



Stockton

NEWS

Stockton Council's Award Winning Community Magazine - Winter 2003 - 2004



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Stockton NEWS

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Stockton News is published by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and distributed to every household in the Borough free of charge. If you have not received a copy please call (01642) 393020 or e-mail communications@stockton.gov.uk

It aims to provide news and information about the Council, its partner organisations, and local community groups and businesses. Every effort is made to ensure that all information is accurate and up-to-date at the time of publication. Your views and comments are welcome.

Stockton News is produced by Stockton Council's Communications Unit and designed by Bridge Design Group. Pictures courtesy of the Evening Gazette, Peter Mernagh and other sources.

Arc's spectacular success!

More than 24,000 visitors have flocked through the doors of Arc since the launch at the end of September when the Stockton arts and education centre was re-launched.

Dead Fish, Arc's first theatre production, had fantastic ticket sales and the rest of the season's programme has enjoyed similar success including singers Stacey Kent, Tom McCrae and George Melly and top stand-up comedians Sean Locke and Mark Steel.

Arc's next big production is Alice. Running until 23 December, it is an adaptation of Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland by Stockton Riverside College, whose productions are legendary.

Suitable for children aged four and

upwards, Alice features a specially produced musical score, big dance numbers, outrageous characters and fabulous costumes.

For those who would rather be part of the action, Arc's new education emphasis is very evident and workshops in singing, acting, guitar playing have all been extremely well received and classes in Tai Chi, meditation, dance-size and salsa are all underway.

The new coffee shop is open from 9am-5pm, Monday to Saturday, serving breakfasts and a lunch menu from 12-2.30pm, with pre-bookings available.

With theatre, comedy, music, fun workshops, films and food all on your doorstep, if you haven't been yet, you're missing out!



Beacon shortlisting for Community Safety

Stockton Council has been shortlisted for Beacon Status under the theme of Crime and Disorder Partnerships.

The status is bestowed by the Government on authorities acknowledged as being leaders in their field and reflects the achievement not only of the Council, but on all the organisations which make up the Safer Stockton Partnership.

The Community Warden Service, run by the Community Safety Team, is set to continue and extend after more than 90 per cent of residents, when asked, said they believed the service to be 'good' or 'excellent'.

At present, the service covers Hardwick, central Stockton, Norton and parts of Thornaby and Billingham. Early next year, a new scheme will cover Roseworth and Mile House wards and funding is also being sought to extend the service in Billingham and Thornaby.

Government officers will now visit Stockton and other shortlisted authorities, who will also give a presentation in Whitehall. Results are expected to be announced in April.

The Council's engineering and transportation's service has Beacon Status for the current year under the theme of Rethinking Construction.

Local democracy earns Sam £25

Student Sam Reeve found himself £25 better off thanks to a week of activities celebrating local democracy.

Sam, 17, of Speeton Close, Billingham, logged on to Stockton Council's website while working on his Bede College course in Government and Politics. Finding a quiz organised by the Council as part of the nationwide Local Democracy Week, he clicked on the right answers to earn £25 in Debenhams vouchers.

It was Sam's first visit to Stockton Council's website www.stockton.gov.uk but he's now a regular visitor for the useful information he can find there.

Held each October, Local Democracy Week aims to broaden understanding of local Councils and their work. This year, the theme was 'Listening to Tomorrow's Voters Today'. Amongst the other activities, an open day at Stockton Town Hall attracted many visitors who wanted to see round the building, discover its history and find out more about their Council.

Year 10 pupils from seven local secondary schools took on the role of running the fictional Sunnydale Council for a day. Teams had to solve issues and prioritise funding and the winners, from Ian Ramsey School, were awarded a trophy and £50 Staples store voucher.

And students at The Norton School celebrated the new name for their School Council, now called "The Voice", which helps them become involved in local democracy. The School Council will also produce a young people's newsletter, funded through Stockton Council's Youth Services' Hear by Right project.

Myton Way completes the link



Motorists, cyclists, pedestrians and even horse riders are benefiting since the new £1.3m Myton Way link road at Ingleby Barwick, opened in October. The 1km road includes double that distance in cycleways as well as new footpaths, bridleways and an underpass. The design, by Stockton Council, also involved extensive landscaping to preserve existing trees and most of the area's ancient hedgerows.

Pictured above, Stockton's Mayor, Councillor Ann Cains, and Jeff Fairburn, managing director of Persimmon Homes North East, were

joined by local schoolchildren and others to open the route. Construction began in May after the Council and housebuilder Persimmon Homes, which met the cost, agreed to bring the programme forward from its original 2005 start. Contractors Halls Construction completed their work on budget and two weeks ahead of schedule.

Myton Way provides the "missing link" between the centre of Ingleby Barwick and the South Stockton Link, connecting with Preston Farm Industrial Estate, the A66 and Stockton town centre.

Expanding start for Queen's Campus

The University of Durham, Queen's Campus, Stockton, has celebrated its new term with a record number of new students.

Nearly 800 new students have started this year, taking the total number of students to more than 2,000 – a contrast with its opening in 1992 with 190 students.

With a record 27,000 applications received for 3,000 places at the University of Durham, Queen's Campus freshers make up around a quarter of the total first year intake.

Amongst the new courses is a BA in Business. For more details call 0191 334 0048 or visit www.dur.ac.uk



European education partners visit the Borough

Teachers and managers from European schools and colleges have visited Stockton to learn about adult education in the Borough.

Delegates from Slovakia, Spain, Greece and Germany met with Stockton's Adult Education Service as part of the Socrates Grundtvig project, which promotes European co-operation in life-long learning and improves the training of adult educators.

The two-year project is developing new language teaching ideas called 'language theatre sports'.

During their stay, the visitors met community learning partners and attended adult education classes.

Highlights included a performance of an interactive play for adult education students and staff at Arc by teachers from Madrid, who also taught Spanish to pupils at Ian Ramsey School.

Keeping roads safe this winter

After the wonderful summer we've had, are we in line for another unpredictable British winter?

Severe weather can strike suddenly and unexpectedly, causing real problems for motorists.

The Meteorological Weather Centre plays a vital role in providing up-to-date forecasts and is the Council's main source of weather information.

The area's two trunk routes, the A19 and the A66, are maintained by contractors working for the Government's Highways Agency.

But for all other roads, it's Stockton Council's responsibility to keep delays and accidents caused by snow and ice to a minimum.

There are 225 miles of major roads in the Borough – some 46 per cent of the total – to be treated with salt.

It is impractical to treat every road in the Borough, so the network is prioritised to limit disruption by keeping the main thoroughfares clear.

When gritting is needed, most of it takes place in the evening or very early morning. So while most of us are asleep, someone else is out there trying to ensure that your journey to work is trouble free.

Rock salt is the most cost effective material for keeping roads ice-free but on its own it won't remove ice or prevent it reforming. This requires the action of moisture and traffic to break it down and work it into the road surface.

So never assume that roads are free from ice - whether they have been treated or not. Drivers are urged to slow down in wintry weather conditions, whether it be ice, snow, fog, hail, rain and even winter sun!



Kids have a crucial time

More than 2,500 Year 6 pupils had a 'Crucial' start to the academic year when they took part in the annual two-week Crucial Crew safety awareness event.

Youngsters visited the Education Centre, Norton, where they looked at various scenarios related mainly to personal safety.

A host of organisations took part including Cleveland Police, Cleveland Fire Brigade, HM Coastguard, Prison Me No Way, Northern Electric and Stockton Council's road safety, animal welfare, environmental health and Care For Your Area services with support from Jennings Ford, ntl, Stockton Riverside College and North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust.

Organised by Stockton Council's Planning and Environment Projects Unit and Road Safety Team, planning is underway for the 10th Crucial Crew event next year. Anyone interested in finding out more should contact Gillian Corcking on (01642) 391144.

It's in the can for MACS

Stockton Council's Care for Your Area team showed their true metal during this year's Stockton International Riverside Festival, collecting enough

recyclable cans to be able to donate £550 to local radio station 96.6 TFM/Magic 1170's Make a Child Smile Appeal (MACS).



pictured are Freda, Stockton Council's Care For Your Area mascot and 96.6 TFM/Magic 1170's MACS

Dog fouling campaign winners

A successful 'Pick Up or Pay Up' dog fouling campaign on local tv and billboards during September has brought a tremendous response, say Stockton Council's animal welfare officers.

6,000 questionnaires, which also included a competition in conjunction with Pets at Home, were returned as a result.

The lucky competition winner was Sylvia Matthews from Billingham, who won the £100 first prize. Second prize of £60 went to Brian Leonard of Thornaby, while Angela Sweet from Stockton won the £40 third prize.

The views of respondents confirmed those received earlier in the year through a separate survey carried out by the Viewpoint residents panel. This showed that 67 per cent of respondents felt the overall dog fouling problem had improved over the last two years, 23 per cent said there was no change and 10 per cent thought it was worsening.

36 per cent of people want more dog bins, 27 per cent want more education on dog fouling through media campaigns, 20 per cent want more enforcement activity and 17 per cent want more street cleansing to remove dog droppings.



Animal Welfare Officer, Michelle Johnson pictured with her dog, Molly, whose cartoon image was used in the campaign

Making music with Stockton On Line

Musician Bob Tranter has been making the most of his work placement in Stockton.

Bob has created a CD album thanks to a free service offered by Stockton On Line (SoL) in the town's Parish Church hall.

Using music packages provided in the SoL centre, Bob has put together an album of 'melodic beats and pieces interspersed with gothic flourishes'. He has also used the centre's software to create CD covers.

A student on Stockton Council's Basic Employability Training programme, Bob found a work placement with SoL as part of his course, since then he's been able to indulge his interest in photography and music.

Stockton Online has won a new award for centres offering Learndirect courses in the Tees Valley.

Stockton Online was the pilot centre for the courses in the Tees Valley area in 1999.

Now Stockton Online – which offers free and open access to information technology to the community – has won the Most Improved Centre award.

The awards are the first of their kind offered by the Learndirect managing body for the Tees Valley.



Walk your way to health

Walking your way to health is an idea that is gathering momentum locally, thanks to a project to get people out and about into the fresh air.

The Walking Way to Health promotes the huge benefits of walking – both mental and physical – and Stockton Council is setting up regular walking groups in six areas, with developments for Hardwick, Newtown and Parkfield.

Every week until Easter, short walks take place in Ragworth, Thornaby and Portrack & Tilery. Thornaby Pavilion - Wednesdays 10.00am – 11.00am, Stockton Sports Centre Wednesdays 2.00pm – 3.00pm and Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre Fridays 10.00am – 11.00am. There's no need to book, just turn up!

The scheme is looking for walk leaders - a one-day training course is provided in January. To find out more call David Cowell on (01642) 391464 or 07717 727628.



Residents have their say on Thornaby plans

Plans to regenerate Thornaby town centre have been on display for people to have their say. Local residents and businesses have also received a special edition of **Thornaby Light** magazine, detailing the proposals to regenerate the town centre.

Thornfield Properties Plc have been named as Stockton Council's preferred developer. Their designs for the town centre were showcased during three days of public consultation in a retail unit within the Town Centre.

Officers from Stockton Council and Thornfield were on hand to answer any questions and residents were asked to fill in a questionnaire to show what they thought of the proposals.

Around 82 per cent of those who responded thought the plans for the design and layout of the town centre were good, while there was strong support for the outline proposals, 88 per cent agreeing with the plans.

Thornfield is planning to invest more than £15 million to refocus the town centre and provide an opportunity to attract new multiple retailers into the town. Proposals include quality purpose-built retail units in a variety of sizes totalling up to approximately 80,000 sq ft in an "open street" format.

A new car park with facilities for disabled users will be built at the Mitchell Avenue frontage, replacing the existing car parks fronting Allensway.

The majority of shop units will be serviced independently from Allensway and have around 45 dedicated staff parking spaces to the rear.

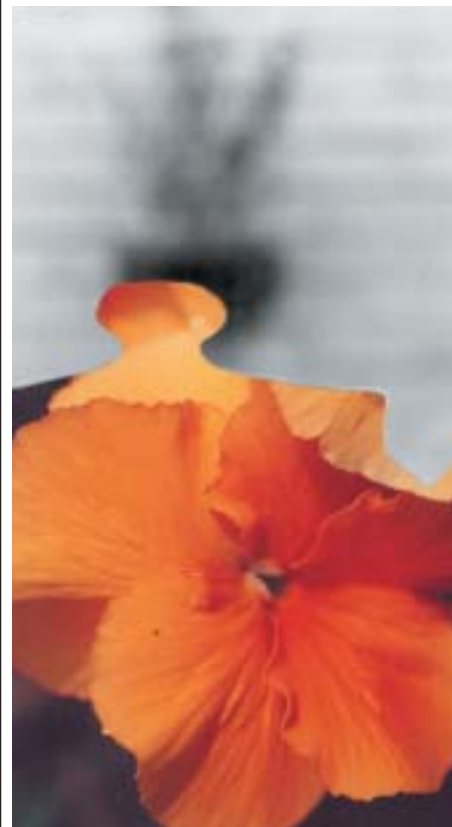
It is anticipated that the market will continue to trade from a totally refurbished Town Square, which will become the new main entrance to the shopping centre.

