

NORTHUMBRIA IN BLOOM PORTFOLIO 2017

northumbria *in* BLOOM
 *Communities Growing Together*



BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL



**New Gateway Signs
Installed May 2017**

BULB AND WILDFLOWER PLANTING

Following the many positive comments that we received from residents and visitors to Blyth, it was agreed to extend the bulb and wildflower planting for 2017.

Extra bulb planting is concentrated on the Broadway Circle area - on the roundabout itself and the surrounding verges where new trees were planted in 2015 and 5 trees planted in 2016.



Progress could be seen from late February by viewing 'Crocuswatch Broadway' on our website.





Verges along south beach are planted with succession bulb planting consisting of

- Crocus
- Daffodil
- Muscari
- Chinodoxia and
- Tulips

to give a longer season of interest.



These images were taken in mid-March.

The wildflower planting will now extends along South Newsham Road and further along Rotary Way towards Broadway. It is now also continued on parts of Renwick Road, Cowpen Road and Asda entrance.



South Beach at the end of May 2017.

In July.



Other areas of planting

Broadway Circle



The road verges at Broadway Circle that once contained roses were changed to sustainable planting in 2016 and continue to impress with the pink *Sidalcea* mixed with yellow *Rudbeckia* which is starting to come through.



Newsham Roundabout

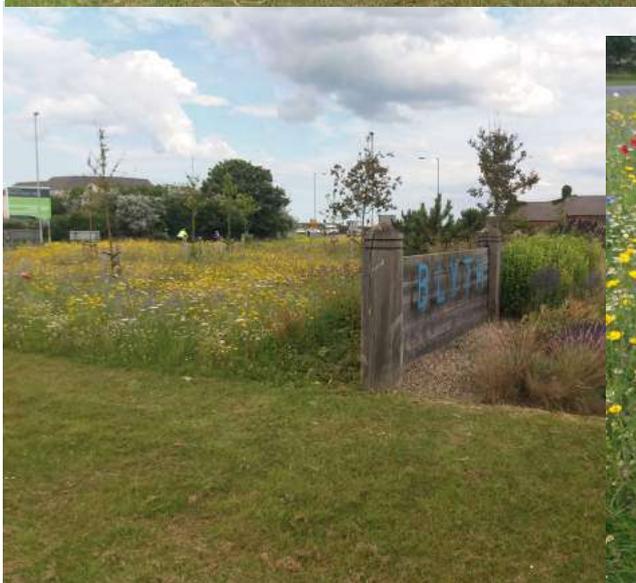


This bed is planted with Happy Days dahlias. The centre is sustainable planting of lavender and lucaethenum.

Beach Roundabout



This is a mixture of sustainable planting and wildflowers.



TREE PLANTING

As part of National Tree Week a total of 40 trees were planted by Northumberland County Council and the Town Council. These were planted in Ridley Park, at Broadway and South Newsham/Rotary Way.



Tree Planting

Northumberland County Council and Blyth Town Council are carrying out tree planting across various sites in Blyth as part of National Tree Week, if you'd like to volunteer to plant a tree, head down to:

Ridley Park
29-30 November
Meet at Pavilion 10.00 am

Broadway + Rotary Way
1 December
Meet at Broadway Circle 10.00 am
and/or
South Newsham/Rotary Way
Junction 1.00 pm



Before National Tree week the Rotary Club planted trees as they do every year.

In January 35 fruit trees were planted in Ridley Park as part of a foraging trail that will continue on South Newsham Road. A native shelter belt will also be created in the park consisting of 300 trees which will be planted along the fence between the park and the harbour.

SENSORY GARDEN

There has been some additional planting in the garden as there were some gaps. These were filled with:

Dicentra - 'Bleeding Hearts'
Phlox
and
Penstemmon



Last year we had the idea of lifting some of the paving slabs and planting ground cover plants to soften the hard landscaping and provide scent when walked on. We are re-considering this idea as it might cause problems for cleaning.

Cllr Nisbet had given £130, the remainder of her 2016 Councillors Allowance to buy plants so we need to think about what to do. We will leave it now until the autumn.



CARPET BEDDING FLORAL DISPLAY

South Beach

At a meeting of the Partnership Board last year the design of the floral display to replace the display planted for the Tall Ships was discussed. It had been suggested that it commemorate the centenary of a tragedy that occurred in August 1917 when 9 young men of the the Royal Warwickshire Regiment drowned.

The design is taken from the uniform tunic button of the Regiment.

As for last year's display, Jimmy Reith sent the original design to Kernow Plants and worked with them to come up with a design that could be planted and this was agreed by the Partnership Board.



The carpet bedding arrived and was planted at the beginning of June. As last year, it arrived in sections that were laid like a jigsaw puzzle in the marked out bed.



