will still be able pop in for your morning paper, grab the essentials or use the Post Office. We will just be offering you a wealth of new products too.

We can't wait to welcome everyone back and to show you the new shop.
Jo and Grace



Space for Shorebirds



It's a time of change on the Northumberland Coast, as signs of spring are in the air! Spring migration is an exciting time of year, as birds all over the world are on the move. Species we have been watching, such as turnstone (photo above), sanderling and dunlin are preparing for a mighty journey to their breeding grounds in Arctic Canada, Svalbard & N. Scandinavia.

Before they embark on their migration, the birds must feed as much as they can to ensure they are fit and healthy, giving them the best chance possible of surviving their long journey and the breeding season. As part of their preparations, their physiology changes; their heart and lungs increase in size, and other internal organs not essential for a longdistance flight shrink, turning them into mini athletes without having to do any training!

It's incredibly important that we give the shorebirds plenty of space so they aren't disturbed whilst feeding or roosting. Every calorie counts for them, and energy wasted by flying away from unnecessary danger could be the difference between making it to their breeding grounds or not.

We are calling on our incredible Dog Rangers to help keep shorebirds safe as they prepare for the most challenging months of their lives. The Dog Ranger team is made up of nature-loving dogs & their owners, who have promised to give the birds space and never chase them. We have almost 100 dogs on the team now & we're so grateful to them for spreading the word and setting a fantastic example when walking on the beach.



As we say goodbye to the shorebirds heading North, we are planning our shorebird nest protection programme for ringed plovers and oystercatchers which nest along the Northumberland coast. The nest site on Embleton Beach has successfully supported birds of both species for 2 successive years now, and

from early assessments of the habitat, it looks suitable for the birds again this year. In addition to this site, ringed plovers successfully raised chicks at Low Newton last year, showing just how important this stretch of coastline is for them.



Their success wouldn't have been possible without support from local residents. It was a pleasure to talk to so many of you about the birds' progress throughout the season. Over the past two years we have recruited a large proportion of our Dog Ranger team at nest sites in this area, and we are extremely grateful to them for always giving the sites space to avoid disturbing the birds.

A ringed plover sitting on her nest

Over the coming months, along with the fantastic ringed plover surveyors from Coast Care, we will be out along the whole of the Northumberland Coast looking for potential nest sites and protecting as many as we can in a bid to build on the success of previous seasons and give ringed plovers a fighting chance of conserving their vulnerable population.

We are always looking for dogs to join our team, so if you have a pup who would make the perfect Dog Ranger then we'd love to hear from you! Please send us a message on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter (search Space for Shorebirds) to get involved. You can also find out more information on our website – www.spaceforshorebirds.co.uk. As always, thank you for your continued support for us and the birds, and we look forward to seeing you on the coast soon!

Peter Brown is away for this edition of the WT, so we look forward to more Nature Notes upon his return.

If you have any interesting sightings, observations or photographs of our local flora and fauna, please feel free to email shirewater.peter@gmail.com

Dunstanburgh Castle Hotel Update



A new bar and grill room has opened at the hotel, along with a Diners' Club launching in March.

Locals can benefit from great deals each month from Beer tasting and Pizza nights to Coffee and Cake lunch dates.

Simply sign up with your email address and bring family & friends together for some good times!

Visit www.dunstanburghcastlehotel.co.uk for details

Many farms have added to their business by diversifying into areas other than food production. We have been running Brunton House and Cottages for 10 years, offering self-catering accommodation in several different sized properties.

We got permission 12 years ago to convert our dilapidated, old, stone farm buildings into holiday cottages. We finished the first phase in 2012 and are now working on the second phase. We are very lucky to have great skilled local tradesmen who we have built relationships with over the years.