A new lift and staircase within the shopping street is planned to provide a more convenient access to Pavilion facilities. There will also be environmental improvements to the centre including new paving, lighting, enhanced CCTV, signage and canopies.

It is also proposed to include a new road linking Allensway to Trenchard Avenue, subject to further land assembly. In addition there could also be up to 300 further town centre car parking spaces.

The work will be phased so that sufficient parking spaces are available throughout the building period, at the northern end of the site. Thornfield and its selected contractor will work with the Council to minimise disruption to the existing shop traders and visitors to the Pavilion and medical centre.

Artist takes her exhibition onto the street



Artist Helen Shannon has taken her work out onto the streets of Stockton with an unusual venue for her first solo exhibition.

She chose to exhibit her work using a billboard on Oxbridge Lane, Stockton, for two weeks in November.

Helen, who has always had an interest in alternative sites for showing work, uses photography to document images from both domestic space and local landscape.

Her billboard exhibition, supported by Stockton Council's Care For Your Area Team, saw these contrasting environments merge together through digital imaging to create surreal, imagined landscapes. She used dumped chairs and fridges as well as sun-soaked fields of golden wheat.

Helen's exhibition is part of her study towards a Masters Degree in Fine Art, which she is due to complete at the University of Sunderland.

She said: "I like to centre on aspects of identity and environment, as well as urban deterioration and regeneration."

Alison cooks up a treat – and a prize

A catering supervisor at Harewood Junior School impressed judges in the School Chef of the Year 2004 competition.

Alison Crossan won a Highly Commended award at the regional heats in Durham, after success in the local heats at Northfield Comprehensive School.

It was Alison's dessert – apricot and pear crunch with crème fraiche and

caramel sauce - that won her the runner-up spot.

Eileen Robinson, Stockton Council's operations manager, said: "Congratulations go to Alison on her well earned achievements.

"The whole idea of the competition was to make a dish that could be adapted to a school meal and Alison did really well."

Working together to reduce offending

April 2002 saw a new system introduced to deal with young offenders pleading guilty and convicted for the first time at a Youth Court. Orders referring young offenders to the service are now a key element in preventing offending.

Appearances before new, community-based Youth Offender Panels operating on restorative justice principles allow offenders to take responsibility, make reparation and achieve reintegration into the law-abiding community.

The panels include at least two volunteers from the local community and one member of the Youth Offending Service. Stockton runs two panels a week and has a highly motivated team of volunteers who, on average, each attend panels about once a month. Their commitment to this work is greatly appreciated.

Youth Offender Panels investigate the causes of offending with the young person and their family, before drawing up a contract to include a programme of activity aimed at preventing re-offending.

These contracts normally include an element of reparation, requiring the young person to try to repair some of the harm caused by their offending, either directly to the victim, or indirectly to the local community. Victims are invited to attend Youth Offender Panels and have the

opportunity to confront offenders and explain the effects the offence has had on them.

Acknowledged as one of the region's best, agencies contributing to the success of Stockton's highly effective reparation scheme include Stockton Council, Yarm Parish Council, various bowling clubs, HMP Kirklevington, Butterwick Hospice and numerous schools.

Referral Orders are still in their infancy but there are early indications of their positive impact in deterring youth offending in the Borough.

Sheila Whitehead, who manages the scheme in Stockton, said: "This system is a highly effective way of dealing with young people who are on the brink of a life of crime.

"Most respond well to the input from the community panel members and are surprised when they are able to express their views informally. We rely on our volunteers to inject common sense into the process and come up with new strategies to deflect these young people from a life of crime."

The Youth Offending Service is always looking for volunteers to become panel members, so if you have one evening a month to spare and can commit to attending six days of training spread over six weekends, give Sheila a ring on (01642) 415538 or e-mail her at Sheila.Whitehead@Stockton.gov.uk



Left to right members of the Youth Offending team: Laura Gourlay, Sheila Whitehead (Operations Manager), Ian Birch and Lynn Dickson.

National recognition for motorcycle training



Instructors from the Billingham Saturday centre of Cleveland Motorcycle Training Scheme with their award.

Stockton Council's unique, volunteer-staffed motorcycle training scheme has received national recognition for its services to road safety and casualty reduction.

Cleveland Motorcycle Training Scheme, organised in all four local Borough's by Stockton's Road Safety Team, has been awarded the prestigious Lynda Chalker Award by the country's Road Safety Officers.

This Award, created in honour of the charismatic MP who was the Minister of Transport in the early 1980's is awarded annually by the country's Road Safety Officers to a person or organisation who makes a major impact in casualty reduction.

Volunteers have been recognised for more than 25 years of public service to reduce motorcycle casualties during which time almost 20,000 new riders have been trained by the volunteer instructors, many of whom have been giving up their free time to provide this service for 10 years or more (some even for over 20 years). Each year the instructors give 12,000 hours of public service in the cause of motorcycle safety.

In the last 15 years the Cleveland area has seen the biggest reduction in motorcycle injuries and deaths anywhere in the UK.

Neil Ellison, Stockton Council's Road Safety Team Leader, and himself an instructor with the scheme for 25 years, said: "The teams do a magnificent job to pass on skills and experience to new riders both to help them to survive on our busy roads, and get the most out of their motorcycling. This award is long-overdue recognition of our service, now unique in the country."

If you would like to know more about the scheme, please call the Road Safety Team on (01642) 397709 or visit www.cleveland-mts.co.uk

New Council phone numbers on the way

New numbers for hundreds of Council telephone lines are being introduced as part of a new system designed to improve services and save millions.

Although the first internal numbers have already switched, key public numbers will remain unchanged for the time being.

Much behind the scenes planning has been carried out to make the changeover as seamless as possible and a major public launch is planned for spring 2004. Full details will appear in the next edition of Stockton News.

Until then, the message is to continue calling the numbers you currently use – if you hear a message, make a note of the new number for next time.

To smooth the transition, some existing key numbers – such as the 393939 main switchboard number – will be retained indefinitely. Callers to many other numbers will find a recorded message or be diverted to the new line for an interim period. The new digital system will allow

dozens of locations across the Borough to be brought into a single network, including the smaller and remoter sites such as social care centres and countryside park centres. Eventually it could also allow video links or extra CCTV services.

Public facilities such as the Council's website and the ability to pay bills or access services by computer will benefit. The range of telephone numbers will be simplified and many direct lines will have a voicemail facility.

The electronic network will reduce the Council's estimated future costs by up to £2.5million and is being introduced in a seven-year partnership with NextiraOne UK.

All the main Council sites will be connected to the new network by May, with smaller, outlying sites linked up by December 2004.



Over the coming year, Council numbers beginning with 35, 39 and 41 will be gradually replaced by completely new numbers in the range 01642 526000 to 01642 528999.

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or e mail: BenefitService@stockton.gov.uk**

**Write or call in:
The Benefit Office, 16 Church Road, Stockton. TS18 1TX**

**If you wish to report a benefit fraud call Freephone
0800 328 6340.**



Stockton – one of the country's cleanest Boroughs



Stockton Council is celebrating earning a top three star rating from the Audit Commission in its Care For Your Area Services.

As well as the three star rating, the Commission's report also states that Stockton Council has 'excellent prospects' for further improvement - the highest rating possible. It puts the Council at the forefront of local authorities across the country in these service areas

The recent re-inspection covered grounds maintenance, street cleansing and refuse collection, recycling, waste management and waste education. The last inspection, two years ago, gave Stockton Council a one star, fair rating with promising prospects for improvement.

A MORI survey last year showed the Borough's residents to be satisfied with improvements the Council has made to street cleaning and refuse collection. Indeed, MORI reported in 2002 that Stockton was the only Council in the country to increase its satisfaction levels in street cleansing from 53 to 69 per cent, saying: "Nationally, the only local authority that has gone against the tide in terms of local opinion is Stockton-on-Tees."

Simon Dale, the Council's Head of Direct Services, said: "We have shown that the Care For Your Area initiative is not about empty slogans but about delivery.

"At the end of the day keeping the area clean and tidy can only be achieved by everyone playing their part and that means local people supporting the committed and hardworking Council employees we are fortunate to have."

"The real heroes are the men and women who are out there every day in all weathers emptying bins, sweeping the roads, cutting grass and answering queries. A special thank-you must also go to those responsible residents and businesses who really do care for their area.

"Despite this three star rating, we are not complacent and will continue to tackle problem areas such as fly tipping, whilst sustaining our performance levels and continuing our improvements to make the whole town a cleaner, greener place to live, work and visit."

An Audit Commission spokesperson said: "Two years ago the Borough was labelled one of the dirtiest in England, now it is one of the cleanest. The Council has a reliable rubbish collection and clean streets and public spaces.

"What's more, the service has gone from average to outstanding in just 18 months.

"Street cleaning and waste collection services may seem unglamorous, but they have a huge impact on people's quality of life. And the good news is, it looks like the service is set to get even better in the future."

Children have a swimming friend in Bubble

Bubble the dolphin has arrived in Stockton to encourage more children to go swimming.

Bubble is the new mascot for Stockton Council's three swimming pools – Splash, Thornaby and Billingham Forum. Nine-year-old Laura Douglas suggested the name, while six-year-old Sophie Plunkett created Bubble's "look" in a colouring competition by Stockton leisure services.

For their part in creating Bubble, Laura and Sophie both won bicycles, donated as prizes by Tim Stephenson, of Skinnergate Cycles.

Tony McGuigan, of the Council's leisure services, said: "Bubble should soon become well known across the Borough, encouraging more and more children to come swimming. We hope Bubble will be visiting schools, going to birthday parties at the pools if he's invited and offering children swimming vouchers to visit their local pools.

"Swimming is a healthy and fun activity for children and we hope Bubble will make it even better."

Future plans for Bubble include a website and a fan club to make being one of Bubble's friends even more fun.



Boost your basic skills

People who feel they struggle with reading writing and numbers are being urged to boost their skills.

Nationally around 7 million people – some 20 per cent of adults – have difficulties with literacy and numeracy. Many of these are employed and some even hold degrees.

Stockton has a dedicated team on hand to offer advice, information and support to adults who would like to improve their skills, including spelling, writing and maths skills.

Based with Stockton Council's Adult Education Service, they can arrange for people to attend classes near to where they live, or put them in touch with providers who are able to meet their needs.

"Reading, writing and maths are the essential skills we use every day to help us function at work and home," said Anne Smart, Stockton Council's Skills for Life Outreach Worker.

"Without these skills it would be difficult to help children with their homework, improve employment prospects, handle finances and household budgets and fill in forms."

The team can also give sessions to groups or organisations to raise awareness in basic skills. Volunteers are always needed to help 'signpost' people to the relevant organisations and to promote the service. Volunteers are particularly needed in Billingham, Portrack and Tilery, Parkfield and Hardwick.

For more information please contact the Outreach Team on (01642) 676528.



Looking at parish status

Following two separate petitions received from electors in Billingham and Norton to receive Parish status, Stockton Council is taking steps to assess the results from its recent consultation with residents in each of those areas.

As part of the consultation process in Billingham, 26,164 leaflets were distributed to electors, with 5,961 responses returned (22.8 per cent). Of those, 3,970 were in favour of parish status and 1,945 were not.

As part of the consultation in Norton,

leaflets were distributed to 14,360 electors with 3,507 responses (24.4 per cent). 512 were in favour of parish status for Norton and 2,992 were not.

The results of the consultation were due to be considered at a special meeting of Stockton Council on 10 December.

The Council's views, along with a summary of the the petitions and consultation exercise, will then be forwarded to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, with whom the final decision will rest.

Tristar vice chair elected

Joan Henderson-Thynne, a Billingham tenant for almost half a century, has been elected as vice-chair of the Board of Directors of Tristar Homes.

Tristar Homes, which was set up 18 months ago, is run by a board of 18 directors, six tenants, six representatives from Stockton Council and six independents.

Joan's first involvement came through the Customer Testing Panel that looked at options for the future of the Borough's Council properties before being part of the Homes for the Future Group from which she was selected as one of the first tenant board members.

PIPS is new voice for patients and carers

Patients, carers and health and social care service users are being urged to get involved with a new forum.

The Public Involvement Partnership Stockton (PIPS) has been developed to support improvements in the way health and social care services are delivered and the development of future plans and policies.

PIPS has been designed to provide a route for users, carers and patients to both challenge and support the delivery of NHS and social services in Stockton.

Working with existing groups such as PALS, the Patients Advisory Liaison Service, it also provides a forum for users and carers to voice their views. PIPS offers a way of co-ordinating carer and public involvement within health and social care, bringing the views, ideas and concerns of carers and users to appropriate corporate bodies.