This, and previous images show the first section in the centre being laid.



The finished display.



WHAT HAPPENED IN 1917

On 24 August 1917 a group of around 600 soldiers who were on a training march. It was a hot day and they were given permission to cool off in the sea but most could barely swim and some had never seen the sea. None were aware of the dangers of the ebb tide and a number of the men quickly got into difficulties. Others went to their aid and also foundered. Lieutenant Kenneth Brown organised human chains to attempt a rescue and seven soldiers were saved while eight were swept out to sea. Lt Brown lost his footing and, despite efforts to hold on to him, he too was swept out to sea and drowned. Most of the bodies were returned to their relatives in the Midlands but the body of Lt Brown, which was recovered from the sea several days later, is buried in Horton Churchyard.

At the meeting of the Partnership Board when the display was agreed, it was also agreed that there should be an information board to explain why the display was for the Warwickshire Regiment that there would be a service on the anniversary of the tragedy.

From an initial meeting to discuss a possible collaboration with Blyth Battery who we understood were planning to mark the occasion, various parties have become involved and we are grateful to all for their input. We are especially grateful to the representatives of the Armed Forces for all of their help and advice and for taking on the organisation of the actual service.

Blyth Battery Volunteers have spent months researching and tracing relatives of the soldiers, some of whom will be attending the dedication service. Unfortunately, the great great niece of Lt Kenneth Brown is not able to attend but she is coming to England from Perth, Australia at the end of July. She will be visiting the Blyth Battery Volunteers who will take her to Horton Church to visit the grave. She will also visit the Town Council offices to meet the Mayor. The Battery have recently had the grave restored with the help of a grant from Blyth Masonic Lodge.

The Battery provided the initial design for the information board that we have had produced and Arthur Cranson, Coastal Warden, made the plinth and installed the board.

REMEMBERED
24 August 1917




Lieutenant Edmund Kenneth Wallace Brown
Aged 23
Buried at Horton Churchyard

Private 202131 George Edward Beavon Aged 19	Private 26392 William Harry Henderson Aged 18
	
Private 202685 Jesse Blunn Aged 17	Private 36217 Edward Gordon Noy Aged 18
	
Private 243009 Thomas Fortey Aged 18	Private 202962 Fred Shale Aged 19
Private 26694 Harry Blanchard Southern Aged 18	Lance Serjeant 292172(679) John Riley Aged 26



On a hot August day in 1917 over 600 soldiers of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment were on a route march from Horton Camp. They stopped to rest on Blyth beach and were given permission to cool off in the water. Many had never seen the sea and some could not swim. Tragically no-one understood the strong undercurrents of an ebb tide and very quickly some of the men got into difficulties. Others went to their aid and also floundered. Lieutenant Brown organised human chains to attempt a rescue and seven soldiers were saved while eight were swept out to sea. Sadly Lt Brown lost his footing and despite efforts to hold onto him, he, too, was drowned.



The Dedication Service will be held on Thursday 24 August at 10.45 am at the Dave Stephens Centre, South Beach which is near the flower bed.

As part of the service a commemorative 'blue' plaque will be unveiled. This is the first plaque to be installed as part of the Town Council's scheme.

RIDLEY PARK



Ridley Park continues to be extremely popular with residents and visitors. The water play area is a particular attraction for families during the summer months.

The Park has retained its Green Flag status for 2017 and is again being entered for a Special Award for Northumbria in Bloom having won Gold in previous years.

A mixture of purple and yellow Happy Days Dahlias planted with cordylines alongside the newly planted fruit trees.



Grass cutting has been stopped between the trees and instead there is a combination of wildflower planting and allowing the grass to grow. Hopefully this will add to the biodiversity of the Park.



The boat feature has been planted this year with a mixture of geraniums and begonias.

As part of the tree management programme some tree removal was required in December - the arboriculture pixies got to work on the stumps!



The Friends of Ridley Park continue to work with Croftway School and the children visited on 17 May to do some planting. They were due to visit again on 4 July but this was postponed due to the weather - that was the day of the deluge. They will be back again in the autumn. The photographs are available for the judges but, because this portfolio is hosted on the website, pictures are not included as parental permission was not available at the time of compiling this document.

Jimmy Reith is expecting a visit from students of Bede Academy on 17 July for Environmental Day. They will be carrying out a combination of litter picking and cleaning/repairing park benches.

TYNEDALE HOUSE CARE HOME SENSORY GARDEN

We are again entering Tynedale House Sensory Garden for a special award this year. Everyone was delighted when they were awarded a Gold on their first time entry last year.