The farm buildings were no longer suitable for any modern farming role. The Brunton granary and mill are hundreds of years old and from archives we know that in late C13th the canons of Alnwick Abbey were granted the right to grind their corn at the Brunton Mill. The old mill building still had a water wheel working in 1930s, and evidence of the old sluice gates can still be seen now, but the position and size of these historic buildings made them tricky to incorporate into the farm. My father-in-law turned part of the old granary into a grain drying facility and storage in 1953. By the late 70s this was too small and too slow to keep up with the volume of crops and the speed with which they were then being harvested by the modern combines.

Having sat unused for forty years, the granary is now being converted as part of the Brunton tourism business. We are turning what was becoming a liability into an asset and it is very satisfying seeing these old buildings being brought back into life and adding another chapter. Converting old buildings is far more complicated and costly than creating new builds, but we unearth history and learn from the stonemasons, joiners and drainage team about things they have uncovered. Huge horseshoes from the old cart horses, branding irons, and the remains of the old oak water wheel are amongst the finds.

Sea Fret by Sean

Sky descended smothering the world with thin
steamy breath.

Time is trimmed. Space
bounded to a stone's throw.

No then, or now, no sky - no
clouds no Earth.

The world is reduced to air,
water and dry time, silent, but
for waves curling from the
restless beyond.

Now I am a single point in
simply connected space,
surrounded by untouchable
mothering white.

I want to strip, lay naked, that my
skin might blend unnoticed with
tones of sharp sand.

Grit in my eye pearls tears, while I stare - remembering clouds.



Embleton Carpet Bowls

The members of Embleton Carpet Bowls wish readers a Happy New Year 2023.

After starting this year on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at Creighton Hall, we have played an internal pairs competition, which was won by Alan Wilson and John Wallis.

We also welcomed 2 new members who have just moved to the village and have never played carpet bowls before.

They enjoyed themselves so much that they joined the club at the end of the evening, so why don't you pop in and see if carpet bowls is something you might enjoy too.

You will always be made welcome and it's a great way to meet new people in the village. John F Wallis

Embleton WI

Embleton WI meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 2pm in the Parish Room.

For our March meeting Daniel Watkins from Alnwick Castle will give a talk on "Notable Women in The Percy Family history".

For April Louise Percival will give a talk on Acupuncture.

Guests are very welcome to join us for this meeting - ring Joan Little (01665 576788) if you are interested.

We are always ready to welcome new members, so please come along and join us!



Embleton Flower Club

Monday 13th March Workshop with Rachel Blakey.

Members £20 and Non-Members £30.

Creighton Hall at 7.30pm

Monday 17th April - Embleton Thoughts - a Demonstration.

Members free and Non-Members £7.50

Creighton Hall at 7.30 pm.



All are very welcome - Enquiries to Alison Wilkin on 078022426808

Embleton Parish Room

Don't forget that Mandell's Coffee Pot runs each Wednesday morning from 10am-12pm in the Parish Room serving delicious cakes and refreshments.



The Parish Room is open every Monday 11am - 2pm, until 27th March serving a hot soup lunch. Sponsored by Community Action Northumberland, there is no charge, but donations are most welcome.

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Macmillan Northumberland Coast Hikes 2023

March is Cancer awareness month & Macmillan cancer charity have chosen our wonderful local coastline as one of the top locations across the UK to launch their Mighty Hike charity walks for Summer 2023.

Marathon (26 miles) Alnwick Castle to Bamburgh Castle
Sat 15th July 2023

Half marathon (13 miles) Alnwick Castle to Craster
Sun 16th July 2023

This is a great opportunity to get fit in our local landscape and raise money for a charity which supports everyone living with cancer.

For more information & to Sign Up for a walk, please visit
Mightyhikes.macmillan.org.uk



Mothering Sunday 19th

March 2023

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is also known as 'Refreshment Sunday' or the 'Sunday of the five loaves', as it was supposedly the day on which the miracle of Jesus feeding the five thousand took place.



This is a rare day of relief from the austerity of Lent and historically workers were given the day off to join their families and attend a church service in the nearest important church or cathedral - their 'Mother' church. As time went by, servants and apprentices in particular would use this special time to visit their families and spend precious time with their mothers, hence the 4th Sunday of Lent becoming Mothering Sunday.