Health and social care service users and carers are encouraged to become involved by visiting the new website at www.pips.nu or contacting the carers centre on (01642) 739955.



has its 21st birthday



James Fenny in 1982 (left) and today (above)

Much has changed in the size and content of Stockton News since the first edition was published in December 1982, as has the life experiences of the youngster featured on the front cover, choirboy James Fenny.

In 1982, 13-year-old James was a pupil at Ian Ramsey School, Stockton. A keen choirboy and outstanding singer, twice running he won a place amongst the 16 finalists from 1,600 entrants for the prestigious National Chorister of the Year Award.

Doing well academically, James attended Stockton Sixth Form College, followed by Newcastle University to study law, before going to the Chester Law School.

Life was going well until, at the age of 24 whilst working in Sheffield, James was struck down with a virus that badly affected his heart, causing a rare condition called Cardio Myopathy.

James' world was turned upside down as he learned he only had three or four months to live without a heart transplant. Within six weeks James was fortunate enough to receive a new heart at Newcastle's Freeman Hospital, recovering rapidly to be back at work within five months.

In 1996, James married Nicky and they have three beautiful children, Jamie Catherine aged 6, Joseph Samuel, 4, and 1-year-old Daniel William.

Currently a solicitor for the Public Defender Service, part of the Legal Services Commission, James has high hopes for the future.

He said: "My experience made me realise the importance of family and quality of life. It's good to be working back in the Teesside area where I am also near other members of my family."

On his state of health James said: "I will be on medication for the rest of

my life, but that's a small price to pay. I look at my kids and realise that if it wasn't for someone carrying a donor card, they would not be here."

The first Stockton News contained 16 pages, mostly black-and-white, and aimed to "provide a readable magazine with news of developments in the area, stories of local interest and achievement, information for future reference and explanations of issues which will add to and perhaps challenge the factual assumptions of current debates".

Other stories covered in the first-ever Stockton News included:

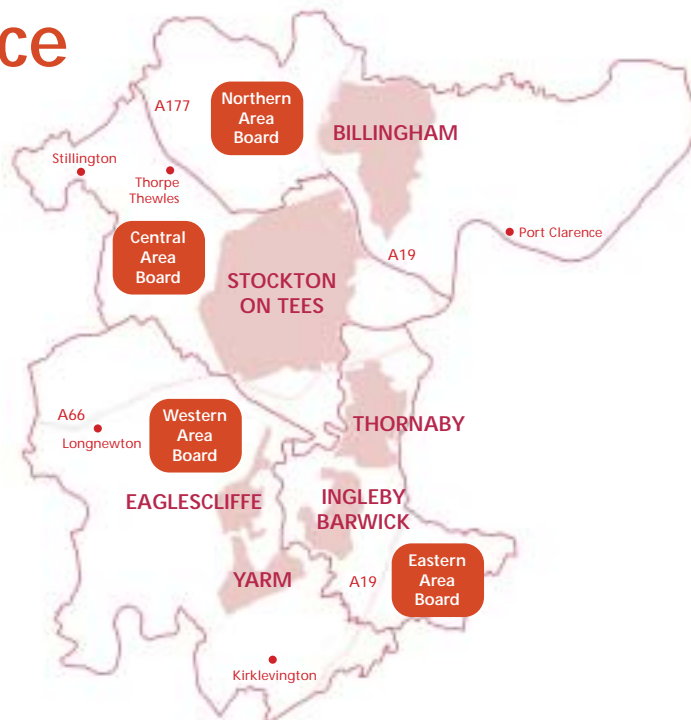
- Civic receptions for 60 local men who served in the Falklands campaign, attended by WWI veteran Major Edward Cooper, VC.
- Opening of the new footbridge across Stockton's Riverside road and the final section of the A19 Billingham bypass
- Refurbishment of The Shambles in Stockton High Street
- News of Norton bowls player Norma Shaw's Commonwealth bronze medal

Stockton Renaissance

– your area your choice



Stockton Renaissance Partnership Board member Jean Baron with Stockton Renaissance Co-ordinator Dawn Welsh and two of the lucky shopping voucher winners, Mrs Hodgson from Norton (£50 voucher) and Mr Smith (£25 voucher) from Stockton. A Mr Evans from Billingham also won a £25 voucher.



A new Area Board is set to give people in the south west of Stockton a greater say in the way services in their area are delivered. And changes to the boundaries of three existing Area Boards mean that all parts of the Borough will soon be covered by one of the boards.

The decision to create the new board and change the boundaries of the three others was made by Stockton Renaissance, the Local Strategic Partnership for the Borough. This followed three months of consultation involving local residents, Parish Councils, business, Councillors and the existing area boards.

A consultation leaflet about the area board coverage and an article in the Summer edition of Stockton News generated a good response, with over 500 people voting for their preferred option.

All the responses from the leaflet and website were entered into a draw for £50 worth of shopping vouchers kindly donated by Debenhams; the lucky winners are pictured above.

Overall, an amended Option 2, which will include Thorpe Thewles within a Central Area Board, was the favoured option. This would give us-

- all the urban area of Stockton represented on a Central Area Board including Stillington, Whitton, Carlton, Thorpe Thewles and Redmarshall
- Ingleby Barwick and Thornaby within an Eastern Area Board
- the Northern Area Board to include Billingham and areas to the north of the A177

- the new Western Area Board, incorporating the south west of the Borough including Longnewton, Eaglescliffe, Yarm and Kirklevington.

Stockton Renaissance will now work with the community, voluntary sector and service providers to look at formal terms of reference and the best way of ensuring that all the different sectors are fairly represented on the Board.

Christine Willis, Vice Chair of Stockton Renaissance, said: "We were very pleased with the positive response to the consultation and look forward to welcoming representatives from the new area board onto the Stockton Renaissance Partnership Board.

"A number of people were interested in learning more about the area boards and Renaissance, so we intend to regularly publish the dates and venues of the meetings in Stockton News to give people the opportunity to attend."

Area Boards bring together local residents, businesses and service providers to give local people the chance to influence all the services in their areas – not just the Council ones. The Tees Health Review, Neighbourhood Renewal strategy, town centre regeneration, playing field strategy, drug prevention strategy are just some of the issues that have been considered by Area Boards.

The Chairs of these Area Boards also serve as part of the Borough-wide Stockton Renaissance Partnership Board, which draws together service providers and representatives from the private and community sectors to plan for the future of the Borough.

This local strategic partnership takes a lead on the Borough's Community Strategy, which brings together decisions that will affect you and your quality of life. It also takes decisions on Neighbourhood Renewal Funding applications over £100,000 and endorses applications to the region wide Tees Valley Partnership (TVP) for Single Programme Funding. The TVP includes in its membership a representative from Stockton Renaissance.

More information on Stockton Renaissance and the Area Boards can be found on the Stockton Renaissance website at www.stockton.gov.uk/renaissance

If you would like to attend one of the partnership meetings or for information on your local area board please contact -

Stockton Renaissance Partnership Board - Dawn Welsh, tel (01642) 415519. 5pm 16 December 2003, 13 January, 10 February, 9 March 2004.

Stockton Central Area Partnership - Julie Harrison, tel (01642) 415142. 18 December 2003 at 10am, 29 January at 1.30pm, 26 February 10am, 25 March 1.30pm 2004.

The Billingham Partnership - James Hadman, tel (01642) 360150. 5.45pm on 12 January, 9 February, 8 March.

Thornaby Regeneration Partnership - Stuart Levin tel (01642) 608316 at 9.30am on 16 December 2003, 27 January, 24 February 30 March 2004.

The shape of a bridge to come

Stockton's changing skyline will soon include this stunning new pedestrian and cycle bridge, crossing over the River Tees between the University of Durham Queen's Campus and the new Northbank development.

This sweeping double arched design by one of the world's leading architects, Spence Associates, will pave the way for the massive redevelopment, expected to attract £120 million of private investment. Included at Northbank will be a research-based business and education park, a hotel, restaurants, modern waterfront homes and open space with riverside footpaths and cycleways.

Work on the bridge will begin early spring 2004 and should be complete within a year.



Thornaby past and present

South Thornaby residents have created an exhibition of photographs of their town past and present at their local community centre.

Dozens of pictures are on display at South Thornaby Community Centre, Havilland Road, along with information about them based on the memories of contributors. Working with Donna Whiting of Stockton On Line, they have used computers at the centre for their research.

Some material has been compiled into a fascinating scrapbook, on view at

the centre. Subjects include the Five Lamps, Head Wrightson's works, the Town Hall and local churches.

A new exhibition to be completed shortly focuses on the old Thornaby aerodrome.

More photographs and memories are welcome and residents can drop in on Thursdays to use the computers free to research Thornaby's history, assisted by guidance of Stockton On Line staff - for details please call Donna Whiting on (01642) 863488 or 863188, or email sthornabysw@stockton-online.ac.uk



Success story

Lindsey achieves her dreams

Bubbly Lindsey Johnson, aged 24, from Newtown, has finally achieved her lifelong ambition of opening her own hair and beauty salon.

Business is going well in her new establishment, based in Green Dragon Yard, Stockton, where she offers everything from makeovers and air-brush tanning to nail art and natural hair weaving.

It was always Lindsey's ambition to work in the beauty business and she discovered she had a real talent for the job when working as a nursing assistant at a local hospital, she gave free hair and beauty treatments to the elderly patients who were delighted with the results.

She was able to realise her dream with the help of funding from Stockton Council towards her nail therapy beauty training through the SRB People into Enterprise Fund, the NES Programme, Five Lamps and Action Team for Jobs.

Lindsey first set up business offering a mobile service with help from Bill Erskine at the Five Lamps, Thornaby, and she also attended the New Entrepreneur Scholarship Programme at the University of Teesside.

For more information on aspects of funding, please call Annette Nylund on (01642) 391256.



Stockton Adult Education Service

Adult Education Performance Figures

	2001-02	2002-03
Number of learners	7310	7527
Number of courses	773	877
Number of venues	82	80

Student Information Booklet

The Senior Managers meet regularly with learners to find out how the Service can be improved. At a meeting of the 'Voice of the Learner' learners suggested what information they needed. This resulted in a Student Information Booklet being produced.

Achievements and Proud Moments!

Skills For Life Learners in Print - We are extremely pleased that three of our learners have seen their work published this year, Dianne Gosling has had an item published on the BBC Skillswise website, Sandra Harvey-Smith had a piece published in the

Evening Gazette and Bryan Hayden had a poem published in a book of poetry.

Adult Education was delighted to work with the management of The Castlegate Centre to create a display of students' projects in the old Dixon's shop. Soft furnishings, artwork, decorated eggs, stained glass, parchment craft, beadwork, decorative techniques, woodwork and woodcarving were all on display celebrating the quality and diversity of crafts that can be learned with Stockton Adult Education.

Linda Oliver, tutor of "Braille for the Sighted" course was runner-up for the Northern Region in the Adult Tutor of the Year Awards run by the National Institute for Adult and Continuing Education.

Comments, Compliments and Concerns

Between September 2002 and August 2003 we received 3 comments, 16 compliments and 30 complaints. Most of the compliments were from students to say that their tutors had done a great job! All complaints were actioned within 10 working days. We would like to thank everyone who has sent in a Comment, Compliment or Complaint over the past year. Your comments help us to continually improve the service.



Billingham tenants are delighted with transformation

Tenants of the Borough's first properties to be modernised up to "Decent Standard" under a £100m partnership deal between Tristar Homes and four leading contractors are delighted with the transformation.

Tristar Homes, which took over the management of most Council-owned housing in Stockton Borough 18 months ago, has started a comprehensive investment programme for the next seven to ten years.

Under the rolling programme, most properties in Billingham, Thornaby and Stockton will be inspected and a schedule drawn up to provide, in most cases, new bathrooms, kitchens, windows and central heating.

The first houses to benefit have been completed on the Chiltons Estate in Billingham by Connaught Property Services – a week ahead of schedule.

Tenants of the two 80-year-old semi detached houses, Millie Crook and Angela Twizell, were both "over the moon" with the speed and standard of workmanship. Presented with flowers to mark the completion of the first two properties, each agreed that their new kitchens and bathrooms were the highlight of the work.

Mrs Crook said: "I have lived in the same house for 30 years and the work that has been done is absolutely marvelous. It has given the property a new lease of life."

Mrs Twizell, who has been there five years, added: "It's just like getting a new house. Everything seems much more spacious and airy. The whole family is delighted with the transformation."

Connaught Property Services is carrying out modernisation work in Billingham, starting with the 101 homes at Chiltons Estate. Houses are getting new kitchens, bathrooms, windows, exterior and interior doors, partial re-wiring, and wall tiles and bathroom and kitchen floor covering.

Similar work is being done by Frank Haslam Milan, Mears and Dunelm Property Services under the partnership.

The partnership between Stockton Council, Tristar Homes, and the contractors is expected to give local industry a big boost.