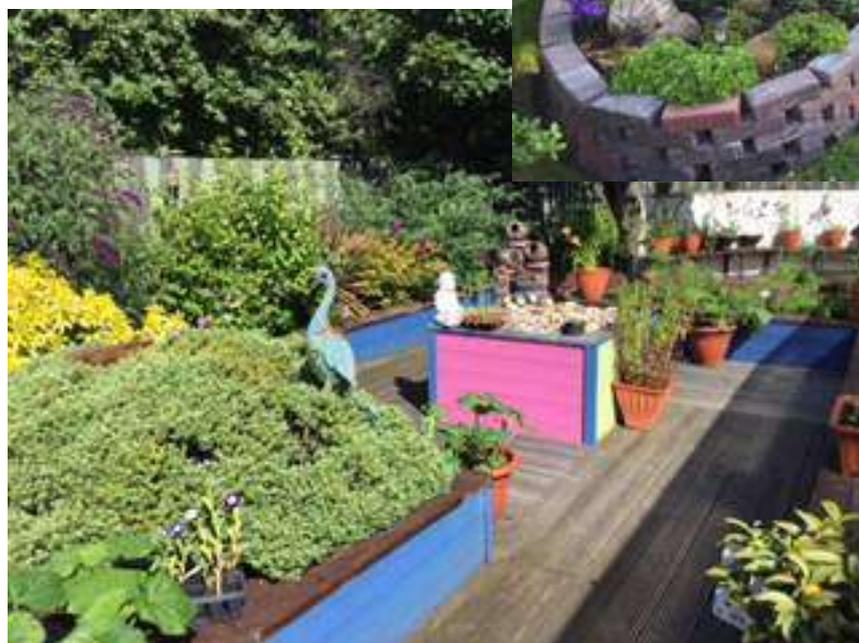
Tynedale House is a care home for up to 30 adults. Six places at the home are designated for respite, short term care for adults with learning and/or physical disabilities. The remaining places are used to provide longer term accommodation, support and personal care to older people with learning disabilities, Down's syndrome and dementia.



The Sensory Garden was created in 2015 to provide a quiet and reflective area for residents and their families, as well as an alternative learning space. The Garden includes decking, a water feature, raised beds with sensory plants, ornaments, wind chimes and suncatchers and a seating area.



The Garden also incorporates bird tables, nest boxes, a hedgehog house and wildflower planting to attract bees and butterflies.



The provincial Grand Lodge of Masons donated £500 and a charity night held by the Croft Lodge raised £1,200 with contributions also being made by the County Council, families and staff at Tynedale House. The Sensory Garden was officially opened in August 2015 by the Civic Head of Northumberland County Council.



Staff, residents and volunteers help to maintain the Garden under the guidance of Linda Starkey, Care Supervisor.

Linda has entered the Sensory Garden into our Blyth in Bloom competition in the Best Commercial or Community Group category.



COWPEN CREMATORIUM

This year we have entered Cowpen Crematorium for a Special Award. Of particular interest is the recently developed Garden of Tranquility. Work was started on the Garden in December 2014 and completed in June 2015.



ST CUTHBERT'S COURT

We have also entered St Cuthbert's Court for a Special Award this year following the judges visit in the Spring. This gated area of houses and flats is entered in the Residential Community category.



ST CUTHBERT'S CHURCH

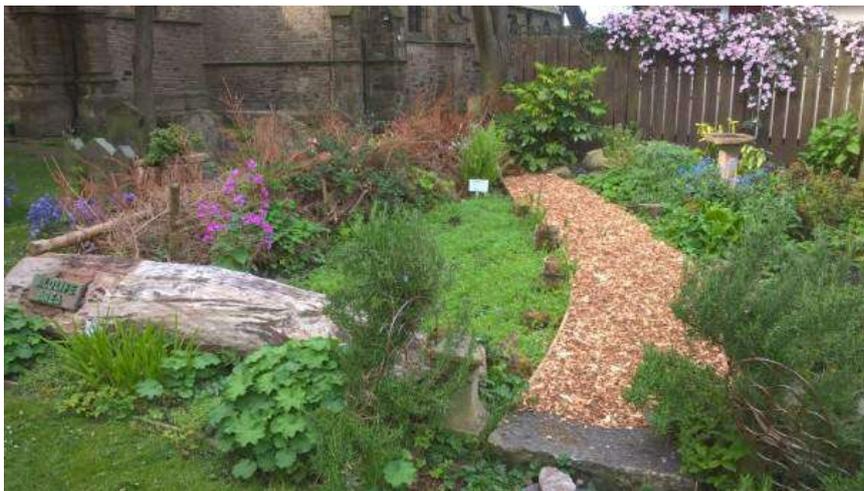
The Holy Weeds

IT'S YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD AWARD ENTRY

The Holy Weeds has developed into a regular group of nine people. They always offer a warm welcome new members. They have also had volunteers from a variety of organisations including some working with people with special needs and addiction recovery. Some volunteers stay, others come and go. There's no pressure as long as you're enjoying it!



