Issue 103 June 2021

CONSETT MAGAZINE



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Consett RFC Rugby Club training session (Juniors and Minis) By: George Ledger

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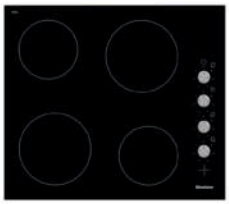
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Dear Consett Magazine readers,

Thanks for picking up your free copy of Consett Magazine, keep reading for your monthly dose of #positivelocalnews.

This month's front cover is a photograph taken at a recent Consett RFC Club Rugby training session (Juniors and Minis, 4th March 2021). It was taken by George Ledger and is part of the Consett Coronavirus Photo Project. Head to pages four and five for more about this fantastic project which is documenting local Consett life throughout the 2020-21 pandemic for present and future generations. It'll be a snapshot of local history, to see what life was like for some Consett residents during this difficult and unprecedented time.

On page nine, local business owner, Darren Cutler who underwent open heart surgery at the age of 23, is now launching his Heart of the North challenge, which encourages people to walk or run 266.3 miles - the challenge is designed to get everyone out walking or running regularly to improve their physical and mental health. What a great opportunity it is for a local fitness professional like Darren to help people in the local community become more active. We encourage everyone who can to get involved.

Local business owners Lorna and Ian Adamson are developing the Haystax Inclusive Farm Experience and Accessible Holiday Lodges at Woodlands Park Farm in Knitsley, Consett. The project will be catering for families of children, young people, adults who have complex needs and/or disabilities. Read more about the Haystax and Woodlands Park Farm on page six.

Become a Contributor

We're looking for local contributors to get involved with Consett Magazine on a regular basis to publish even more #positivelocalnews for the local community. Anyone with a passion for storytelling and publishing can get involved, whether you are a writer, photographer, videographer, blogger, local business, musician, or stay-at-home dad, historian, teacher, doctor, chef, full-time mum, dancer, baker, or candlestick maker, it does not matter - we want to hear from you. If you'd like to get involved, just send us an email with your story (and any photo, audio, or video content) attached to editor@consettmagazine.com or call one of our team on 01207 438 292 - we'll help you get up and running as a contributor quickly so your photo or story could be in print next month too.

And remember, Monday the 21st of June is the summer solstice, this heralds the start of summer in the Northern Hemisphere. It's the day with the most hours of daylight, so enjoy and make the most of it. Sunrise in Consett is at 4:29am that day.

Thanks again for reading,
Barry Kirkham, Marco Elsy
and everyone who makes
the Consett Magazine possible.

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SCAN ME

The Front Cover

The front cover this month is by George Ledger
Send any drawings or photographs to:
editor@consettmagazine.com

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Consett Corona Photo Project - June 2021

The intention is to host an exhibition or series of exhibitions in the area once restrictions are relaxed and it is safe to do so. Prior to this we will publish selected images on our FB page - **https://www.facebook.com/ConsettCoronaPhotoProject**



1. Our first Sporting image shows grassroots football, which was allowed to return from the 29th March. Even though it was outside on a windy day a good proportion of the crowd of parents chose to wear face masks. The first game back for Stanley U'11s saw them play and win against Plains Farm Green from Sunderland, the match was played at Dipton. The excitement on both the children's and parent's faces were obvious as they had been prevented from playing their sport for so long. (Image: Steve Webb)



3. Recreational cycling resumed for groups up to 6 people on the 29th March, so no longer were solo bike rides the only way to get out and exercise. Groups of friends could go out together and enjoy group cycling along the Derwent Walk. (Image: Chris Bruce)



2. Rugby also returned following relaxations on the 29th March but with restrictions and (temporary) changes to the laws to prevent Rucks and scrums. However even during Junior training at Consett Rugby Club, every 15 minutes hands are sanitised, and Rugby balls and equipment cleaned. After four weeks of contact training to enable players to build fitness levels and condition themselves physically, matches with adapted laws (no scrums or mauls) will be permitted against other clubs from 26th April. Full contact training is forecast to return in June, provided the UK government meet their scheduled re-opening criteria. (Image: George Ledger)