More recently, Mother's Day has become a celebration of the role of the mother & is now the 3rd most popular time to buy greeting cards, behind only Christmas & Valentine's Day.

Clocks Go Forward, 26th March

Don't forget Daylight Savings Time will begin at 1am on Sunday 26th March, when the clocks will "spring" forward by one hour.

Did you know... Daylight Savings was introduced in 1916 to conserve coal & give farmers an extra hour of sunlight to work, thereby boosting the economy after WW1.



Useful Telephone Numbers

Emergencies - Police, Fire, Ambulance, Coastguard	999
Police (non-emergency)	101
Childline	0800 1111
Crime stoppers	0800 555 111
NHS non-emergency care	111
Northumberland C. C. County Hall	0345 600 6400
NCC Councillor for Loughoughton Ward – Wendy Pattison	07779 983072
Alnwick Medical Group	01665 656000
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	0344 811 8111
Samaritans	0845 790 9090
Silverline (advice for older people)	0800 470 8090
Traveline	0871 200 2233
C.A.B. Northumberland Adviceline	03444 111 444

Information

Copies of the Parish Council, Joint Burial Committee and the Quarry Working Group minutes can be found on the Parish Council website –

northumberlandparishes.co.uk/embleton/documents

Planning Applications

The Parish Council would like to make sure that all parishioners are aware of current planning applications in the Parish so that they are able review and comment on them.

For a list of current planning applications please visit

www.northumberlandparishes.co.uk/embleton

These lists are updated weekly, and all planning applications are discussed at the monthly Parish Council meetings.

What's On in March 2023

4th Craster Film Club, 7-9pm, Craster Memorial Hall (1st Sat of month)

12nd Embleton W.I. talk 2pm, Parish Room – Notable women in Percy history

13th Embleton Flower Club workshop with Rachel Blakely, 7.30pm
Creighton Hall

18th Embleton Quarry & NASTRO Aurora Night, 6.30pm Creighton Hall

20th Craster History Group, Craster Memorial Hall, 7pm (3rd Mon of every month)

What's On in April 2023

1st Craster Film Club, 7-9pm, Craster Memorial Hall (1st Sat of month)

11th Embleton W.I 2pm, Parish Room – Talk about Acupuncture

17th Craster History Group, Craster Memorial Hall, 7pm (3rd Mon of every month)

17th Embleton Flower Club demonstration, Embleton Thoughts, 7.30pm,
Creighton Hall

28-30th Alnwick Weekend Festival of Music, Alnwick Playhouse
alnwickmusicsociety.co.uk






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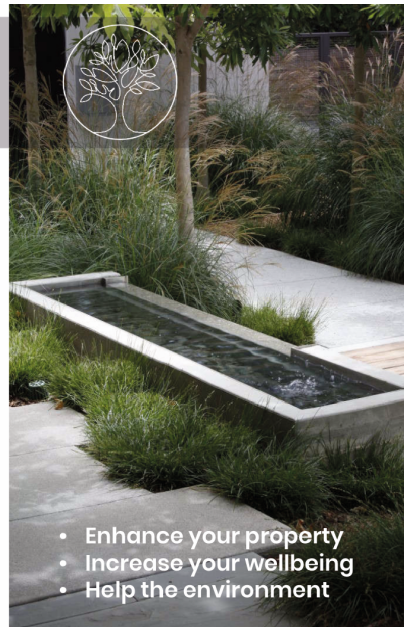
Providing inspiration as we go, we will work with you to help fine tune what you'd like to achieve from your garden, before delivering a unique design that meets your requirements and exceeds expectations. We specialise in working with discerning professionals who would like to invest in great design for their garden but perhaps lack the time or knowledge to do so themselves. We can create an inviting outdoor space that matches your lifestyle – helping you relax with family and friends and switch off from the pressures of modern life.

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- Help the environment