All the partners have vast experience in this type of work and would welcome approaches from local businesses about becoming a supplier or sub-contractor for the work. To find out more, or about job opportunities, please contact Tristar Homes at business.dev@tristarhomes.co.uk

Splash points give pupils a smart move

Cutting edge technology is bringing a smart bonus to pupils at Tilery Primary School and their families.

A scheme being piloted by Stockton Council as part of the North East Regional Smart Card Consortium (NERSC) is encouraging pupils at the school to use smart card technology to make greater use of the swimming pool at Splash.

Pupils have been given the cards, which are pre-credited with a number of points that can be redeemed for swimming sessions, thanks to funding from the Council's Healthy Lifestyle Programme.

And it doesn't stop there – the smart cards are being offered not just to each child at the school but also to their families in order to encourage more people to take up swimming as a hobby.

The school is able to reward pupils for good attendance, good behaviour and good work by awarding points that can be redeemed at Splash.

The scheme will be assessed at the end of its pilot stage in March 2004 and it could possibly be extended Borough wide.

Splash manager David Seller said: "Since the scheme began in July it has proved a great success. Out of 850 cards issued, just three have not been used and over 3,000 visits have being made to the pool.

"Funding through NERSC has meant this has also been an ideal way for our staff to try out the new technology."

Wardens crawl for charity

Stockton Council Community Wardens swapped uniforms for fancy dress recently to raise money for the charity Daisy Chain, helping children with autism. Armed with lipstick, handbags and high heels, the team collected more than £600 on a pub-crawl around Stockton.



Towns aim for city lifestyle

Stockton and Middlesbrough are busy centres for business, shopping, learning and leisure.



But look a little wider and there's much more - the barrage and watersports facilities; development sites at Stockton's Northbank and Middlehaven in Middlesbrough; docks and yards, business and industrial zones alongside nature conservation sites; two growing universities; and a complex network of road and rail facilities.



All this within a few square miles at the heart of the wider area known today as the Tees Valley, stretching from Darlington through Stockton and Middlesbrough to the coast.

But this centre of an area of no less than 650,000 people still has huge potential to develop to the benefit of everyone.

Unlocking this potential is the purpose of the Stockton/Middlesbrough Initiative, part of a wider Tees Valley Vision that will determine the future of the sub-region over the next 15 years.

Rather than being rivals, Stockton and Middlesbrough Councils are working together to develop their assets and attract new investment to provide the sort of facilities that big city residents would take for granted.

Ian Thompson, Stockton Council's Head of Regeneration, believes this presents a massive opportunity.

"Both towns have come a long way in recent years and there are some



excellent facilities here now," he said. "But compare these with elsewhere and it's apparent just what could be here. 650,000 is a lot of people and the facilities should be worthy of them – world class.

"The strategy will be to develop attractions of regional significance – high quality retail facilities; leisure, eating and entertainment opportunities; better transportation. These are essential if we are to attract new businesses, continue expanding our two universities and make the Tees Valley a real visitor destination.

"It will begin by building on our present strengths, especially the people. They have so much to offer, yet we end up losing many bright prospects who leave to work or study. So the Initiative will aim to provide what's needed to give them the opportunities to stay here.

"We will encourage our universities to develop, build on the excellence of our key industries – chemicals, steel and the port – and encourage diversification by providing the

conditions in which entrepreneurs can operate successfully."

Next spring, consultants will begin a major study to move forward implementation of the initiative, with a 15-year masterplan to co-ordinate the development of key sites and an investment strategy to identify potential funding.

The river is one asset with vast potential. The Northbank and Middlehaven developments, along with Teesdale and the barrage, are tapping into this, but massive opportunities remain for high quality waterside development.

The masterplan is expected to propose a range of projects to maximise the development opportunities of key sites. Office and business premises, high quality riverside housing, a hotel and conference centre as well as leisure, recreation and cultural facilities will all be on the agenda.

Over the 15 years, delivery of the plans will take £250 million of public funds

to 'prime the pump' and attract further outside investment.

"This is all about redefining the image of the Tees Valley and what's important is that all sectors of the population can benefit," Ian Thompson continued.

"It's an opportunity to create a place to be proud of, with a positive new image. We are looking for high quality urban design, opportunities for iconic art and buildings, contemporary culture and a city lifestyle.

"With growth targeted where it gives most benefit, riverside housing for mixed communities will have spin-off benefits for surrounding areas, many of which currently have low land values and low employment.

"At the end of it all, we want to create a new heart and image for the area, complementing other parts of the Tees Valley Vision, to increase land values, generate new employment opportunities and bridge the gap between the Tees and other parts of the country."

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Rachel Paylor

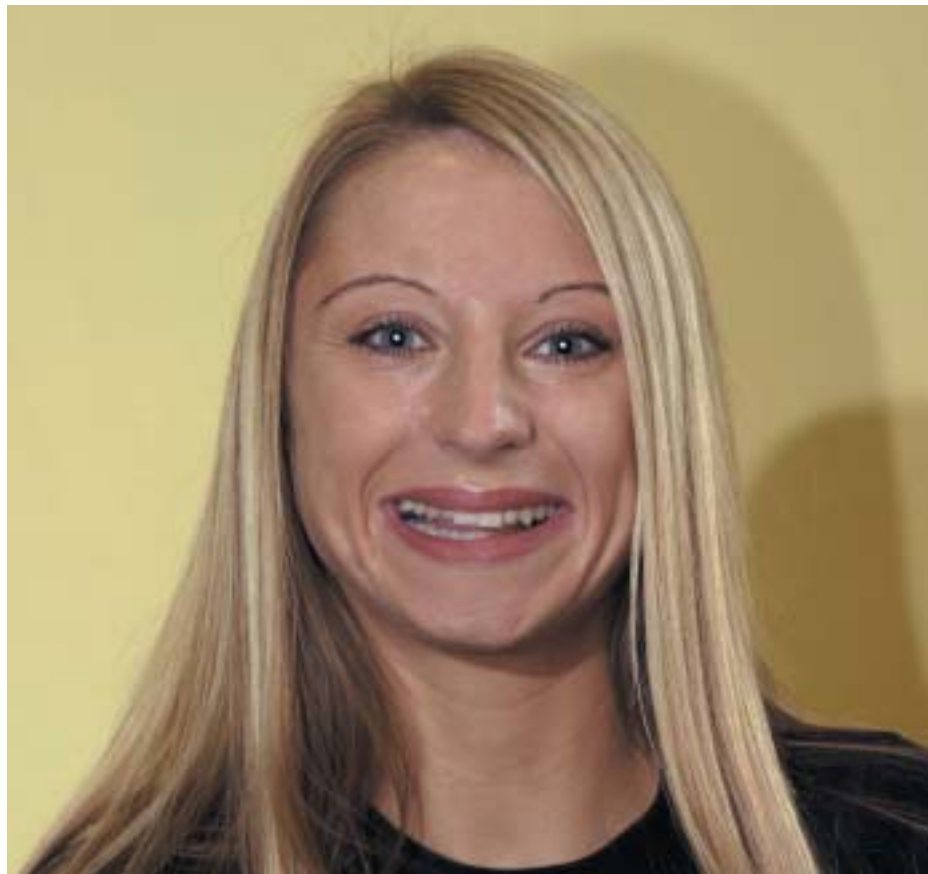
From a very young age, sport has always played a very big part in the life of Rachel Paylor, one of Stockton Council's Activ8 Fitness Advisers.

Rachel describes herself as child who was 'energetic and a bit hyperactive' and who started joining in sporting activities from around the age of five.

Later, whilst attending Stockton's Bishopsgarth secondary school, Rachel took part in gymnastics and was the netball captain and ran at Claireville Stadium, Middlesbrough, for the school.

For the last three years, she has worked in a sporting capacity for Stockton Council, based at the gym in Splash as part of the team that promotes the new fitness service, 'Activ8'. This provides opportunities for the whole community to enjoy exercise, through which they can achieve a more healthy lifestyle.

"It's great to see the difference in how people look and feel, once they have introduced some exercise into their life"



As part of the Activ8 programme, Rachel will work on a one-to-one basis with people who want to either change their lifestyle by taking up more physical activity or to enhance the one they already have.

Come along to Activ8 and Rachel will be your first point of contact. She'll start you off with an induction, taking around an hour and a half. This involves a tour of the gym at Splash, followed by a thorough explanation of the equipment.

Then comes a fitness assessment with a personalised programme, tailor-made to meet your individual needs – also taking around one and a half hours.

Rachel will look at your weight, height, flexibility, lung capacity and percentage of body fat in order to work out a programme of exercise for you. Her main aim is to produce a balanced programme to increase your healthy lifestyle.

Once you have begun your personalised programme, Rachel will monitor how you are getting on, assessing you again around six weeks later to review your progress.

With a string of qualifications including RSA Exercise to Music, OCR Gym and Freeweights, and currently taking part in an OCR course in Pilates, you can rest assured that you will be

in good hands with the advice and guidance Rachel can offer.

On being a fitness advisor and instructor, she said: "I love the variety of working as a fitness advisor

"It's great to see the difference in how people look and feel, once they have introduced some exercise into their life.

"I am keen to work with people of any age and any fitness level, for many people it's just taking that first step, but once they get into a routine, they find it makes a great difference to their lives, both mentally and physically."

Rachel leads a very busy life – being wife to Gareth and mum to four year-old son Charlie, she has her work cut out in balancing home life with her work with Activ8 which involves working shifts. She also works within the fitness suite at the Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre, where she holds classes and also inductions and fitness assessments.

As if that's not enough, Rachel recently took part in the Great North Run and represented Activ8 in a fitness competition in Birmingham. This involved pedalling on a bike and answering questions on fitness; she came fourth out of 24 and was delighted with the results.

Thornaby youngsters carry North East banner

Nine children from the Thornaby Pavilion Judo Club have represented the North East region at a prestigious national martial arts competition.

The youngsters took part in the annual National Judo Championships, held at the Crystal Palace National Sports Centre in November.

Anna Baxter, Rachel Drummond, Natalie Stevenson, Stacey Walton and Amy Wishart were joined by Adam Drummond, Craig Meaburn, Mark Morrison and Sean Stonehouse in the 10-15 year-old age group

Their coach, Cassandra Johnson, said: "I am so proud of the children for all the hard work and dedication they have put into their training for this sport. This championship is a just reward for their efforts."

Can you afford not to insulate your home?

More people die from cold weather in Britain than in any other European country.

Since 1996, Stockton Council has reduced wasted energy in the home by some 20.6 per cent in accordance with the Home Energy Conservation Act.

But despite the fact that more than 50 per cent of all heat can be lost through the walls and roof space, 12,000 households still do not have cavity wall or loft insulation to the current required standards.

Staff from Stockton's Environment Centre will be contacting all vulnerable households to offer insulation grants to those people on a qualifying benefit and to explain about great money saving deals with loft and cavity wall insulation. To find out more, call (01642) 391186.

Kenny's a superstar roofer

Kenny Patterson spends much of his working life head and shoulders above everyone. Now, he's officially a superstar!

Tristar Homes roofer Kenny is the first winner of the company's Superstar Award.

He scooped the award for being a respected, reliable, dedicated, helpful and knowledgeable member of the Tristar team.

Staff across the organisation were invited to nominate their colleagues. More than a little surprised, Kenny's reaction to being considered such a model employee was summed up in one word – chuffed.

"I knew about the award but I didn't even know I'd been nominated," he admitted, especially when Chief Executive Elaine Corney and Corporate Services Manager Michelle Abramson turned where he was working to give him the good news, complete with trophy, certificate, card and gift.

"It came out of the blue. We were really busy and I thought they'd just

come with another urgent repair job!" he said. "We work as a team and help each other. I don't see it as work but a service for tenants, especially the vulnerable and disabled who would suffer if repairs weren't done."

Kenny, who has worked for Tristar and Stockton Council for 27 years, was praised for being flexible, especially during bad weather, and for offering to provide emergency cover over Christmas.

Michelle said: "The award was designed for colleagues to nominate each other, not just for management to recognise employees. Often it's your closest working colleagues who know and appreciate what you do and how you make a difference. There were no criteria, people were just invited to submit names and say why they thought they should win."

Kenny doesn't give climbing great heights a second thought, nor working in all weathers. And it could end up running in the family – Kenny and his wife Linda's sons, John, 12, and Ian, 7, both have their job sights set high by following dad up on the roof.



Post-16 education is thriving as youngsters wishing to study for A Levels or vocational qualifications find plenty to choose from across the Borough.

In Yarm, Conyers Sixth Form encourages its students to follow a broad curriculum. This year's outstanding exam results saw 51 per cent of entries graded A or B and a 97 per cent pass rate that saw one national newspaper rank Conyers among the country's top 30 state school Sixth Forms.

"Particularly pleasing is the consistently strong added value indicators – however well they may have done up to GSCE Level, the majority of students achieve above expectation in our Sixth Form," said Head Teacher John Morgan.