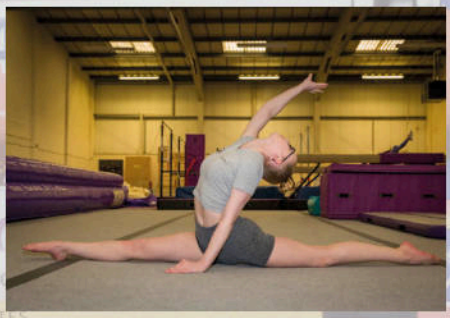


4. As of 29th March, we saw the gradual lifting of restrictions with the 'rule of 6' people meeting outdoors and outdoor grassroots sport restart across our area. Shotley Bridge Tennis Club didn't hesitate to welcome back old and new members in the Easter sunshine and training resumed for their younger members. (Image: Chris Bruce)

The Consett Corona Photo Project started in March 2020 and has continued to document the effects of Covid-19 upon the people, volunteer groups and businesses in the Consett area. All images have been photographed within the Government guidelines. If you wish to be part of the project or have suggestions, please contact us at: consettcoronaphoto@gmail.com



5. Cricket - was allowed to restart but under strict Covid-19 rules and further rules by the ECB, e.g. Changing rooms cannot be used, No Teas to be provided and players to bring along their own refreshments. Players had to sign in with the NHS app. During the game, the umpires called Covid breaks after every 6 overs, and all players had to sanitise. Despite restarting, the match had to play out without 'spectators' as they are not permitted during stage 2 of the roadmap. However, an ambiguity of Stage 2 allows people to participate in outdoor hospitality (table service only) during the game whilst seated in the beer garden – a good excuse to enjoy the cricket even more! Consett's first game was a good day as they comfortably beat Ryton by 6 wickets. (Image: George Ledger)



7. All children's activities (including parent and child groups up to 15 people) were allowed to restart on the 12th of April. Derwent Valley Gymnastics Club opened their doors to all their age ranges but with new Covid safety guidelines. Parents only allowed to drop off and pick up their children and Not to enter the building. Children to arrive dressed for the session, bring their own drinks. Hands to be sanitised on entry and gym doors to be partially opened to improve ventilation. 2-meter distance signs are placed around the gym and all coaches have completed an Infection Prevention Control Course etc etc (A full list of the new measures are displayed on their website).(Image: George Ledger)



6. Fitness Classes. Over the past few months Julie has been hosting her fitness classes online, to adhere to covid regulations. The easing of lockdown restrictions, mean that Julie can now return to some of her fitness classes in person. At first, Outdoor sessions of Rock fit have resumed in Ebchester and everyone is so happy to get moving again. Indoor sessions will resume after Stage 3 relaxations on the 17th May. These particular exercise classes are accompanied by rock music rather than the usual dance music and are suitable for all abilities. Black clothing is optional. (Image: Debbie Todd)



8. Indoor leisure, including Gyms could reopen on Monday 12th April but only for individual use. No group classes are allowed indoors until the 17th May. Steel Town Gym in Consett was keen like others, to reopen and welcome back members to the gym. They have made sure all members and staff are as safe as possible by strict adherence to Covid-19 regulations including cleaning equipment after use, hand sanitisers, restricted numbers, and increased ventilation. (Image: George Ledger)

Learning for Life

Embracing diversity and enriching lives...

Our learners are 'down on the farm'...

Lorna and Ian Adamson have recently had planning permission approved to develop Haystax Inclusive Farm Experience and Accessible Holiday Lodges at Woodlands Park Farm in Knitsley, Consett. This project is extra special as it is catered around Children/young people/adults who have a diverse range of complex needs and disabilities. The project puts the person with the disability first, but also takes the whole families' needs into consideration, ensuring all members of the families can enjoy spending time at this amazing and peaceful location.

The Haystax project includes a farm experience center with lots of animal therapy opportunities.
Indoors will be a café, three sensory rooms, some art and crafts facilities, Outside will be some outdoor classrooms for educational sessions, woodland walks, insect hotels, beehives and so many more exciting ideas to be added in the future.
The first two accessible holiday lodges will be available to rent from Easter 2022 and the Indoor facilities from September 2022. This project is very special because so many vulnerable young people/adults and their families will benefit from it, both now and in the future.