An annual coffee morning in May, which is open to all provides their funds. They divide the proceeds between church garden upkeep, for example purchasing plants, tools etc and the rest they donate to a variety of charitable causes. This year the organisations that benefited were Friends of Ridley Park, The Dales School, for their horticultural project 'United Christian Broadcasters' and they also donated a rucksack which they filled with essential items to be given to men on their release from Acklington Prison.



The late spring and early summer saw attention given to physical improvements.

They also became more informed about the wildlife habitats in the grounds through contact with John, who is a bit of an ornithologist, a good photographer and member of the Friends of Ridley Park.

They knew we had bees for a second year, which was great news, but then John showed them that Bluetits had actually nested and fledged their young in one of the bird-boxes and also a pair of Thrushes had fledged in one of their trees.

They're now starting to broaden their approach beyond gardening to include nurturing the natural habitats within the church grounds.

They've made a start by using the by-products from some tree removals, which was done for safety reasons, together with shrub shavings to re-lay the pathway in their wildlife garden; the wildlife garden was also re-seeded with wildflowers. Also, using logs from the felled trees, they've created a planted 'feature' which also doubles as a bird feeding station, especially for the winter. They have also been advised by John to change the orientation of some of their bird-boxes and to reduce their density in order to encourage more nesting.





They've sown wildflower seeds around the internal wall perimeter, which are now showing and they had a 'planting out morning' in early June, which gave people the chance to be involved. They are keen to encourage children in the congregation to take ownership of the garden.

They've managed to retain about 80% of the geraniums in the Garden of Remembrance by careful over-wintering. This reduced costs this summer, with only topping-up required.

The very dry spring followed by a short-sharp downfall of rain in mid June has unfortunately served to maximise the leaf canopy, especially over the Garden of Remembrance. Geraniums, which last year were very successful in the partial shade, have been slower to bloom.



They've kept the

main floral features in the grounds in pretty good shape, without having to spend a lot of money on new plants, having nurtured the pansies in the boat since early spring.

The area that was being developed earlier in the year between the wildlife garden and the Hall is filled with plants that can be used by the flower



In September Blyth hosts the finish of a stage in the Tour of Britain cycle race. It is expected that crowds will be visiting the town and the Weeds aim for the gardens to be as lovely as possible. The group have been collecting old bicycle frames, which have been painted yellow and these will be hung from posts around the inside of the railings. They have 7 bikes (possibly 8!).

And when you've done all that work why not carry a no longer required heavy pew out the Church and have a sit down!



ALLOTMENTS

Blyth Town Council is responsible for 10 allotment sites throughout the Town:

- ◆ Bolam Avenue
- ◆ Twentieth Avenue
- ◆ South View
- ◆ Newsham Side Club
- ◆ Beatrice Terrace
- ◆ Tenth Avenue
- ◆ Delaval Gardens
- ◆ Laverock Placce
- ◆ Bebside
- ◆ Wensleydale Terrace

Bolam Avenue, Twentieth Avenue and South View sites are managed by Blyth Smallholdings and Allotments Association. Newsham Side Club and Beatrice Terrace (old site) are managed by Newsham and New Delaval Allotment Association.

All sites are regularly inspected by our Allotment Officer, Dave Clough.

Major work on the sites this year has included:

- ◆ Lane stabilisation at Wensleydale, Beatrice and Newsham Side Club allotment sites. This is a process carried out using a product called ecoProactive. This is an environmentally friendly product and works because it is not affected by high or low temperatures. It has been used extensively on cycle tracks and allotment lanes throughout the country. It is hoped that eventually all the sites will have been treated using the same system.
- ◆ A new water system was installed at the Wensleydale site to reduce the costs incurred by excessive water use. This was completed in January 2017.



Some images of Bebside Allotment site.

NEWSHAM MATTERS

Allotment Project

Newsham Matters is a community project set up in March this year. Julie Turner, Resident Involvement Officer, Northumberland County Council/Homes for Northumberland contacted our Allotments Officer to discuss the possibility of renting an allotment plot. This was organised and the group is renting 2 plots on the Beatrice Avenue new gardens site. These plots had been unoccupied for some time so they've had their work cut out but in a very short space of time and with the hard work and dedication of Tony - one of the founder group members together with Jackie the official tenant of allotment - they have made great progress.



Some information from Julie about how the group got started.

In August 2016 we carried out a survey of 900 homes in the Newsham area. We carried out a survey in partnership with the police and spoke to 300 households. We identified a number of issues people felt strongly about ranging from perception of antisocial behaviour to lack of pride in the area.