Conyer's is now bidding to become Stockton's Maths and Computing Specialist College from September 2004,



In and a



supported by sponsorship from computing software and training giant Oracle.

"We'll be opening the region's first Oracle Internet Academy, providing industry standard training and qualifications for post-16 students and other members of our community," added Mr Morgan, "And a wider range of maths courses will be tailored to support the differing needs of studying at advanced level."

The diversity of sixth form subjects is a key feature of Conyers. 24 separate AS/A2 courses include all the "traditional" subjects, plus Health & Social Care AVCE and newer courses such as film studies, psychology, and philosophy.

Facilities were recently enhanced by a state-of-the-art all weather sports pitch, funded by the school with Stockton

Council and the Football Foundation and used both by pupils and community groups.

Impressive teaching, high standards of achievement and good facilities gained Conyers sixth form high praise when OFSTED inspectors said: "...impressive standards are being achieved – students have mature and very positive attitudes, work hard and make the most of the opportunities."

Size is not everything when it comes to being a successful place of learning. Billingham's Bede College is one of the smallest in the Further Education sector, recruiting its 550 students mainly from three local schools – Billingham Campus, Northfield and St Michael's.

Bede has enjoyed considerable examination success and is consistently one of the North's top colleges.

"The majority of students are on Advanced Level courses and go on to higher education," said Principal, Miriam Stanton. "But we've developed courses to meet the requirements of a wide ability range, paying particular attention to the needs of those with learning difficulties and building up a portfolio of GNVQ and AVCE courses for those preferring a vocational option."

Open access facilities for computing, CD Rom, TV and audio, professional media and video editing equipment and desk top publishing are supplemented by English and theatre studies rooms, a high quality Learning Centre and five new classrooms.

"We take pride in the individual care given to all students. Each is a member of a tutor group and almost all staff are tutors," Miriam Stanton added.

In 1999, Bede's success was confirmed by a national Beacon Award for Science, an

One student, Joel Beevers, gained the Tees Valley's best individual achievement with five Grade A passes, the AQA examination board awarding one of the top five marks in the country in Biology, Chemistry and Mathematics.

The Good Schools Guide sums up Eggescliffe as 'effervescent' and 'busy from dawn until dusk'.

Angela Darnell added: "Our facilities continue to develop and we now have a purpose built studio theatre, a music suite with recording studio, specialist ICT facilities, well equipped library and resources centre, fitness room, gym and art studio. By next Easter, the main school site will also have a new floodlit astro-turf sports pitch."

A Sixth Form open evening for 2004's prospective students and parents takes place on Thursday 22 January at 7.30pm.



around

The Borough's colleges and sixth forms

achievement repeated in 2001 with a successful OFSTED inspection, a further Beacon Award for Biology and an outstanding Investors in People reward.

2003 performance tables show similar success, with results better than ever, including a 97.4 per cent overall A Level pass rate.

Eggescliffe Sixth Form, with 280 students, is a Specialist School for the Performing Arts. Head Teacher Angela Darnell says many students join the Sixth Form to study music, dance, drama, performance and media.

"We are also very proud of our examination results which indicate that all curriculum areas deliver excellent results," she said. "In 2003, the overall A Level pass rate was more than 95 per cent, 15 candidates gaining Grade A passes in all their A Level subjects."

The Borough's newest college is at Teesdale, in Thornaby. In a successful first year, Stockton Riverside College students, staff and visitors responded positively to the new environment and facilities, full time enrolments rising by ten per cent on the previous 12 months to 1,375.

The College is one of only two in the country to be given Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status in Performing Arts. Located in ARC, the CoVE will receive an additional £500,000 from the Learning and Skills Council over the next three years to establish the MAP Theatre Company, a training organisation that will also tour. Students will learn performance techniques, technical skills, industry standards and business practices, leading to a Modern Apprenticeship award.

The College has strong links with community partners including schools,

community resource centres and Middlesbrough FC. It is also the North's largest provider of Prince's Trust programmes.

Principal Sujinder Sangha aims to make it the ultimate open access and equal opportunities College for everyone who wants to learn, work and enhance their quality of life through learning, saying: "The College has commenced its first full academic year at the new premises in a healthy position and coped remarkably well with the transition. Our aim now is to build on our success to create even better opportunities for our students."

The College plans to expand into new areas of education and training by collaborating with partners in the voluntary sector, public industry and business.

Come down to the ice kingdom

Stockton's town centre has been transformed into a winter wonderland with the installation of a festive ice rink.

The Kingdom of Ice opened on 21 November and is proving a hit with young and old alike who are donning their skates and enjoying the Christmas atmosphere. The rink, where Stockton's Dovecot Street

meets the High Street, will be open until 4 January. As well as being able to skate, you can warm yourself up and relax with a cup of hot chocolate or a mulled wine.

Simon Dale, Stockton Council's Head of Direct Services, said: "This ice rink really adds to the festive atmosphere in the Borough and it has been wonderful to see so many families enjoying themselves on the ice."



Christmas and New Year refuse collection

There will be minimal disruptions to the normal collection service this year. Please check the collection day information below to confirm when refuse in your area will be collected:

Normal collection day

Wednesday 24 Dec 2003
Thursday 25 Dec 2003
Friday 26 Dec 2003
Tuesday 30 Dec 2003
Wednesday 31 Dec 2003
Thursday 1 Jan 2004
Friday 2 Jan 2004

Revised collection day

Wednesday 24 Dec 2003 (Normal day)
Saturday 27 Dec 2003 (2 days late)
Monday 29 Dec 2003 (3 days late)
Tuesday 30 Dec 2003 (Normal day)
Wednesday 31 Dec 2003 (Normal day)
Friday 2 Jan 2004 (1 day late)
Saturday 3 Jan 2004 (1 day late)

Refuse collections will return to normal from Tuesday 6th January.

There is also a one-day collection service for the disposal of real Christmas Trees. Place your tree out on the boundary of your property on Monday 12 January 2004 and we will dispose of it for you.

For further information, please contact the Care for Your Area Team on (01642) 391959 or email careforyourarea@stockton.gov.uk

Christmas and New Year opening: Stockton Council and Tristar Homes

Opening hours of many Council offices will be restricted over the holidays.

Municipal Buildings:

24 December: closed at 1pm; main switchboard (01642) 393939 open until 4pm.

25 & 26 December: closed.

29 & 30 December: reception and switchboard will operate normal hours.

31 December: Closed at 1pm: main switchboard (01642) 393939 open until 4pm.

1 January: closed.

2 January: open as usual.

Cash Offices

Municipal Buildings, Stockton, Billingham Town Centre & Appleby House, Thornaby:

24 December: open 9am - 1pm.

25 - 28 December: closed.

29 and 30 December: open as usual (9am - 4pm).

31 December: open 9am - 1pm.

1 January: closed.

2 January: open as usual.

Leisure Centres

Billingham Forum, Splash, Stockton Sports Centre, Thornaby Pavilion & Pool:

24 December: all centres 9am - 4pm and Billingham Forum open 9am - 5pm;

25 & 26 December: closed.

27 - 31 December: only two centres open-Billingham Forum (10am - 5pm) and Splash (9am - 4pm).

1 January: closed.

2 January: open as usual.

Kingsway House

Billingham
(Council Tax & Business Rates):

24 December: closed at 1pm;

telephone inquiry service (01642) 397108 open until 4pm.

25 December - 1 January: closed.

2 January: open as usual.

Service Stockton

Sun Street Offices, Thornaby:

24 December: closed at 1pm.

25 December - 1 January: closed.

2 January: open as usual.

For Bereavement Services please contact your Funeral Director.

Service Stockton

Cowpen Depot, Billingham:

24 December: closed at 1pm.

25 - 28 December: closed.

29 & 30 December: open as usual

31 December: closed at 1pm

1 January: closed

2 January: open as usual.

(See article on opposite page for revised refuse collection arrangements)

16 Church Road

Stockton (Housing Benefits, Advice, etc and Environmental Health, Licensing & Trading Standards)

24 December: closed at 1pm.

25 December - 1 January: closed.

2 January: open as usual.

Homelessness Emergency out of hours service please contact:

Cleveland Police on (01642) 326326 or Social Services on (01642) 631123

Tristar Homes

24 December: open 9am - 1pm

25 - 28 December: closed.

29 & 30 December: open 9am - 5pm.

31 December: open 9am - 1pm.

1 - 4 January: closed.

January 5: open as usual.

Please see local offices for opening times. For emergencies and make-safe repairs outside of hours call 0800 174491

Wynyard House

Human Resources:

24 December: closed at 1pm.

25 December - 1 January: closed.

2 January: open as usual.

Training & Employment Services

Dovecot Street

24 December: open as usual.

25 - 28 December: closed.

29 - 31 December: open as usual.

1 January: closed.

2 January: open as usual.

Security & Surveillance Centre:

Stockton Council's Security Services, Concierge Security officers at high rise blocks and Care Call staff are open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Stockton Register Office

22 & 23 December:

Open 9.30am - 4pm.

24 December: Open 9.30am - 1pm.

25 & 26 December: closed.

27 December:

open for Marriages ONLY.

28 December: closed.

29 & 30 December:

open 8.30am - 6pm.

31 December: open 9.30am - 2pm.

1 January: closed.

2 January: open as usual.

Please note: an appointment system is in operation at this office with priority given to the registration of deaths from 29 December - 2 January; after this normal service will be resumed. To make an appointment to register, please call (01642) 393155. In cases of extreme emergency out of office hours only, please call (01642) 618946.

Health and Social Care

Alma Street Office, Billingham Council Offices and First Contact Unit*

24 December:

open 8.30am - 4.30pm.

25 - 28 December and 1 January: closed

29 & 30 December: open as usual.

31 December will be open 8.30am - 4.30pm.

1 January: closed.

2 January: open as usual.

*Emergency duty team available all hours when offices are not open on (01642) 631123.

Swim with Santa at Splash

Stockton youngsters are set for lots of fun at Splash, thanks to Santa 'n' Swim sessions during December. Children of all ages can join in, enjoying a swim in the pool before visiting Santa in his grotto for a present.

There's also an opportunity to take part in Santa's Sinker Sessions – normal swim sessions which Santa will join in from time to time to throw sinkable toys into the pool. Any child who retrieves one and returns it to a member of staff will receive a small prize.

For more information see page 40 or please call Splash on (01642) 393900.

Music Service adds to festive cheer

A series of concerts by the Tees Valley Music Service will add a musical note to this year's festive cheer.

A massed choir of primary school pupils will give performances of 'Stable Manners', a jazzy nativity musical about three animals with "attitude".

25 Stockton primary schools will taking part in a series of performances across the Tees Valley involving a total of more than 3,000 pupils.

The two local performances will take place at Thornaby Pavilion on 16 and

17 December, where pupils from St Patrick's RC Primary will perform the drama between the songs.

Managed by Stockton Council, the Tees Valley Music Service teaches children in schools across the area to play music, and runs the Tees Valley Youth Orchestra and Youth Choir.

Several of the service's musicians and vocalists have performed with national orchestras and choirs and an extensive programme of school-based workshops is also provided, as well as professional development opportunities for school-based teachers.

Boost for consumer advice service

Stockton's Consumer Advice Centre has received a boost at one of the year's busiest periods with the recruitment of another experienced Consumer Advisor.

Advice officers can give impartial advice on the law and your rights, suggest appropriate courses of action, advise you how to pursue your rights and court procedures.

Although they can also pass on information to the Council's enforcement team, they cannot close businesses down or automatically obtain a refund for you. Neither can they recommend a business to you or tell you which ones to avoid.

The extra post will help reduce the waiting for service and avoid the need to reduce opening times.

Top tips to avoid Christmas present problems

- You can't insist on a refund for unwanted goods, so ask about a retailer's returns policy before you buy. Some will offer refunds but this is not a legal right and most shops insist on a receipt for refunds.

- Check that goods are working and free from faults as soon as you buy them – it's easier to resolve a complaint if you return to the shop soon, rather than wait until after Christmas.
- Make sure the toys you buy are suitable for the child's age and consider other smaller children in the house. Most toys will indicate the minimum age they are suitable for.
- Beware of bargains from traders selling from a street corner - if something goes wrong you'll be unlikely to find the seller again.
- Counterfeit goods may not be the bargain they seem – DVDs, videos and tapes may vary in quality and perfumes smell may not last and could even be dangerous.

For advice, call the Trading Standards Consumer Advice Service on (01642) 391180, drop into the Advice Centre in the Central Library or visit the website at www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/stockton



Make the season special with a panto

It's that time of year again – oh, yes it is – when theatres across the land play host to the most spectacular pantomimes – **Billingham's Forum Theatre is no exception.**

This year it is the setting for Aladdin, an old favourite with a difference. The theatre has drafted in illusionists from Spain to help put on a visually stunning performance, with a real flying carpet hovering above the audience at key moments.