Learning for Life, a charity based in Consett that provides a stimulating and effective learning environment for all young people, including those experiencing more profound and multiple learning and physical difficulties, have teamed up with Lorna and Ian who are developing the project and are going to be working closely with them moving forward to provide work experience opportunities for their learners at Haystax. www.learninglife.org.uk

As part of the planning consent, 8.5K trees will be planted onsite; many individuals at Learning for Life are benefitting from this project, as they have been onsite over the last few weeks helping to plant trees. There have been over 3K planted so far! There are so many opportunities for these inspirational young people/adults to be involved with this project and it will be an asset to our community for many years to come, offering a safe haven for so many people.

CMYK a local business technology company that offers digital solutions became involved in the project as they wanted to be able to give something back to their customers in the North East, helping with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and environmental strategies, they have committed to planting a tree for every one of their new customers. They also plan to make a financial donation to the project each time a tree is planted for their customers who will receive a certificate for their planted tree. CMYK have had such a positive response from customers involved so far, they can see the real benefit to the local community and environment; it also helps them with their own CSR objectives.

Craig and Sarah from CMYK have been working onsite planting trees alongside the learners, Learning for Life staff and Ian and Lorna. Sarah stated, 'I have really experienced what a positive impact this is having on these amazing individuals and as you can imagine in the current pandemic, a welcome break from being indoors is undoubtedly good for everyone.' CMYK have also sponsored the Hi Viz vests for the learners and staff who are working on site!

Anyone interested in making a donation or thinking of doing some fundraising for Learning for Life can donate or contact us via our website www.learninglife.org.uk





Leadgate Memories - By Bill Laidlaw

Although I was born in Medomsley in 1949, we moved to Villa real in the early 50's. My earliest memories are going to Leadgate Primary School when I was 5 (no parents, just my older brother).

My dad was down the pit at Medomsley. I remember seeing the Northern Lights from Villa Real on my birthday. We used to have it on guy fawkes night as mine was the 6th Nov.

I took over a paper round at Matthews in Leadgate when my older brother joined the RAF in the early 60's. We had to do St Ives road, the Dene, Plantation St. and they around past the CO-op. My sister took over from me when I joined the RAF in 1967.

All 3 of us were the first from Villa Real to all pass our 11+ and go to the Grammar school. I left early and worked in Doggarts for 2 years before joining the RAF.

I remember sneaking into the Wheatsheaf pub in my ATC uniform and conning Sadie and Alan to let me have a pint. (Alan was a RAF mechanic in the Battle of Britain)

I then married Glynis Herdman from Delves Lane and began my RAF adventure. We travelled the world, had 3 kids and finally settled in Norfolk after being with the RAF for 49 years.

Sadly Glynis died in a car crash 10 years ago, but me and the family are settled down here. My sister stills live in Consett and we try to get up there when we can. My older brother lives in Spain.

The picture is of me on Swings at Villa Real

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UMBRELLA
COMMUNITY CENTRE

I recently visited the Umbrella Community Centre which incorporates Consett Community Fridge. It is a community interest company* located in the centre of Consett.

Before the restrictions imposed by Covid -19, the centre provided a three course Community Meal on Tuesdays and an accessible Community Fridge offering fresh produce three times weekly. Undaunted by the changes, the volunteers adapted to provide a takeaway and delivery service to those in need of a hot meal and food parcels.

This service is well used and the centre has over 400 people on their books, which include the elderly, families on low income and the vulnerable.

The aim of this company is to provide a warm, sociable, positive, welcoming, non judgmental environment and that was certainly the case when I visited with one of my colleagues from Consett Rotary Club. Suitably impressed by the amount of work that goes in to making this facility available for those who rely on and look forward to it, at Consett Rotary we made the decision to fund their excellent work with a monetary donation and hopefully more support in the future.

Urszula Dabek who runs and facilitates the centre explained, 'The food stocks we use to cook with and share via the fridge are supplied through our annual subscription membership with FareShare. We receive donations from The Co-op and Tesco as well as other local companies. We can accept monetary donations and do our own fundraising.'

The centre receive referrals from local Social Services, Consett Food Bank and Jobcentre Plus as Urszula explained, 'Many of our clients live in social housing, are on benefits, and/or are on severely low incomes.

Therefore this collective project aims are to:

- Improve physical and mental health needs; give access to support and provide a healthy and filling 3 course meal.
- Help to reduce social isolation, anti-social behaviour and the possibility of harm and criminal activities.
- Help residents by signposting them to other agencies that can help where necessary.'