We had a few meetings with representatives from the community to look at the details of the survey. We also invited other agencies already working in the area. Our aim was to be inclusive. We knew we could access some funding but we needed direction, support and a buy in from the community. Our community representatives carried out visits to other projects in the area to see what they were doing and to get some good ideas.

We launched the project in March of this year, and over 200 people came to support us (despite the dismal weather on the day!!). Newsham Matters was born, and our journey was just about to begin!!

We didn't have the luxury of a bespoke building in the area, so we asked the two Church Halls and the local community pavilion if they had free days we could use. We developed four strands to the project, to be delivered from different venues across the estate. The four strands are;

IT Matters

The Northern Learning Trust are teaching IT skills, helping with job searches, benefit support and CV writing.

Practical Matters

Craft Club followed by a Lunch Club, guest speakers and volunteer artists.

Family Matters

NHS Health Trainers carrying out health checks, boxercise sessions and healthy walks

Youth Matters

British Army Youth Engagement Officer helps young people from the estate to enjoy carrying out activities every week at the local TA Centre.

We are working in partnership with North East Procurement, the police, the British Army, Northern Learning Trust, Sure Start, local schools, Youth Service, Voluntary Sector and CVS. We have a SLA with the Northern Learning Trust as they provide a worker, who is paid out of funding we received from North East Procurement. Room hire for all venues is also paid out of this funding.

We have set up a group of a majority of residents to take the project forward; they have now become We have recently acquired two allotment plots Gardening Matters is growing and coming along nicely.

We did all of this because Newsham Matters!!

Following a suggestion from a members of the Holy Weeds at St Cuthbert's Church, the Allotment Officer is looking into the possibility of funding to install a poly tunnel at the Beatrice Avenue site for use by community groups who would like to bring on their own plants from seed but do not have the space to do so. This would save them money and they could share the plants with other groups.

BLYTH in BLOOM

For many years, in the days of Blyth Valley Borough Council, a gardening competition was held for residents. This ceased when the Council was disbanded in 2009.

It had been felt for some time that the Town Council should hold their own gardening competition for the residents of Blyth and this year it was decided to launch our own competition.

We asked for advice from Terry Garnick and Jimmy Reith from the County Council and Bob Stephenson, Bloom Volunteer and former Blyth Valley Borough Council employee, as they all were involved in the Blyth Valley competition. The first meeting to discuss how we would organise the competition was held in January 2017. Terry, Jimmy, Bob, Dave Clough BTC Allotments Officer, Cllr Kath Nisbet, Chair of the Events Committee, and Alison McCabe, Office Manager were present.

BLYTH in BLOOM Gardening Competition 2017

CATEGORIES

Best Front Garden

Best Back Garden

Best Front Yard

Best Back Yard

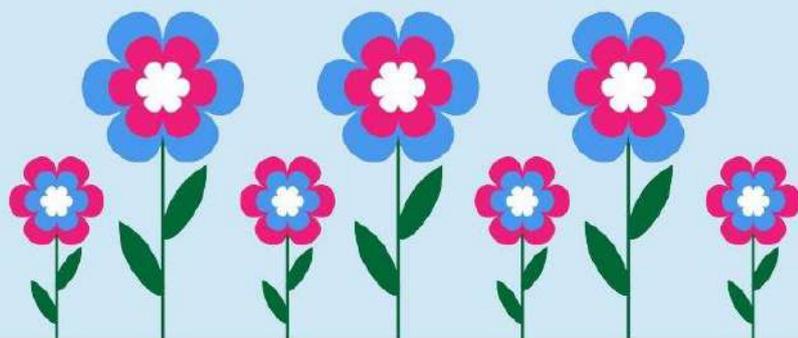
Best Commercial or Community Group
(to include pubs, shops, care homes, sheltered housing)

Best Allotment Plot

Closing Date Friday 9 June
Judging Dates Tuesday 4 and Wednesday 5 July

Get your entry form and further information from
Blyth Town Council, Arms Everytne House, Quay Road, Blyth, NE24 2AS
Tel: 01670 361668

info@blythtowncouncil.org.uk www.blythtowncouncil.org.uk



It was decided that, since this was our first year, we would have only a small number of categories as we weren't sure how many entrants we would have. These can be seen on the image of the poster opposite. There will also be a Judges' Discretionary Award. Terry, Jimmy and Bob agreed to be judges and Dave agreed to be a standby judge.

We had put an article in the November/December issue of NE24 to let people know we were having the competition so they could look out for information in the new year. Posters and flyers were distributed all round the parish from March 2017, it was on our website and facebook and another article was in the March/April edition of NE24 magazine.

When Adam Greenwold of Perennial Favourites nursery heard about the competition he offered to provide some prizes.

