



Chatton News

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Issue: 51

A Newsletter for Chatton and Surrounding Area

25 January 2008

School Public Meeting

Over 50 people attended a public meeting organised by Northumberland County Council on Thursday 17 January. County Council officers presented the background and rationale for closing the school, giving falling pupil numbers as the principle reason. Many expressed their concern about the actual numbers that were forecast in April, since they disagreed with Health Service statistics. John Clark, a Northumberland CC Officer, said that the figures provided by GPs were always incorrect and the school's own figures were preferred by education officials. The numbers were contested by many in the audience who pointed out that the school's numbers had taken no account of older children moving into the area or any new development. There was concern that announcing in May 2007 that the school would close had had a negative impact on pupil numbers.

Residents were told that the proposed closure was based on the belief that the needs of the children would be better delivered within larger groups at other schools and this would ensure that pupils have access to the formal and informal curriculum on a par with other pupils in the area. It was also said that the County Council had no concerns about standards at the school and the 2006 OFSTED report stated that 'standards at the school are satisfactory'.

County Council Officers were not aware of reports that other schools in the Alnwick partnership have been assured of their future until reorganization into a two-tier system. It was asked why Chatton had not been given the same opportunity.

Members of the audience were asked to comment on the impact of the proposed closure on the community. Most agreed that it would have a negative impact on Chatton and discourage families moving into the village. Future generations of young children will have to travel at least five miles to school and not have the same opportunity to socialise within the village. There would also be less contact between local parents. In future Chatton's catchment area would become part of Wooler First School's catchment.

Ideas for alternatives to closure were given and there was a consensus that to use the building in the future for the benefit of the community would not only leave the authority an opportunity to reopen the school if needed but would also help meet the needs of the community. Northumberland County Council accepted that it has obligations to deliver lifelong learning through vocational training and other courses.

Northumberland County Council's Executive will make one of three choices once they have received the report from their officers. They can stop the process and leave the school open, they can issue a statutory notice to close the school or they can re-consult on alternative options.

Residents are asked to put forward their views on the proposal to close the school. The closing date is Tuesday 29 January at 4pm. You can write to Northumberland County Council, FREEPOST NEA5976, Chief Executive's Directorate, FAO Helen Griffiths, County Hall, MORPETH, NE61 1BR

Church Auction of Promises

An Auction of Promises in aid of church funds will be held on Friday 29 February at the Percy Arms. Jim Railton has volunteered to be the auctioneer and a number of generous 'promises' have already been donated, including the following items:

- Two desserts for a dinner for eight people
- Use of pickup and driver for two hours (50 mile radius)
- Match tickets to Chatton football club 'with perks'

The normal full evening menu is available from 6:30pm along with the alternative option of enjoying a sausage and mash supper. You can view items from 7:30pm and the first will be auctioned at 8:30pm.

If you think you have something to 'promise', large or small, the organisers would be most grateful to hear from you. Offers to do gardening, babysit, iron, cook, wash a car etc, along with any gifts that can be auctioned on the night will be gratefully received. Please contact PCC secretary on 215376 before February 10 in order that a catalogue can be drawn up and distributed in good time.

Chillingham Bridge Update

The weight limit on Chillingham Bridge has still not been resolved. Northumberland County Council insist that the limit was properly reduced to 18 tons but there is photographic evidence that a sign giving the limit as 26 tons was still in place for many years after the above reduction. Only recently was a new sign installed and local farmers are finding the new limit a real problem. The compromise proposal to allow local access up to 26 tons has not yet been accepted by Northumberland County Council.

Carpet Bowls Roll Into Chatton

Northumberland Care Trust has approved a grant to provide carpet bowls equipment in the village. The grant is available under the Northumberland Care Trust project FISHNETS (Fit Involved Safe and Healthy) which encourages communities to stay active and socially involved. The equipment is now on order and due for delivery in February. The aim is to set up a bowls activity group meeting weekly in the school hall as soon as the equipment arrives, probably starting from mid-February. Interested in taking part? Then contact Bob Scott on 215376.

RAF Invitation

The Parish Council are considering a request from the RAF to hold a meeting in the village about low flying so that they can explain the reasons for their activities in Tillside. Chatton News will publish any arrangements that are made.