By providing this excellent service Urszula, her co-workers and volunteers are able to look after and serve those in our community who are in need and rely on help and compassion. For more information please feel free to contact Urszula Dabek on 07539643904

**A community interest company is a type of company introduced by the United Kingdom government in 2005 under the Companies Act 2004, designed for social enterprises that want to use their profits and assets for the public good.*

County Durham heart patient launches physical and mental health initiative.



A County Durham business owner who underwent open heart surgery at the age of 23, and lives with the risk of contracting a potentially life-threatening illness, has developed a virtual challenge to encourage people to get active and raise funds for the British Heart Foundation (BHF).

Darren Cutler is launching his Heart of the North challenge, which will encourage people to walk or run 266.3 miles – equivalent to covering the distance from Ashington to Penrith – at their own pace and in their own way.

Participants will log their mileage on an interactive map, where every Ebac Northern Football League club's home ground will represent a checkpoint, along with several iconic landmarks. They can also encourage friends and family to sponsor them through a team JustGiving page, with the funds raised through this page going directly to the BHF.

The 44-year-old, who is managing director and sports therapist at Fit2TheCore Training Systems based in Consett, says the challenge will appeal to anyone. "Here in the North East our football clubs are the heart of our communities, so I wanted to try and develop an incentive around people's passion for their local team and appeal to the wider community," said Darren, a dad of two.

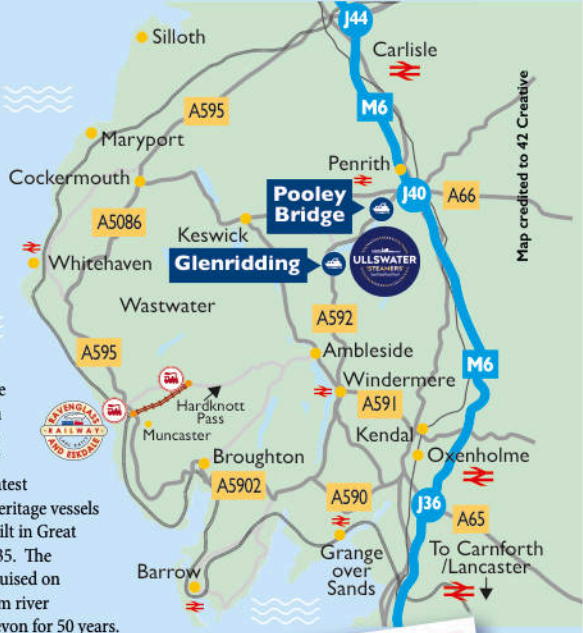
Darren was inspired to fundraise for the BHF after his personal battle with heart problems. He required open heart surgery in 1999, where a piece of pig heart was used to repair the damage to his heart caused by a pseudoaneurysm. Darren then suffered two subsequent bouts of endocarditis, an infection of the heart lining that can be life-threatening.

However, he has never let any setbacks stop him and in December 2019 he began his fundraising efforts for the BHF by running 13 miles side-by-side with Dr Michael Cave, the cardiologist who treated him. Darren has since raised over £2,000 for the BHF.

Entry for the Heart of the North challenge costs £19.99, with £2 per entry going towards the BHF. Participants will also be encouraged to raise further funds for the BHF through the team JustGiving page at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/heartofthenorthcommunity

To sign up to the Heart of the North challenge, visit www.fit2thecore.uk/virtual-challenges

Penrith for Ullswater



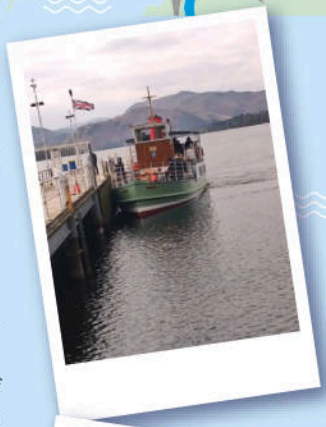
Outdoor tourist attractions in England could reopen from 12th April and my second excursion was on the 21st to Penrith, using the line from Newcastle to Carlisle, where there is the choice of five directions to travel. Penrith is £32.10 from Chester-le-Street which is ok for a day return, but you can return within a month - much better than buying two singles, as you have to on some routes. (If there is no suitable fare from your local station, get a separate ticket from Newcastle, and feel free to email me for advice.) Unusually we were a bit late into Carlisle, but still in plenty of time for my Avanti train to London, next stop Penrith. I enjoyed a cup of coffee from "Caffeine Rush" which is a little trike dispensing coffee which I have used for over twenty years.