As the week of judging approached the weather was not good but we all had our fingers crossed. On the first day of the scheduled judging, 4 July, there was torrential rain and it was decided to postpone. On contacting the entrants we discovered that some had suffered flooding and other damage had been caused so most were quite happy that they weren't having a visit that week. The judging did take place the following week on 11 and 12 July and the weather was lovely. The judges were very impressed with all of the gardens they visited and in some cases it was extremely difficult to choose a winner.

This is the first year and we are hopeful that the competition will grow in the future and give the judges even more of a headache with such difficult choices to make!

Some of the entries are shown below.



The winners are secret until the presentation event we are planning to hold in September.

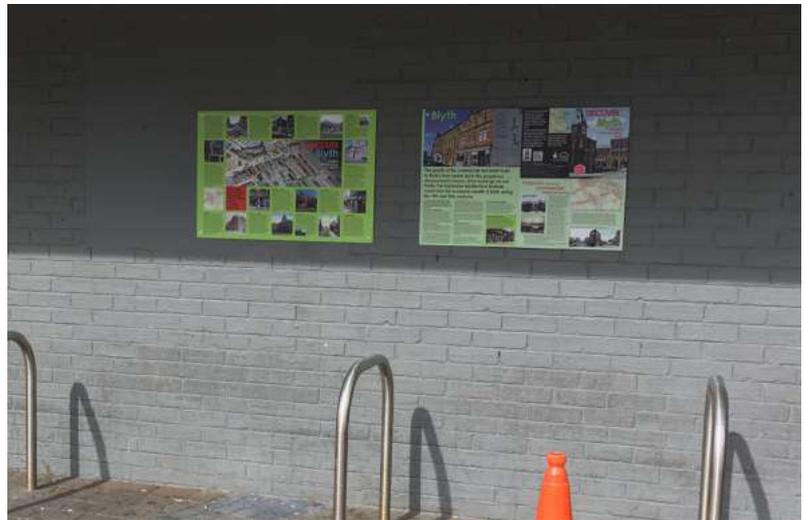
HERITAGE AND CULTURE

Central Conservation Area Leaflet

The growth of the commercial and retail heart of Blyth's town centre led to the prosperous development of many of the buildings we see today. The impressive architectural features come from the economic wealth of Blyth during the 19th and 20th centuries. From 2012 to 2016 many of the buildings were restored through a grant scheme called a Townscape Heritage Initiative funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Northumberland County Council.

With the assistance of ARCH and supported through the Heritage Lottery Fund the Central Conservation Area heritage guide described in the 2016 portfolio was completed and produced in August 2016. This free guide was produced by the North of England Civic Trust and has been published by the Town Council in partnership with Blyth Local History. It has been distributed to addresses within the Conservation Area and is available from the Library, Community Centres, the bus station quiosk. It is also available on the Town Council website and from the Town Council offices.

We had information boards produced and, with the kind permission of Arriva, these have been installed at the bus station.



Legacy from the Tall Ships Event

In 2015 the Town Council agreed to put aside a 'one-off' budget for the Tall Ships Event that was due to come to Blyth in August 2016. This was a major event for the town, attracting thousands of visitors and it was important that the Town Council was involved in the sponsorship of the event and also in contributing to projects that would remain after the event had finished.

Pedestrian Signage

We contributed to new pedestrian finger post signage was installed throughout the Town Centre and directing people to Ridley Park and the Beach. The project was organised in conjunction with



Boat Seats, Picnic Tables and Deckchairs

With Culture Creative, event organisers, and with a grant from Banks Mining the Town Council purchased boat seats, picnic tables and deckchairs for the event.

After the event the picnic tables were permanently installed in Ridley Park.

The deckchairs are in storage - minus the ones that disappeared - for use at future events.

We had numerous enquires from people about the boat seats - some to buy them and some to use at their business. To be fair the question of what to do with them was put to the Events

Committee who decided that they should be installed where they could continue to be used by the public. Four have been installed on the quayside and four were due to be installed at the beach beside the beach huts. It has now been decided that they are not strong enough to withstand being at the beach and the Events Committee need to decide in July where in the town to put them.



Gateway Signs

Due to receiving the help of a grant from Banks Mining, there was some money left in the budget after the event. It was decided to spend this on new Gateway signage. The company who designed the signs for Seaton Valley Community Council were contacted and consultation began with a working group of Councillors. The design company, Canny Creative, are based in Blyth. They came up with a number of ideas and eventually, after a few changes, the new design was settled upon.

Brick planters were built and the signs were installed at the entrances to Blyth on Cowpen Road, Horton Road, Laverock and the Links.

The possibility of lighting the signs from beneath was discussed but this is something that can be added at a later date as it wasn't within budget.



Market Revitalisation Project

Blyth Town Council has joined with Northumberland County Council to launch an initiative to revitalise Blyth Market. We are looking to increase the range of stalls and offer a wider selection of products to shoppers.

