



February 2024

A message from the Mayor



What a windy and blustery few weeks it has been, we hope for calmer days this month! February is a month of planning for the Council. We'll be looking at Christmas lights this month, along with spring and summer planting around the town and ways that we can keep the planting as green as we can.

As you may know it is a notable year for one of the most important landmarks in the town – this year will be 400 years since the first traffic crossed Berwick Bridge and we look forward to celebrations to mark the anniversary in the summer.

John Robertson - Mayor of Berwick-upon-Tweed



The recipients have now been chosen for the Mayor's Award, an annual celebration of achievement and excellence in Berwick in March, where we recognise those people that you have voted outstanding in the local community.

Last year's event saw a range of local people win awards. The 2023 winners were Isabel Lister of Northern View, local speedway rider Leon Flint, winner of the under 19 and under 21 British championships in 2022, Tom Matthewson, a long serving volunteer for Berwick Cancer Cars, Margaret Johnson, the tireless secretary of the Berwick and District Friends of Dementia group and, all together, the Spittal Gardening Group for their enthusiastic hard work on behalf of the community.

Those who have been successfully nominated for the Mayor's Award 2024 will be invited to a ceremony at the Town Hall next month where they will receive a certificate from the Mayor - we will be posting pictures of the recipients in our next issue.

Local Services

The very windy weather in January meant that the wardens have spent some of the month in our depot fixing benches and preparing the wood for reconstruction projects, so they are now well prepared for any repairs that we find and which are reported to us. Given that there are 300 benches in Berwick it is a long running project to maintain them,

especially due to the coastal location. A new memorial bench was built and oiled ready for installation on Spittal Prom and work has also started on treating the wood for mending benches at the Rose Gardens. Repairs have begun on the benches on the walls – what you think sounds simple is, in reality, more complicated. Working on a historic monument of national significance, we have to be very careful with any work we do and make sure we liaise with English Heritage regarding access to the walls for any maintenance.



We have to do our play park checks even if the weather isn't conducive to play to make sure they are safe for residents and visitors, and we were pleased to be able to fix one of the swing seats at Flagstaff this month following a report from a resident. The Christmas lights were put to bed at our depot, in storage designed and made by our wardens to keep them safe and sound until they're checked in October. For use in December.

They also recently completed a full check and inventory of all the bins, bus stops and benches in the area and installed a new bin at Union Brae after requests from residents following a flurry of littering near the seating areas.



Berwick Hospital

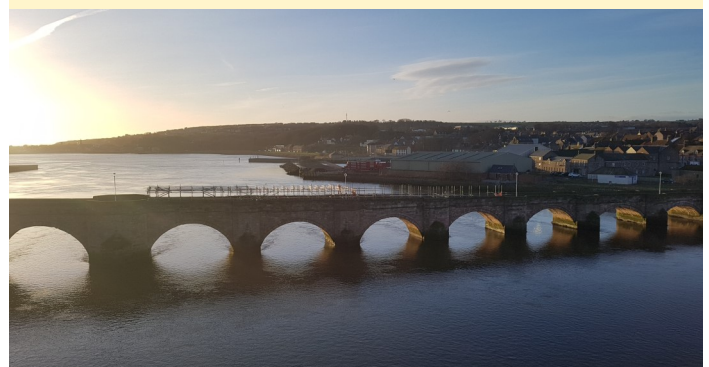


Members of Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust attended Council's Communities and Local Services committee meeting in January to update Council on the new Berwick hospital. They reported that good progress is being made on the site and patients and staff are settling well on the new inpatient temporary ward. We've asked Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to provide updates of progress on the hospital for our newsletter so we hope to bring you the first update next month.

Berwick Old Bridge

As you may know, works have now begun on the Old Bridge so it is currently closed to vehicles. The scaffolding went up this week so for safety reasons it is now also closed to pedestrians and cyclists whilst this phase is underway. Northumberland County Council are trying to minimise the occasions that they will need to close the bridge to pedestrians so instead of a rolling programme of scaffold erection and dismantling, they are installing the scaffold over a longer length. This will include a covered and lit walkway for pedestrians. It will take 2 weeks to install so they anticipate it will reopen to pedestrians on Monday 12th February. They hope to avoid any further long full closures until the works to spans 8 to 15 are completed, when they will move the scaffolding to the next section.

There will be events to celebrate 400 years of this bridge in the Summer, do follow the Berwick400 Facebook group for more information.



Greener Berwick – What We Do

It's always the question we get asked – what do you do for Berwick?

This month we've had wardens out working on one of the projects that we think we can make a difference. The small planted area in the Greenses area of town, with benches and raised flower beds, was getting beyond the capacity of the group of residents who care for it. It's a good example of what we nowadays call a micropark, and we think microparks are a good thing.