The train arrived in Penrith on time, and I had about thirty minutes before the Stagecoach bus 508 set off towards Windermere, just time to explore the ruins of Penrith Castle directly opposite, and the pleasant park, complete with crazy golf, surrounding it. I was just going to Pooley Bridge to join the steamer sailing at 1230, but would be returning from Aira Force down the west side of the lake, so the driver suggested I bought the Penrith and Ullswater Dayrider for £8.50 to give me unlimited travel, and cheaper than two singles.

Pooley Bridge has just gained a new bridge to replace the stone one dating from 1764 which collapsed following Storm Desmond in 2015. The new bridge opened in 2020, and the pavement is marked with the names of many families and businesses. I could not tell which way the river was flowing, but Ullswater drains into the River Eamont, then into the River Eden through Wetheral and Carlisle and out into the Solway Firth. The pier for the Ullswater Steamers is just outside the village (indeed the 508 bus stops southbound only right outside). Diesel powered nowadays, the boats are crewed by friendly and professional crews which made the cruise a pleasure.

The vessel for the first cruise down the length of the lake was the MV Western Belle, latest to join the five heritage vessels on Ullswater, built in Great Yarmouth in 1935. The Western Belle cruised on Tamar and Yealm river excursions in Devon for 50 years. She joined the fleet of the "Steamers" in July 2011. A pair of RAF fighters zoomed overhead and I observed to my neighbours that this was the most tranquil of the lakes. The deck was covered with canvas, affording some shelter, and the journey to Glenridding via Howtown took just less than an hour. A quick pint of Hobgoblin at the Glenridding Hotel, and I was back to the pier to join the MV Lady Wakefield to Aira Force. Built in 1949 in Dartmouth, she worked on the River Dart before her arrival at Ullswater in 2007 where she was fully restored and renamed by HRH Princess Alexandra.

National Trust owned Aira Force is a series of waterfalls, and the are a series of walks going further up the river valley. I went only about half way up to avail myself of the popular (open air) tea room close to the bus stop on the way down. I made an extra bus journey down to Patterdale and back to get full value for my Dayrider, and the return bus dropped just me off at Penrith station for my return trains across the Pennines in the golden hour shortly before sunset.





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Sources for sites to pitch up with your Caravan and Motorhome.

by Chris Gage, Motorhome & Caravan Broker

Well, the UK holiday season is well underway now with the (hopefully continuous) relaxation of restrictions. Anecdotal evidence suggests that bookings for campsites are in high demand. No wonder really, with so many new and established home-grown holidaymakers wanting to get away at the first opportunity.

Both of the two largest clubs, the Caravan and Motorhome Club and the Camping and Caravanning Club, operate around 200 of their own sites across the UK and all of these are popular with both members and non-members. People like the high standard of presentation, quality locations and facilities - it's a bit like Starbucks; you know exactly what you are going to get. Needless to say, it can be hard to get a booking at the moment. But club members also have access to so many more places; each one of the clubs also offers around 2,000 'Certificated Locations' - these may be farms, small holdings or even gardens in grounds. They are specifically members only sites, with a maximum of 5 units. These little places can be hidden gems of tranquillity, if you are prepared to use your own facilities and put up with perhaps, a sloping pitch or sheep munching grass around you. Joining one, or both of the clubs will give you many more choices of places to stay if you are open minded to being self-sufficient.

There are some good mobile apps out there too, such as Search for Sites, which combines a vast database of club and independent sites, with the facility to narrow down what type of pitch you want, eg. a pub style location, near a village, near a canal, or shopping.

Whilst the most stunning locations will always be fully booked, being a little flexible on your site criteria can result in some surprisingly memorable trips away.

If you are looking to buy or sell a Motorhome, Campervan or Caravan in the North East, I'm here to help. Contact me on 07375 074407



Lovely Jubbly - By Lorraine Weightman

During this past year with the uptake on online shopping, there are an increased number of white vans rocking up around the area, not only on my street, but every other.

Yet there is still a thrill to opening a package addressed to yourself - as we all enjoy receiving gifts - even if we have to pay for them ourselves!

As a child I looked forward to the deliveries at home; the milkman leaving two pints on the doorstep, Fentiman's pop bottles on a Saturday, the Ringtons van, and a man in a beret with onions on the handlebars of his bicycle.