An incentive scheme was introduced in mid-April for new and existing traders on Fridays and Saturdays. The first 25 new traders who meet the trade criteria and sign up to the scheme will receive a weekly incentive payment for their first 20 weeks of trading that will add up to £600 if they trade for all 20 weeks.

This will be supported by developing an enhanced marketing plan and increasing advertising activity. We will be trying to create other reasons for people to come into Blyth market by running an events and entertainment programme on market days.

COMMEMORATIVE 'BLUE' PLAQUES

It was suggested to the Council early in 2016 that a commemorative plaque scheme be introduced in the Town. Following a consultation period which ended in mid-January 2017, a list of nominations was compiled. These were considered by the Planning and Development Committee and the next step was to contact the owners of the buildings where we hoped to install the plaques to gain their permission and also gain Listed Building Consent if this was required. This process was started following their meeting on 16 March 2017.

The following nominations have been received and we are working through them.

- ◆ **Fred Stoker** founder of Blyth Spartans, Harley Street doctor and horticulturalist who lived at 13 Bath Terrace. We are working closely with the owner of the property, who is very enthusiastic about the plaque, and Northumberland County Council Conservation Team as this is a listed building. We have applied for Listed Building Consent and the Team have been extremely helpful with advice and guidance.
- ◆ **Wallaw Cinema** now Wetherspoons, site of the first **Hippodrome**. **William Tudor**, circus proprietor opened 10 March 1904. Wetherspoons are very supportive and we are working closely with them to gain planning permission as this is a listed building.
- ◆ **The site of the First World War Thomas Knight Memorial Hospital** now Thomas Knight Home and **Thomas Knight**, shipowner, whose bequest laid the foundations of a hospital in Blyth. Also to **Dr Gilbert Ward** who started the fund to raise the money to build the hospital. Opened by Lady Ridley 28 December 1887.

We have agreement from the home but a decision needs to be made on the wording and if there should be two plaques.

- ◆ **Newsham Station Building**. We have verbal agreement for this plaque.
- ◆ **Site of the original railway station** around where King Street car park is now. We have agreement from Bradley's Locksmiths for the plaque to be mounted on their building. The wording needs to be confirmed then the plaque can be ordered.
- ◆ **Site of the second railway station** now Morrison's car park. We have agreement from Morrison's for this plaque to be on their building. Again, the wording needs to be confirmed before it can be ordered.
- ◆ **Site of Blyth's first chapel of ease in 1751 - St Cuthbert's Church Hall**. We have the agreement of the PCC and Church members for this plaque to be placed on the Church Hall. They have also agreed that it would be appropriate to have a plaque commemorating **Willie Carr** on the building.
- ◆ **Captain William Smith** discoverer of South Shetland. Clive Gray of the Tall Ship Project is delighted to have the plaque and has identified a suitable position for it. We hope to be ordering this plaque by the end of July.
- ◆ **Site of the Salt Pans** at Arms Everytne House (Police Station side). We have agreement from Steven Reay and this should be ordered by the end of July.
- ◆ **Submarine Base 1916-1919 and 1939-1945** at South Harbour. We have agreement from Port of Blyth and are waiting for agreement of a suitable position and confirmation of the wording. We should be able to order this plaque before the end of the month.
- ◆ **Site of the Blyth Shipyard** Albert Street and **Blyth Shipbuilding and Dry Docks Company Offices** opened 25 July 1907 at the Catapult offices. Confirmation has been received from the Marketing Manager at Catapult. We are arranging to meet to discuss location and wording of the plaque.

- ◆ **Aaron Walton** - we have been given a great deal of information regarding Aaron Walton by his grandson - in short he was Mayor of Blyth on 11 occasions, Chairman of Blyth Library, Councillor and Alderman given the Honorary Freedom of the Borough in 1960, Blyth Spartans Club President. Died at home in Marine Terrace.
- ◆ **The first Blyth Post Office** now a take-away on the corner of Freehold Street.
- ◆ **John Wallace** former post master and author of the First History of Blyth, born 1799 died 1883.
- ◆ **Blyth and Tyne Brewery Site** - brewery built in 1786, closed in 1916, demolished in the late 1930s.
- ◆ **The Blyth Stationmaster's House** in Delaval Terrace. The site of the Cowpen Lodge demolished in 1884 and the house built later that year in preparation for the fourth railway station which opened in October 1895.
- ◆ **George Skee** who opened the Newsham Pottery and created the bust of Lord Ridley which used to be in Ridley Park. He also worked building sets in Hollywood after emigrating there. George created the dinosaurs for 'The Lost World' and worked on the set of 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame' starring Lon Chaney. He later became a preacher and visited Blyth where his relatives live today. George lived at 5 Seaview - the site where Blyth Workspace is built.
- ◆ **Richard "Dicky" Fynes** miners' leader who helped to found the local co-operative society, a building society - known as "The Father of Drama" in Blyth - plaque at the site of the first theatre. Born 1828 and died 1892.
- ◆ **Site of Blyth's first theatre** at the Keel Row - Waterloo Road side.
- ◆ **Thompson's Arcade** created after the great fire of 1904.
- ◆ **Salvation Army Hall** Market Street beside Perfect Home (former Woolworth's shop). Fire gutted the Hall which was above the shop leading to it being replaced by Woolworth's opening in April 1934.
- ◆ **Site of the Royal Rink** roller-skating building opened Wednesday 11 May 1910 and the second **Hippodrome** Saturday 6 March 1920 at Rink Street, Mecca Bingo.