It's not the only micropark project we're working on either. On the opposite end of the micropark scale is the wooded area on Etal Road that residents have asked us to explore turning into a community woodland and tidying it up in the process. Over two hundred people have asked Northumberland County Council to support this idea, and we're keen to be able to get volunteers involved.

There will be plenty of other places in Berwick that could become a community benefit that we don't already know about. We're keen on you telling us about the places that could be a formal micropark, like the space at the Greenses, or about places that could be so much better, but more wild, like the woods at Etal Road.

We've got lots of seasonal planting to do, in planters and hanging baskets in the town centre, but we're keen to keep on greening other parts of Berwick too. Why not let us know what you'd like to see?

We are also involved with the allotments in town. Our commitment to greening Berwick isn't just about microparks or planters. We provide allotments around Berwick too. We're not the only ones; the Lions Allotment site on the walls is self owned and self managed, and we think that's a good thing. While space for new allotments is restricted, we're always keen to know if you think we should do more. We'd love to know if you think we should provide alternatives, like community allotments or other places where individuals can garden and help plants grow. As ever, the message is clear. If you've got ideas about how Berwick could be greener, let us know.



REPAIR



TOSS IT? NO WAY!

TECH * PHONES * GUITARS
SEWING MACHINES
SEWING REPAIRS
MECHANICAL STUFF
ELECTRICAL * TOYS
FURNITURE * FRAMES
P.A.T. TESTING * HI FI
BLADE SHARPENING

REPAIR CAFE

LAST SAT. OF EVERY MONTH

10-1pm

Supported by Berwick Town Council
NCC Climate & Environment Fund

SALVATION ARMY CHURCH
53 CHURCH ST,
BERWICK UPON TWEED

We will do our best to repair your things but can offer no guarantees.
Brought to you by **Greener Berwick Zero Waste Action Group**



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Friends of Castle Parks Upcoming Events 2024

February

Weds 7: Winter Talk Willie Robson, Honey, 7.00pm at Parish Centre

March

Weds 6: Winter Talk Composting – Brown Bins – Northumberland County Council

Saturday 30: Easter Bunny Hunt 11.00-12.00, Coronation Park

April

Saturday 27: Dawn Chorus Walk 6:00am in Castle Vale Park

Later in 2024

May: Tai Chi in the Park (dates tbc). **June: 2 Plant Sale, 29 &/ 30 Open Gardens.**
July: 20 Big Beastie Hunt. Also back: **Art in the Park** (dates tbc).

Check our website and SM for updates and changes

FOCP are a small voluntary group who
Raise funds to enhance Coronation, Castle Vale and Flagstaff Parks
Run events based in the parks
Assist with planting and maintenance on regular volunteer days
To join us or find out more, please contact Kate Dixon on 07876 398026



Full details at: friendsofcastleparks.org
Regular updates: Facebook & Instagram



Greenses Haven

We were recently asked by the gardening group at Greenses Haven to assist with getting the flower beds ready for spring planting. We were very happy to help and our wardens (and Councillor Turton) are doing the "heavy lifting" for the gardening group who are keen, enthusiastic but not quite as sprightly as they used to be.

As well as looking the planters, hanging baskets and (some) of the flower beds in the town, we also work with industrious gardening volunteers all over Berwick who do so much to keep our town looking beautiful.

Please get in touch if you're involved with a volunteer gardening group, we're planning to get everyone together to look at how we can help support what you do. Please email projects@berwick-tc.gov.uk for more information.



Fix My Street

As you will have experienced, Berwick has had some very windy weather over the past month as well as icy conditions at times. So if you have an icy road that needs gritting or a pothole on your street that needs to be filled you can report it on fixmystreet.com. This is a site for reporting local problems (like fly-tipping, blocked drains, broken paving slabs, graffiti, etc.) and you receive updates when repairs take place.

It shows reports that have already been created, plus any planned roadworks, which saves time and avoids multiple reporting.

Fix My Street works on smartphones, tablets and desktop computers and is monitored by town and



Contact the Town Council

You can email us at info@berwick-tc.gov.uk or telephone us on 01289 302391.

Or you can pop into our office on Marygate. We're open to the public 10am-4pm, Monday to Friday.



Contact Northumberland County Council (NCC)

If you have a question about NCC services you can speak to someone in

person in the Library on Walkergate on Tuesday and Friday 10:00am-1:00pm or telephone NCC on 0345 600 6400.



Get an Email Newsletter

Make sure you get a copy every month by joining our mailing list. Simply email info@berwick-tc.gov.uk and ask to be added. Next month's newsletter will turn up in your inbox at the beginning of the month.

Upcoming Council Meetings

Mon 5 February - Staffing & Corporate Resources - 6pm

Mon 12 February - Planning - 6pm

Mon 4 March - Communities & Local Services - 6pm

Meetings are open to all and you have the opportunity to have your say on local issues you care about.