And there are big names to draw the crowds, with television comedy star Duncan Norvelle as Wishie Washie, former Airport star Jeremy Spake – who's used to a little flying himself – as The Emperor and Heartbeat's Jonathan Owen as Widow Twankey.

Theatre Manager Derek Cooper is convinced this year's show will prove as big a hit as previous pantomimes. Urging people to book for a performance as soon as possible, he said: "The vast majority of our panto performances sell out every year, so book early to avoid disappointment."

There are just under 50 performances of Aladdin at the Forum Theatre from Wednesday 10 December to Sunday 11 January, with shows at 11am, 1.30pm/2pm and 6pm/7pm.

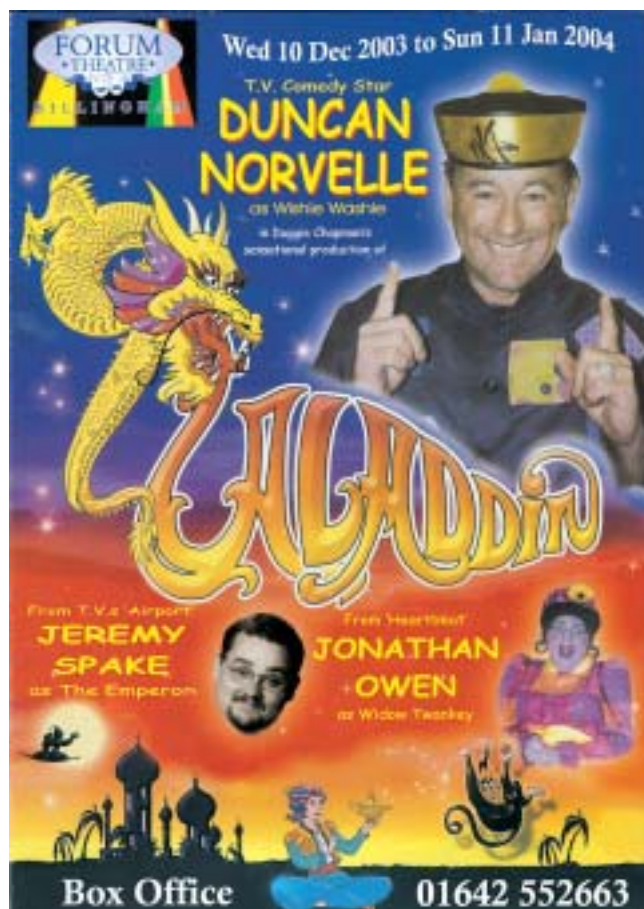
To book tickets, priced from £9 to £11.50, call the box office on (01642) 552663.

Billingham Forum Ice Arena is once again putting on a panto of its own, following the sell-out success of last year's Wizard of Oz.

This year's show, the club's 33rd popular ice pantomime, is Dick Whittington on Ice and 88 youngsters from Billingham Ice Skating Club have been working hard for the run, from Sunday-Thursday 14-18 December.

Tickets are on sale from the Forum priced £6 for adults or £3.50 for children and concessions. There is a ten per cent discount for group bookings of ten or more. The price also includes a free skate after the show for one hour, including boot hire.

For more information contact Billingham Forum on (01642) 551381.



Stay safe and warm this winter

As winter draws in, Transco is urging gas users to follow their safety advice when using appliances.

Transco, which operates the UK's gas emergency service, wants to make sure people know what to do in a gas emergency.

The company is asking residents to have all gas appliances checked by a Corgi-registered installer. People who live in rented properties should ask their landlords for the certificate of inspection.

Residents who smell gas should follow the five-step rule:

- Put out cigarettes and all naked flames
- Don't turn electrical switches on or off
- Open doors and windows to let out the gas
- Turn off the gas at the meter unless you need to switch on a light to do so
- Call Transco's free 24 hour emergency service on 0800 111999

Steve Adair, Transco's North Emergency Manager, said: "Gas is a safe and reliable fuel, but it must be treated sensibly. Transco would rather react to a false alarm than not be called when it's important."



Always ask for identification before letting anyone into your home

SWITCH your child on to a brighter future!

A pilot project has been launched to reduce the risk of children and young people becoming involved in anti-social behaviour and offending.

Titled SWITCH, the scheme offers support services and interventions through a structured programme, tailored to meet the needs of individuals and their families. The project works with families giving them direct and coordinated access to local statutory and voluntary services.

Managed by Stockton Youth Offending Team's Preventions Unit, the programme is voluntary and initially focuses on work with 8-12 year olds in Hardwick, Roseworth, Newtown, Mile House, Portrack and Tilery.

Ultimately, it is hoped to expand both Borough-wide and to the 13 plus age group in the near future.

Statutory agencies, schools and families can make referrals to SWITCH. If you feel your child could benefit from the SWITCH project, you can refer them directly by contacting the SWITCH Team on (01642) 358927 or e-mail switch@stockton.gov.uk

Drugs? Crime? Exclusion? Alcohol? Truancy?

SWITCH

YOUR CHILD ON TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE!

...with the support and guidance of the Stockton-on-Tees Preventions Unit.

Do you live in Hardwick, Roseworth, Newtown, Mile House, Portrack or Tilery?

Is your child aged between 8 and 12?

- Is your child getting into trouble frequently?
- Has your child been excluded from school?
- Do you think your child is involved in drugs/alcohol?
- Are you concerned about your child's friends and their influence?

Then it's time to SWITCH!

SWITCH is a voluntary support programme for children and their families, to reduce the risk of exclusion, anti-social behaviour and offending.

We'll give you direct access to local support services, including:

- HELP FROM STATUTORY SERVICES - PARENTING SUPPORT
- MENTORING - POSITIVE ACTIVITY BASED PROJECTS
- HEALTH ADVICE - FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCING

For further details, call (01642) 358927 or email

a mail: switch@stockton.gov.uk



SWITCH is co-ordinated by the Stockton-on-Tees Preventions Unit. The programme aims to help children identified as needing support, therefore families may be contacted by our Team.



The Perfect Gift...

for those special people in your life! **Activ8** Health and Fitness have a great range of Christmas gift voucher ideas.

Christmas Gift Voucher Prices:-

<p>Personal Training Session Including two further fitness suite sessions = £15</p>	<p>One Months Pass Includes fitness suite use, swimming and exercise classes Existing Activ8 Card holders = £20 Non Activ8 Card holders = £25 includes induction</p>	<p>Annual Passes Fitness Suite only = £166.50 Includes induction Lifestyle = £189.00 Includes induction, fitness suite use, swimming and exercise classes</p>
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Help someone you care about to a... **new 'Lifestyle'**

ACTIV8 CENTRES: Please contact any one of the **Activ8** centres below for more information or e-mail us at: activ8@stockton.gov.uk

Billingham Forum	Splash	Stockton Sports Centre	Thornaby Pavillion	Thornaby Pool
01642 551381	01642 393900	01642 607994	01642 760971	01642 616727

A service provided by Stockton Council

www.lifebeak.com www.stockton.gov.uk

Cartridges and old mobiles

Stockton Council is calling on residents and businesses to help fight child poverty around the world by handing over old mobile phones or printer, photocopier and fax cartridges for recycling.

Working with the charity ActionAid Recycling, which raises funds for overseas development work, the Council has set up a collection point at Stockton's Environment Centre.

More than 2 million printer cartridges are thrown away in the UK each year, with 15 million mobiles left unwanted. At the same time, one third of the world's children do not have enough food to live.

Just one cartridge could purchase teaching materials for five children in Ethiopia, while six cartridges could purchase a season's planting seeds for ten families in Burundi.

Old mobile phones and cartridges can be left at the Environment Centre, 21 West Row, Stockton, tel (01642) 391186.

More school crossing patrollers

A successful recruitment drive has led to the appointment of nine new patrollers to the Council's team of permanent and temporary crossing wardens.

After the formalities of medical and police clearances, it is hoped to start the new patrollers in a rolling programme over the coming weeks.

Patrolled crossings will be at Thornaby: Mitchell Avenue (two posts) and Westbury Street; Hartburn, Darlington Road; Billingham, Clifton Avenue and Whitehouse Road; and Norton, The Green. Two further staff will be available to cover temporary vacancies in the Norton and Billingham areas.

Council services praised in inspections

Two Stockton Council services have won praise after undergoing independent inspections.

Audit Commission inspection teams recently visited the Library services and Health and Social Care service to review their standards and operations.

Both services were rated as "good with promising prospects of improvement", receiving two stars out of a possible three. In the case of Health and Social Care, this covered both adult and children's services.

Stockton's library services have already been awarded a Charter Mark on two occasions and Beacon Status under the theme of Libraries as a Community Resource.

Andrea Barker, Stockton Council's Head of Cultural Services, said: "This

is well-deserved recognition for an excellent service which has the community at the heart of all it does. Internet access in all our libraries enables everyone to log on and the good range of books was also highlighted in the report."

The service includes 11 community libraries, a housebound library service, ethnic service, prison and hospital library services, archives, schools resources, children and youth service, central reference library and Open Technology Centre.

Ann Baxter, Director of Health and Social Care, said: "The performance rating reflects the good services provided in Stockton and the dedication of our staff. We will continue to build on these solid foundations to continue to improve service for adults and children across the Borough."

Youngsters rewarded in style

60 youngsters have earned their reward for their excellent school attendance – by taking to the catwalk as fashion show models.

The children, from primary schools across the Borough, were invited to star in the show as part of the '100% Club' reward scheme run by S.T.A.R.S. (Schools Tackling Absence and Rewarding Success), the attendance project by Stockton Council's Education Social Work service.

The fashion show was held at the Robert Atkinson Centre in Thornaby thanks to a partnership with Matalan, Stockton, and Asda, Thornaby. The youngsters modelled clothes from the two stores before an audience of parents, school staff and 100% Club sponsors.

Each received goody bags packed with vouchers and 100% Club merchandise, courtesy of Matalan, Asda, Billingham Forum and the Council's Sports Development team.

Pudsey Bear also made an appearance to raffle prizes in aid of Children in Need.

Elaine Kerr, S.T.A.R.S. Attendance Project Worker for Stockton Council, said: "We are always looking for new and exciting ideas that will appeal to youngsters to impact on their school attendance, and this seems to be a real hit.

"The children really loved being models and this is one way we can reward them for their commitment to attending school."



New Opportunities for sports facilities

More than £1 million of funding has been secured by Stockton Council from the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) to further boost the area's sports facilities.

Three projects will receive funding to provide a wider range of activities – both curricular and extra curricular – as well as providing quality changing facilities to encourage greater community involvement in sport.

Amongst the successful projects is one at Egglecliffe School, which has received £360,000 for a synthetic turf pitch. Thornaby Community School and St. Patrick's RC will benefit from £700,000 to provide a synthetic turf pitch and Blakeston Community School will receive £365,000 for a new dance and fitness studio.

Each school has secured further funding for the projects and Angela Darnell, Headteacher at Egglecliffe School, said: "We are delighted by the NOF award for the School. An astro-turf playing pitch on the main school site will enable more young people to benefit from sport both within and outside the curriculum.

"Although several sports will be played on the new surface, it will be used predominantly for hockey. A partnership with Stockton Hockey Club means that the facility will also be used by the wider community.

"The National Hockey Association has indicated that Egglecliffe School will become their Centre for Excellence for the development of hockey within the Tees Valley."

Kevin McAuley, Stockton Council's Head of Leisure, said: "It is wonderful news that the schools have been allocated the grants from the New Opportunities Fund. The money will be used to enhance facilities not only for the pupils of the schools, but also for the wider community."

Stockton's car parks safe and secure

An inspection of Council car parks in Stockton town centre found that 16 out of 17 qualified for the award of Secure Car Park status.

The scheme, run by the British Parking Association, is designed to increase security in car parks and reduce car related crime – or the perception of it.

To qualify, each car park must be sufficiently covered by surveillance, be covered by high levels of illumination and effectively covered by security patrol staff, amongst other things.

Nigel Gibb, the Council's car park manager, said: "Secure status for these car parks is great news.

"It means that residents and visitors can park in Stockton safe in the knowledge that their cars are protected."

But the Council is not stopping there, as officers meet with local landowners to reach a solution that could see the 17th car park also achieve the secure car park status.



Left to right: Sean Price – Chief Constable of Cleveland Police, Eddie Lincoln – Crime Reduction and Architectural Liaison Officer for Cleveland Police, Andy Edwards – Corporate Director for Development and Regeneration, Stockton Council.

Your views on NHS

You may recall from the autumn edition of Stockton News that your views were sought on the NHS, in order to help shape plans for local services.

A review is looking at the three areas of Primary & Community Care, Hospital Services and Emergency Care Services.

Comments have been considered very carefully and, so far, feedback shows

that the public are very pleased with the service from their local hospitals. Issues that worry them relate to such things as transport if they need to travel further afield.