Although the initial consultation ended in January we are still inviting suggestions to be added to the list which will be ongoing.

The Committee also looked at various options for the design of the plaques as they don't have to be blue although this is the usual colour. However, after consideration, they opted for a traditional blue style, cast in aluminium with raised lettering, border and emblem.



Croft Casting Limited have been sourced to provide the plaques. This is a small family company based in Whitby. The plaques are cast in aluminium with raised letters and the detail is hand painted using air-drying enamel paints.

The first plaque, pictured in progress, will be installed on a wall of the Dave Stephens Centre and unveiled at the Warwickshire Regiment Dedication Service on 24 August.

EVENTS

The Town Council organises and supports free events for the community and to attract visitors to Blyth. This year we welcomed our new Events Coordinator, Mel Jackson.

Easter Egg Hunt

Held in Ridley Park with the support of the Friends of Ridley Park, Mr Ridley's café and Asda who donated Easter eggs for prizes and were represented by Dianne Dinning, Asda Ace. This was a great family event with traditional games and an Easter bonnet competition.



Northumberland Live@Blyth

This June saw the fourth year for the free music festival at the beach. After sponsoring the event last year, the Town Council has now taken ownership of the event from Northumberland County Council and plans are to continue to provide this popular event. The day saw thousands of people flock down to the beach for a great day of entertainment headlined by Undertones and giving opportunities for local bands to perform throughout the day.



Blyth Sports Centre 50th Anniversary

The Town Council has an Olympic Legacy budget used to support a schools sports event organised by Active Northumberland. This year, in addition to that event, additional funding and the support of our Events Coordinator, Mel, was given to hold a 24 hour swim to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Blyth Pool. This was followed by a free day of swimming for everyone.

The Olympic Legacy budget is divided into two parts - the Active Northumberland event as mentioned above and other events. The 'other events' is normally used to support an Olympic and Paralympic Event for young people organised by a Blyth-based organisation Aspire 2 Achieve.

Bringing Back Blyth Carnival

Headway Arts are this summer working with Blyth Town Council to bring back the Blyth Community Carnival. Headway Arts aim to involve local people and community groups in bringing back the Blyth Carnival, drawing inspiration from the old time carnivals, circus and vintage entertainments from Blyth's unique history.

On 26 August 2017 there will be a Community Carnival Parade to Blyth Market Place which will kick off an afternoon programme of performance on the community stage and around the market place. Blyth will host the very best of dance, music, circus and street theatre from an array of regional artists. There will be an international market and the afternoon will finish with rock-a-billy and lindy hop dancing.

Headway have been running free workshops for people to get involved - there's Carnival Club, Blyth Valley Samba and Carnival Costumes.

Other Events

In the planning stages are the Firework Event that will be held at Meggies Burn this year and the Christmas Light Switch-On Event. Mel also has ideas for additional small events - to be announced.

Tour of Britain

In September Blyth will again welcome the Tour of Britain cycle race. Businesses and residents along the route will be encouraged to paint or decorate bikes to display for the event. St Cuthbert's Holy Weeds have already started and are in the process of mounting their display. The Town Council is having a mural painted by graffiti artist John Craggs to replace the one that was commissioned for the Tour of Britain in 2015. The original mural was painted on Broadway toilet block which has recently been demolished. We did consider trying to retain the wall and 'propping' it up somehow but this wasn't possible. The new mural will be painted on two large sign boards and will be installed on the site of the old toilet block. We don't know what the mural will look like - this is left up to John and how he feels when the boards are ready. We're sure it will be as amazing and receive as many comments from residents and visitors as the last artwork he produced.



BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL WOULD LIKE TO THANK

Jimmy Reith for all his help and advice

The Partnership Team for all their hard work

Adam at Perennial Favourites

AND

**EVERYONE WHO CONTRIBUTES
OR VOLUNTEERS TO IMPROVE OUR COMMUNITY**