Although times have changed, there have always been door to door salesmen. I remember my Auntie Rose inviting someone in who knocked, and lugging in a large brown battered suitcase he displayed his wares. After twenty minutes my whole family ended up buying garish jumpers and cardigans that we didn't want, just to get rid of him!

Yet my favourite story by a mile, is the one my friend told me in the late 1980's when she arrived on my doorstep, and over a strong cup of coffee, reiterated her tale.

Apparently her husband - who had been working in the Medomsley Road area in Consett - was approached by someone offering him genuine Antelope coats. Opening the back door of his vehicle the salesman with the talents of 'Del Boy' from Only Fools And Horses, persuaded him to go to the bank to withdraw £100.00 for six of the best coats the back of his van could offer.

Proud of his purchases he carried them into the house. His wife, not knowing whether to laugh or cry was gripped with mild hysteria and needed to go out to get her thoughts together. That's when she came to me and I reassured her all would be well as we pondered over our second cup.

On returning home, she found her family were modelling the coats in the living room, being told they were a real bargain. Relenting, she even tried one on herself and was reminded of their high quality and fire resistant and waterproof properties.

Still uncomfortable and frenzied with the prospect, she made up her mind and demanded her husband sell them on, and get his money back.

That Saturday night he walked along to 'The Duke of Wellington' with six coats over his arm and asked the landlord to display them on hangers in the bar to see if there were any takers. Shaking his head, the landlord replied, 'I wouldn't have thought so son', I've got four lying on the bed upstairs!

Glad to have them out of the house, my friend got ready for 11'o clock mass on Sunday morning at St Patrick's in Consett.

Afterwards she called in for a chat and proceeded to tell me that she'd found it hard to stifle her laughter in church; as when she looked up, all she could see were a line of Antelope coated parishioners making their way down the aisle for Holy Communion!

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DIY Tips - June 2021

- **Research -** Whether you're thinking about renovating your bathroom or your kitchen – or something smaller – research is key.
- **Budget -** Know how much you can spend! Research is vital so you know how to do your DIY project, but also so you know how much it will cost.
- **Equipment -** From the first step to the last, the right equipment will determine the quality of your project.
- **Health & Safety -** Always make sure that you have safety goggles, gloves, masks, and whatever else you may need for your project.
- **Know When to Ask For Help -** DIY projects are a lot of work, especially if you're unsure about one or more steps. Knowing when you are in over your head prevents you from causing any damage to your home. It will however, become progressively easier to undertake DIY projects as you gain experience and learn new skills.

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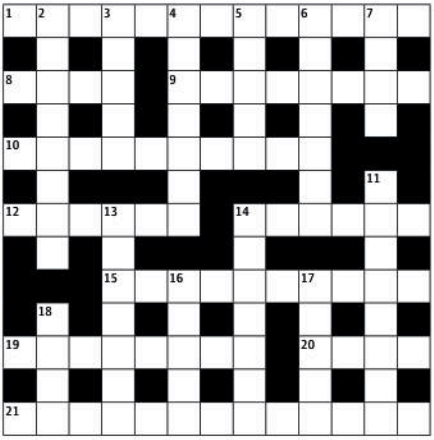
Hot Cars

Now that we are finally getting some nice weather please remember not to leave your dog in a hot car. Even if you open a window the vehicle will get extremely hot, surprisingly quickly – even if it is only 22 degrees outside the car will get to 47 degrees in a short time.

As the dog pants to cool down the humidity in the car rises quickly which makes it even more difficult for the dog to further cool down, and they very quickly develop heatstroke. This is an emergency and needs treating quickly – take your dog to the nearest vet as soon as possible. But, like many things in life, prevention is better than cure.

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Puzzle Corner June 2021



Across

1. NCO (5,8)
8. Endorsement made in a passport (4)
9. Short musical interval (8)
10. Set free (10)
12. Harmful computer program (6)
14. Drinks of bourbon, with sugar and mint, poured over crushed ice (6)
15. Very different (5,5)
19. Prejudiced (8)
20. End of a filming session (4)
21. Not to be relied on (13)

Down

2. Tourist resort in the Cairngorms (8)
3. Series of things linked together (5)
4. Part of a billiard table (7)
5. Dance of Cuban origin (5)
6. Porridge ingredient (7)
7. Skin disease (4)
11. Draw near (8)
13. Largest of the planets (7)
14. A moment ago (4,3)
16. Endures (5)
17. Might (5)
18. Conceited (4)