It's not too late to air your views. For more information visit www.teesreview.nhs.uk or write to Tees Review, County Durham and Tees Valley Strategic Health Authority, FREEPOST NAT3825, Stockton-on-Tees TS17 6BR or email to teesreview@cdtva.nhs.uk

Services under scrutiny

The views and suggestions of Borough residents can help Stockton Council's new select committees begin their job of scrutinising services.

Four new select committees are to look at how services are run and how they affect people, each covering a separate policy area – Education, Leisure and Culture; Environment and Regeneration; Health and Social Care; and Housing and Community Safety.

The first issues to be studied by each will be Education Inclusion, Public Transport, Local Hospital Transport Issues and Anti-Social Behaviour respectively. Council policy in these areas will be reviewed and improvements recommended.

Graham Birtle, the Council's Scrutiny Officer, said: "This is a new and exciting way of working. The select committees are a public process and we want to involve individuals, interest groups and organisations as much as we can.

"The procedure is very different to the way traditional committees worked in

the past. We want to take the process out to the people so that anybody with an interest in an issue can be involved by attending public meetings or providing written evidence – confidentially if they prefer."

The topic of Education Inclusion will include special needs, excluded pupils and the impact of behavioural problems on other pupils. The Public Transport review will consider availability, accessibility, quality, efficiency and the environmental impact of bus, taxi and rail services.

The study of Local Hospital Transport Issues will consider accessibility and availability of current services for patients and visitors, while the committee looking at Anti-social Behaviour will evaluate its extent, impact on residents and measures to prevent it.

People are asked to put their experiences in writing by 30 January 2004 to the Scrutiny Section, Stockton Council, PO Box 11, Municipal Buildings, Church Road, Stockton TS18 1LD or by e-mailing graham.birtle@stockton.gov.uk

Making waste work

Stockton saw the first technical forum on waste management and recycling issues in the Tees Valley in September, held at Durham University Queen's Campus as part of an EU-funded interreg project called 'Making Waste Work.'

Organised jointly by local furniture reclamation charity FRADE and Stockton Council, the conference focused on reducing waste and increasing recycling.

New European legislation demands a dramatic cut in the amount of recyclable materials 'going to waste' via landfill sites.

Stockton Council has already taken great strides with recycling initiatives, including multi-material kerbside collections and a planned centralised composting facility with a Borough-wide green waste collection service.

New Government targets will require the Council to work hand-in-hand with public and voluntary organisations to achieve an attractive and safe environment.

If you are involved in the private or voluntary sector, and feel you could play a part in this recycling initiative, please call Mike Chicken on (01642) 391192 or email mike.chicken@stockton.gov.uk

Caterers serve up a treat

A catering team from Stockton Council has served up a top award at the 'Oscars' of civic catering.

The Stockton team received the accolade of 'Event of the Year' from the Association of Civic Hosts after organizing a three-day conference of civic caterers earlier this year.

The team received their award from celebrity chef Brian Turner at the Academy Awards ceremony in Birmingham.

The event that won Stockton the prestigious title was called 'A Journey to Excellence' and took place in March. Attended by some of the

country's top local authority caterers, delegates enjoyed some of the area's best views from on board the Teesside Princess.

Simon Dale, Stockton Council's Head of Direct Services, said: "I am delighted for the Council's Civic Catering Team in winning this top award.

"It shows what committed and hard-working people we have under the leadership of Anita Brown, who is one of the industry's up and coming managers. This has now been recognised nationally by her appointment to the national executive of Local Authority Caterers."





Cleveland Fire Brigade

Be safe at Christmas



Phil Lancaster, District Manager of Stockton District wishes a merry and safe Christmas from all at Cleveland Fire Brigade to the community we serve.

With the festive season upon us the need to remain safe is as important as ever. As well as the need to be aware of the dangers of faulty wiring and installation of Christmas lights around the home there is also the dangers posed by the ever increasing use of candles in decorative situations.

UK fire brigades reported over 2,000 house fires started by candles in 2000, causing 10 fatal and almost 900 non-fatal casualties. The number of non-fatal injuries has increased consistently from 452 in 1994 to the current figure, reflecting the general increase in house fires started by candles. National estimates of attendance at hospitals for injuries associated with candles have also shown a marked increase.

The generation now using candles does not necessarily have the experience and knowledge of those who used to use candles as a functional product.

Phil said "With more and more candles being bought and used in homes it is easy to become blasé over the safety risks they pose. People should never leave candles unattended and falling asleep with them lit can be fatal. Candles, as with any naked flame, can be a cause of fire, particularly where there are children."

The key messages to remember are:

- Never leave candles unattended.
- Use a proper candle holder and place it on a flat, heat resistant surface.
- Place candles in a draught-free area away from curtains and other furnishings.
- Do not use candles among dried foliage on the mantelpiece

Deaths from fires started by candles have risen along with the increased use of candles. The key message remains to use them safely.

If you require any further information on this or any other Fire Service topic call (01429) 872311

Crucial Crew

Every year Cleveland Fire Brigade, in association with other agencies such as the Police, Coastguard and Prison Service, take part in the Crucial Crew event in Stockton.



This year the event was held at the William Newton Education Centre and approximately 2,400 schoolchildren from all areas within Stockton Borough Council attended.

Each organisation presents a 10 minute session covering important safety messages. The Fire Brigade takes the children into 'Billy's Bedroom', where they meet Billy who initially does everything wrong when a fire starts but, with the help of the children, eventually learns the correct procedure.

A piece of history

Many people are aware of the role the fire service played in dealing with the aftermath of the blitz in World War 2; however it may come as a surprise to know that Fire crews landed in Normandy in 1944 and accompanied units across France and into Germany.



Pauline Davies from Saltburn contacted Barry Waller, Station Manager of Thornaby Fire Station, to tell him of her Father, David Davies',

experiences with the Auxiliary Fire Service. David had been a firefighter at The Fire Station in George Street, Thornaby before being sent overseas. Barry invited Pauline to Thornaby Station and she brought memorabilia including phrase books, medals and a map showing the progress of the Fire crews from Catz through Le Mans and "The Bulge" finally ending up in Bonn. Barry told Stockton News "It is fascinating to see a piece of history such as this and learn about a little known facet of Fire Service history and I would like to thank Pauline for sharing it with us."

Home Fire Safety Visits

As was mentioned in the last edition, Cleveland Fire Brigade is offering free Home Fire Safety Visits to anyone in the Stockton District. We will be targeting those areas deemed to be most at risk with the use of telephone contact by an organisation called LOOP. However, this does not preclude anyone calling their local Fire Station to arrange a visit. The contact numbers are as follows:

Thornaby and Yarm	(01642) 766331
Billingham	(01642) 546000
Stockton	(01642) 552175

Working Together

The Safer Stockton Partnership is an initiative which has the remit of making our area a safer and better place in which to live.

A sub group of this partnership is the Arson Reduction Group. This group focuses on problems associated with arson and seeks solutions using a multi-agency approach e.g. Fire Brigade, Police, Stockton Borough Council etc.

Significant results have been achieved in the past year namely:

- Remedial work in Victoria Ward, Thornaby
- Ongoing work in Bowesfield Lane area.
- Removal of untaxed and derelict vehicles
- Targeting of unlicensed waste disposal operators
- Work on eliminating tyre dumping in Billingham
- School caretaker fire safety education
- Removal of rubbish in areas with high arson rate.

This group is a valuable resource in eliminating a problem which, apart from the nuisance factor and damage to property aspect, could claim lives. Cleveland Fire Brigade appreciates the sterling work undertaken by our partners in tackling this serious issue.

You can help reduce arson in our area in various ways:

- Dispose of rubbish responsibly
- Report abandoned vehicles to the Council
- Don't put out your bin too early
- Report any dumped refuse promptly.

...a regular feature from North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust

Hospital nursery doubles in size



Nursery Assistant Emma Ward with Adam Anderson in the new nursery extension at the University Hospital of North Tees.

The University Hospital of North Tees has doubled the size of its Day Nursery following a £324,000 extension funded by the Workforce Development Confederation. An extra wing has been built onto the nursery leading to the creation of an extra 55 childcare places.

The nursery can now accommodate 120 childcare places compared to just 65 previously – making it one of the biggest NHS nurseries in the north east. An extra 26 jobs have been created as a result of the extension.

The nursery caters primarily for the children of staff employed by the University Hospital of North Tees and the University Hospital of Hartlepool and employees of other NHS Trusts. Nursery opening hours are being extended to 7pm and children up to the age of seven may also be accepted out of school hours.

Hospital bosses are hopeful the extra childcare places will help to encourage more people to take up jobs in the NHS. Margaret Hayden, Childcare Co-ordinator at North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust, said: "We are aware that finding suitable childcare is a big issue for many parents and can often prevent them from accepting various offers of work. The nursery extension means we can now extend first rate childcare to many more people in the Stockton area and help them to move a step closer to returning to employment."

For more information on childcare or jobs in the nursery at North Tees Day Nursery telephone the nursery managers Denise or Andrea on (01642) 624770. To find out more and register your interest about other job opportunities at the University Hospital of North Tees visit www.northteesandhartlepool.nhs.uk

Have your say on health issues

A campaign to give people the chance to become more involved in the running of their local hospital is gathering pace. North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust, the organisation which runs the University Hospital of North Tees, is applying to become one of the country's first NHS Foundation Trusts.

Local people are being sought to become members of the new NHS Foundation Trust when it comes into operation next April, subject to legislation. Becoming a member means you will get to vote for representatives on a new Members Council that will monitor the running of the Trust, which also runs the University Hospital of Hartlepool and Peterlee Community Hospital. You will also receive regular newsletters and updates on the Trust's services as well as being consulted on any proposed changes.

More than 1,000 patients, members of the public and staff have already signed up as a member of the Trust. To ensure you don't miss out on the chance to become a member please complete and return this form.



New unit for cancer patients

More patients are set to receive life saving cancer treatment closer to home thanks to the creation of a new unit. The new dedicated Chemotherapy Unit has been introduced at the University Hospital of North Tees to ensure more patients can be treated locally.

The new facility, built within a disused ward at the Hardwick Road hospital, is twice the size of the previous unit that was based on Ward 45. Its introduction means more patients can now benefit from chemotherapy as well as receiving the drug therapy in more comfortable surroundings. Patients with colorectal, breast and gynaecological cancers, who currently travel to the James Cook University Hospital, in Middlesbrough for treatment, will also eventually be treated at the unit.

Wendy Anderson, Sister at the Chemotherapy Unit, said: "Reducing travelling for patients and offering a pleasant, homely hospital environment goes a long way towards minimising the distress for patients at what is already a very upsetting and stressful time. I'm pleased to say that the new Unit is already making a huge difference to many patients, their families and carers."

DC

I would be interested in finding out more about becoming a member of North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust if it becomes an NHS Foundation Trust.

Full Name _____

Address _____

Post code _____

Email address _____

Day time telephone number _____

Mobile number _____

Return to: Communications Department, FREEPOST NAT3771 North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust, University Hospital of Hartlepool, Holdforth Rd, Hartlepool TS24 9DR

Citizenship ceremonies at Preston Hall

A Stockton museum which recently celebrated the first of its civil weddings will have a new ceremony to perform next year – for citizenship.

Next year the Home Office will introduce citizenship ceremonies for people who apply for naturalisation as a British citizen 1 January 2004 and have had their residence in the UK for more than five years.

In Stockton the ceremonies may be held at Preston Hall, the Borough's flagship for civil marriage ceremonies, where staff will deliver the ceremony, oath and pledge.

The Hall is also able to hold ceremonies for naming and reaffirmation of vows.

Ridewell winners

A Cycle Skills competition was held as part of the fourth Ridewell event, organised at Preston Park in the summer by Cleveland Police and Stockton Council's award winning Road Safety Team. The winners, who have received their prizes of bikes, helmets and gift vouchers, were:

7 and under: Adam Breeze, Ingleby Barwick; Jack McClean, Hartlepool; Daniel Hanley, Eaglescliffe. 8 to 10: Adam Taylor, Norton; Sean Barnes, Billingham; Emily Head, Ingleby Barwick. 11 to 13: Tom Affleck, Yarm; Liam Mabbot, Redcar; Andrew Lynch, Cramlington. 14 to 15: Russ Rooksby, Yarm; Andrew Threadgill, Redcar; Gary Stoker, Ingleby Barwick.

More than 15,000 visitors flocked to the event.

Putting people first

A wide-ranging publicity campaign from Cleveland Police is sending a message to local communities that they are Putting People First.

Radio and newspaper adverts, posters on buses and stories for the media are designed to promote a renewed focus on community policing and dialogue with the public – all based on real-life experiences.

The campaign is seen as a first for a regional police force as some victims of crime have helped make the radio adverts and provided active support for the stories.

Chief Constable Sean Price said: "People, Problem Solving, Partnerships and Professionalism. These are the cornerstones for the future of this Force and I aim to ensure that by 2010 we will be at the forefront of modern policing, driving forward problem-solving work through close co-operation with our partners in direct response to the real needs of local communities."