Farm Watch

PC Ian Miller is setting up a system for farms to be given early warning of any suspicious activity around farms in the area. If you would like to be a part of the scheme please get in touch at Wooler Police Station or email ian.millar@northumbria.pnn.

Parish Council Consider Plans

At their meeting in January the Parish Council considered plans to extend 8 Mill Hill, to build decking at 1 Hetton Hall Farm Cottages and to build a covered ride at South Hazelrigg Steading. The Parish Council will now submit their comments to Berwick District Council Planning Committee who will, in turn, be making decisions on these proposals.

Neighbourhood Watch

The good news is that someone has come forward as the volunteer co-ordinator for Chatton's Neighbourhood Watch scheme. The next step is to form a committee and volunteers are being sought. If you do volunteer, checks will need to be done.

If you are interested in volunteering as a committee member please get in touch with any Parish Councillor who can pass your name on.

Football Pitch Lease Agreed

Tillside Parish Council has agreed to sign the lease for the football ground. The arrangement is that the Parish Council will hold the lease and the football club will pay the rent. The land is owned by Northumberland Estates

Chatton March Up Table

North End Trap 7-2 Chatton

Despite losing their only game of the year, Chatton moved off the bottom of the table on goal difference after Amble Dock were beaten 8-0. For the first time this season Chatton fielded an unchanged team. Paul Douglas again proved to be a safe pair of hands after earning man of the match in the game at Felton.

In a close first half North End Trap went ahead but Barry Rochester equalized with a 35m scorcher that has to be a contender for goal of the season. Minutes before half-time North End Trap went ahead with a well executed set play from a corner. Fitness showed again in the second half and Trap increased their lead scoring no less than six times.

It is disappointing to report that in spite of their lead the game had to be stopped briefly while their manager was warned about his conduct by the referee. With the last kick of the game Shaun Rochester rolled the ball into the net to complete Chatton's tally of two goals.

Unfortunately the match on January 27 has been postponed.

Carol Singers Cash for Air Ambulance

Grateful thanks go to the group of carol singers who gave up their time to entertain the whole village and raise £101.68 for Northumberland's Air Ambulance. It is a tradition in Chatton that is much appreciated and enjoyed by residents. Thanks also go to all that contributed to the collection.

Chatton Store Deals

Bero Plain Flour	89p
Bero Self raising Flour	89p
HP Baked Beans - Four Pack	£1

Church Services

Church services for February are as follows. Everyone is welcome to the services.

3 Feb	9:30am	Chatton URC Service
	11:30am	Chillingham Holy Communion
10 Feb	9:30am	Chatton Holy Communion
17 Feb	9:30am	Chatton United Service
24 Feb	9:30am	Chatton Holy Communion

Weather 2007

David and Meg Thompson of Chillingham Barns provide weather information for the area to the Met Office. The first four months of 2007 were much drier than usual with total rainfall being 3.41" below the expected level, even though February was wetter than usual with an excess of one inch of rain.

People won't be surprised to read that from the middle of June it got very wet. June's total of 3.8" of rain, followed by July with 3.7" brought the total for the year to that date back up to the expected amount of rainfall.

However, August and September were each an inch short of the expected average and October continued the trend with only half an inch of rain instead of the expected 2.36". December was dry with only 1.75" against an average of 2.4".

Total rainfall for the year is 22.59" which is 4.39" less than the average for a year. In 2006 we were down 6.27" and as a result we have had only two thirds of our average rainfall.

Black and Blue Bin Weeks February 2008



Blue bins emptied on: 30 Jan, 13 Feb, 27 Feb
Black bins emptied on: 6 Feb, 20 Feb

On January 23 bins were not emptied. Berwick District Council were unaware of the situation and did not know why the contractor failed to collect refuse but promised that they would be emptied on January 24.

Chatton News - Editor Needed

There is still a vacancy for someone to take over the production of Chatton News. It might be that a group of people can share the task. It will normally take a couple of evenings to produce the newsletter each month - depending on how many contributions are made.

If anyone is interested and would like to discuss what is involved please get in touch. Help will be given to anyone who wants the job but is unsure of their computer skills. Anyone who takes over can decide if they want to change the format or style of the newsletter to suit themselves. We need someone to be responsible for the newsletter, producing their first issue in May this year.

With thanks to all contributors to this issue. The next issue to be published will be on February 22. Items to Bob Perris by February 18 please. (Tel: 215564 or email at robert.perris@btinternet.com)