Answers for May

	P	R	E	P	O	S	I	T	I	O	N	
B		I		R		C		R		N		B
E	S	P	I	O	N	A	G	E		T	A	U
A				V		N		A		H		T
C	U	R	V	E		T	I	D	I	E	S	T
H		E		R		Y				T		E
C	L	I	M	B	S		T	E	R	R	O	R
O		M				O		M		O		F
M	O	B	S	T	E	R		P	E	T	A	L
B		U		R		E		R				I
E	R	R		A	G	G	R	E	G	A	T	E
R		S		C		O		S		L		S
	B	E	N	K	I	N	G	S	L	E	Y	

Answers for this puzzle will be published on the same page next month.

Consett Community Rallies to Oppose Industrial Waste Incinerator Plan

Residents feel betrayed and dismayed that the organisation who promised to improve the former steelworks site is now planning to build a 50-metre tall waste incinerator on their doorstop.

The Hownsgill Energy Centre will incinerate commercial and industrial waste and residents fear it will bring disastrous impacts on their health, the local landscape, and will create unpleasant odour and noise.

Developer Project Genesis Ltd, which was established to regenerate the former Consett Steelworks site into an environmentally sound place to live and work, now wants to build a waste incinerator close to the centre of the town.

If it goes ahead the incinerator will be located at Hownsgill Industrial Estate, which is in close proximity to old and new housing estates in Consett, will stand at 22 metres with a 50-metre high stack – taller than any other building in the area and will be visible for those living on The Chequers and Knitsley Road.

The proposals for the creation of the incinerator have faced a determined backlash from residents who are concerned about the devastating impact it will have. "It's a kick in the teeth for us," said Christine Thomas, who is one of the residents leading the "Say No To Consett Incinerator' campaign, "we trusted Project Genesis to regenerate our town and make it a better place for us to live since the demise of the steelworks, and the irony is that this incinerator will be detrimental to our health, the prices of our homes, and the aesthetics of our landscape.

"it's also concerning that the planning authority registered and renamed the application to energy from waste facility and supporters still insist that it is not an incinerator."

The Heritage Consett and Sunderland Railway Path will also be adversely impacted with the development being visible along much of its length. Helen Corbett-Hope moved to Consett with her young family, drawn by its beautiful, natural surroundings, "we were delighted to find a home so close to the Coast-to-coast cycle path, offering a relatively peaceful, green setting, she explained, "and as parents of an autistic child who suffers from anxiety, these qualities were paramount to us;his sensitivity to noise and smells would not be upset, and on days we want to stay close to home or he refuses to get into the car, we have the wonderful cycle track on our doorstep so he can get the fresh air and exercise he needs to regulate himself, in natural surroundings.

"If the incinerator goes ahead, all of those qualities that drew us to our family home will be completely jeopardised. The negatives for our family, and all residents to Consett and the surrounding area, cannot be substantiated by the implied positives."

Concerns have also been raised that residents have not been consulted in accordance with legislation and best practice. Emma Watson, 42, who says she is terrified for the health of her five-year-old daughter, said, "only a handful of residents directly facing this proposed monstrosity received notice from them and if it wasn't for social media the rest of us may not have found out.

"Project Genesis said that they couldn't have a public meeting or forum to discuss this with us due to Covid-19 and seem oblivious to the fact that they could have arranged an online meeting which is what the rest of the world has been doing over the past year. Instead, they tried to pass this through without fully consulting the residents knowing full well how outraged the people of Consett would be. The people of Consett will fight this all the way for our children, our future generations, and our town."

Nearly 4,000 residents have joined the campaign, which has seen them signing a petition, writing objection letters, organising leaflet drops in and around Consett, and displaying protest banners and posters throughout the town.

Niamh McDonald, a local resident and undergraduate student at Newcastle University, is also supporting the protest, "as a young person who has grown up in Consett hearing stories of the Steel Works and 'red dust', I think an incinerator in our town would be very damaging. We need to be able to celebrate but move away from our industrial heritage and invest in a green future for our town. We can't let this incinerator go ahead and take Consett backwards by 50 years.'

The Facebook group has a template objection letter for residents to use. All objections should be sent to Planning@durham.gov.uk quoting planning reference DM/20/03267/WAS.

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