He added that he was aware there are still too many people who fail to get the service he wants delivering, but he stressed there was plenty of good news for people in the area.

House burglaries are down by 30 per cent; on average, 24 less crimes are

committed every day compared to a year ago; £2m worth of drugs have been taken off the streets so far this year; and there are 2,000 fewer victims of car crime than a year ago.

"A lot of people have benefited by the proactive action of ourselves and our partner agencies – and many can't thank us enough for what we have done and are continuing to do.

"We are literally putting people first. Working with our partners we are placing an emphasis on community policing and I also want to see our staff be the best trained and equipped.

"Cleveland Police has major strengths, a professional, dedicated and enthusiastic staff who have a terrific 'can do' culture and a willingness to accept change. Together we can put Cleveland at the cutting edge of policing in Britain.

"I hope this campaign highlights the initiatives and good work that is ongoing – and also challenges the perception in some sections of the public that policing matters are not worth talking about. People – and the views that different sections of the community have – are important and together we can be a force to be reckoned with."



Wellington Square brings top names to Stockton

Two new stores are set to arrive in Stockton's Wellington Square shopping centre, following the recent arrival of a third.

Leading fashion retailer H&M plans to open at Easter after merging four empty units in a £1.5 million programme. This will be H&M's first Teesside store, selling a wide range of stylish fashions for ladies and children.

The letting follows months of negotiations between the Wellington Square Development Company and H&M.

Centre manager at Wellington Square, Rob Gildersleeve, said: "The opening of H&M is great news as the company is renowned for providing fashion and quality at the best price, which is what shoppers want and expect from a leading retailer."

Building work has also started on Choices Video, which will open on a former piece of derelict land in a £450,000 transformation.

Land owner Wellington Square Development Company has invested £300,000 in an intensive building programme with Home Entertainment Corporation, which trades as Choices Video, investing a further £150,000 to create the new store.

Already open in Wellington Square is Special Occasions offering cards, balloons, gifts, stationery and toys.

Store manager, Pam Hooton, said: "Since we opened our doors we have been rushed off our feet with people taking advantage of the low prices and quality cards. Being part of such a busy shopping centre has also helped position us as a leading provider of cards, gifts and stationery in Stockton."



Third anniversary for Action Team

Action Team for Jobs, part of the Jobcentre Plus network, celebrated three years of serving the residents of Billingham and Stockton during October.

In three years, the team has assisted 1,345 people to overcome barriers and start work or set themselves up in businesses.

Advisers work locally, meeting with customers at community centres or libraries and even use a mobile office to bring services right into local communities. The Action Team also plays an important part in formulating Neighbourhood Renewal plans for the Borough.

In a typical example of their work, two women recently met an adviser at an event held at the Willows

Community Centre, Portrack. They were given details of vacancies for production workers at a new local factory and were keen to apply but were unsure how they would stand financially.

At short notice the ladies were helped with an in-work benefit calculation from an adviser.

Both succeeded in getting jobs and were helped with the paperwork to claim appropriate benefits and tax credits. They were also given help to pay for the uniforms needed as well as financial assistance until they received their first wages.

For more information contact the Action Team for Jobs tel (01642) 343434 or visit www.actionteam-go.net

Are you on the Register of Electors?

Stockton Council's electoral registration office is urging all residents to make sure they have been included on the new register of electors.

Published on 1 December, the register relates to where residents in the Borough were living on 15 October 2003.

If you don't appear on the register it may affect any credit applications you make for things like mortgages, loans and bank accounts and will also bar you from voting in the European Parliamentary Elections on 10 June 2004 and any possible referendums.

Anyone whose 18th birthday falls between 1 December 2003 and 30 November 2004 is entitled to register.

If you are unsure whether your name appears on the register, you should contact the Electoral Registration Office immediately as the closing date for the next rolling registration applications is 12 January 2004.

The registration office can be contacted at: Electoral Services, Law and Democracy, Stockton Council, Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 1LD, tel (01642) 393079/81, fax (01642) 393076 or email electoral@stockton.gov.uk

Dinner boosts Mayor's charity coffers

The chosen charity of the Mayor of Stockton, Councillor Ann Cains, was boosted after a Charity Dinner held at the Tall Trees Hotel. The successful evening was supported by local people and businesses, Mayors from neighbouring authorities, Councillors and Council staff, who donated gifts for the auction and a tombola.

Magic 1170 presenter Peter Grant was the auctioneer and DJ for the evening, which raised more than £4,000 towards the Stockton Borough Carers' Resource Centre.

The money will be added to other funds raised through the Mayor's charity appeal throughout the year and presented to the Centre at the end of the Mayoral year.



Making for



The Fire and Rescue Service is in the national spotlight as key changes are being discussed. This is your opportunity to have a say in the modernisation of Cleveland Fire Brigade.

The main aim is really very simple: to reduce dramatically the number of people who have to go through the nightmare of seeing the home they love being destroyed by fire, or, worse still, have families shattered by serious injury.

Your Fire and Rescue Service will be changing the way it works to help you reduce those risks and will be working with many partners, traditional and new, to help you to be safer at home and work. Our highly professional Fire Service has always been good at learning new skills, and they are working hard to be

ready for new risks and threats which are so different to those of a generation ago.

In the past, it may have felt that a public service was done to you. It's improved to being done for you, but the real target of the Fire Service is to provide a risk reduction approach which is done with you.

Part of this process is understanding exactly where the risks, especially to life, really are, and making sure that the resources we have are targeted on the right places.

As you probably know, the standards which affect fire cover for your home and neighbourhood were set over fifty years ago, and you'll know very well how much has changed in that time.

A lot of professional skill and years of experience has already gone into this project, but what's essential to make the plans as good as humanly possible is your opinion and advice.

All fire brigades have been tasked by the Government to produce and implement plans to modernise the services they provide. As part of this process, all staff and stakeholders, including members of the public, will be consulted. You are welcome to ask questions and make comments.

■ WORKING WITH SCHOOLS



life safer you



CLEVELAND FIRE BRIGADE has to produce an Emergency Response Plan for next year and the main elements include:

- A regional ambulance service collaboration developed to include joint working and response and the provision of automatic defibrillators on fire appliances.
- Better use of resources to focus where the need is greatest.
- Joint working with other agencies will be developed to reduce risk to the community.
- Arson Reduction and Community Safety activities will be fully integrated with regional brigades and other organisations.
- Working with partner organisations to identify and promote the benefits of domestic smoke detectors and sprinklers. Increase the number of homes with smoke detectors, sprinkler systems and other safety features.
- Implementation of a comprehensive Home Fire Safety Check programme across the whole community.
- Implementation of a shared 999 control for emergency services.

WHY not invite someone from your Fire Service to have a chat to your group or neighbourhood?

The hard work is well worthwhile because it is, literally, a lifesaver, and the Fire and Rescue Service is determined to work with you to make a dramatic difference to risk reduction and make life safer for the community they serve.

Contact us

A public service worthy of the name must take on board your thoughts and ideas, and there will be plenty of opportunities to find out more and say what you think.

If you'd like to know more, have a look at www.clevelandfire.gov.uk or alternatively telephone Sean O'Malley on 01429 872311, email: IRMP@clevelandfire.gov.uk

Information is also available in the following formats on request: Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, Punjabi, Urdu and English talking tape.

POLICE BEAT

Putting People First

As part of the 'Putting People First' campaign, there have been significant changes within the Operational and Community Police Teams. The current officers are now in post:

Billingham:	Insp. Stuart Micklewright
Thornaby:	Insp. Ian Coates
Stockton North:	Insp. Peter McPhillips
Stockton South:	Insp. Mick Williams
Operations:	Insp. Ian Garrett
Response:	Insp. Dave Hugill Insp. Ciaran Irvine Insp. Gary Curnow Insp. Dave Toor

ASBOs in full swing

Stockton Police, in partnership with the Local Authority and other agencies, are committed to reducing anti-social behaviour in Stockton area.

Residents in Mansfield Avenue, Victoria Estate, were subject to vandalism, damage, graffiti, and typical acts of anti-social behaviour. There is an Anti-Social Behaviour Order out against one 16 year-old youth, who is now barred from that area completely and 10 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts against other perpetrators.

Community Safety Inspector Colin White said, "The mindless minority of individuals can cause misery and suffering. The Anti-Social Behaviour Team and Stockton Police are committed to eradicating this type of problem. This is the first Anti-Social Behaviour Order obtained in Thornaby and others are in the pipeline. The public can be reassured that we are committed to our Force slogan of 'Putting People First'.

Tackling Drugs

In two separate operations, the Police have seized significant quantities of drugs and assets from major drug dealers in the Stockton area.

Operation Warrior resulted in the arrest of 23 persons, and Class 'A' drugs including cocaine and heroin with assets seized during the two-year operation in excess of £525,000. Eleven persons are currently facing serious drugs charges.

In a separate raid, over a quarter of a million pounds worth of drugs have been seized from a house in Fairfield. Acting Superintendent Shane Sellers said: "These operations show the determination of Stockton Police to tackle the major drugs issues on our streets. We will use all available means to stop this scourge on our society."



Acting Superintendent Shane Sellers

Bogus officials

Operation Strongbow is an initiative being run by Cleveland Police across the Tees Valley to combat bogus officials.

Individuals target the most vulnerable members of our community, the elderly and infirm, and use all means available to con their way into homes.

It is imperative that residents check identity cards, not let people in and use door chains or intercom systems.

PC Eddie Lincoln from the Crime Reduction Department, Stockton Police, said: "There are significant measures that can be taken by our residents to prevent these crimes occurring. Bogus officials appear plausible and genuine, but can quickly nip in and steal a handbag or life savings." If people do have concerns they can contact the Crime Reduction Department on Stockton 01642 302271.

Christmas is a time of joy and happiness but also a time of opportunity for criminals. They know people carry significant amounts of money when buying presents and presents may be left on back seats of cars. Do lock goods away in the boot. Also presents under the tree can be seen from windows. Please think about crime prevention this Christmas and make it a joyous and happy occasion.



PC Eddie Lincoln

Helping make Stockton a safer place

The Probation Service has a seemingly straightforward aim - to help make Stockton a safer place to live. To achieve its goal, its officers work in a variety of distinct teams, as well as in close partnerships with the police, Council, health services, the Learning and Skills Council and many voluntary and statutory organisations, as well as the Stockton Community Safety Partnership.

Working with small groups, the service's Community Reintegration team supervises offenders on community sentences and on licence, following their release from prison.

They challenge offenders' behaviour, confront them with the effects of their offending and try to rehabilitate them by looking at the factors that contribute to offending, such as drugs, alcohol, poor literacy and numeracy skills, unemployment and unsuitable accommodation.

Offenders are offered a real opportunity to change but, if they don't take advantage of this, they can be returned to Court for re-sentencing, or even recalled to prison.

Another group, titled the 'What Works' team, delivers nationally accredited group-work programmes to offenders who need more intensive

supervision. Proven to reduce re-offending, these change how offenders think and behave, helping them find ways to solve problems without reoffending. Other programmes focus on specific types of offence, such as drink-driving and drug-related crime.

The service also works intensively with offenders on Drug Testing and Treatment Orders through a Drugs Resource team. Offenders are kept in frequent contact with probation and health workers and given regular drug testing and monthly progress reviews by the Court.

Probation staff at HMP sites at Kirkclevington and Holme House work closely with prison colleagues to resettle offenders into local communities through unpaid community work. The Community Punishment team's projects include a patio for the Alzheimer's Disease Centre, and decoration and refurbishment of Norton Community Centre and a drop-in centre at Yarm Road.

Elaine Lumley, Chief Officer for the Probation Service, said: "In 2002/3, offenders on Community Punishment Orders completed 8,574 hours of work for the benefit of the Stockton community. This is an important way of ensuring they put something back into their local community and to learn new skills."

Borough blossoms in Northumbria in Bloom competition



Blooming marvellous! That was the reaction to Stockton's performance in this year's Northumbria in Bloom competition.

The results were announced at Wentworth Leisure Centre in Hexham and the Borough was once again up there with the winners.

Stockton received five awards and was once again runner-up in the Best City Category - coming narrowly behind winners, Darlington.

Blakeston School won the Rod Leyburn Memorial Trophy for the second time; old people's complex Cypress Court was a merit award winner in the Ron Grubb Memorial category and Ropner Park Bowls Club was runner-up for Best Sports Ground in the William Leech Memorial Awards.

Rycroft Garage received a merit award in the ISD Floral Architecture Award category.

Neil Schneider, Stockton Council's Director of Service Stockton, said: "This year Stockton has continued its successful presence in the competition and matched the five awards we received last year.

"The Care For Your Area campaign really has had such a positive impact on the Borough and we have made huge strides in making Stockton a cleaner and more attractive place in which to live and work."



SureStart

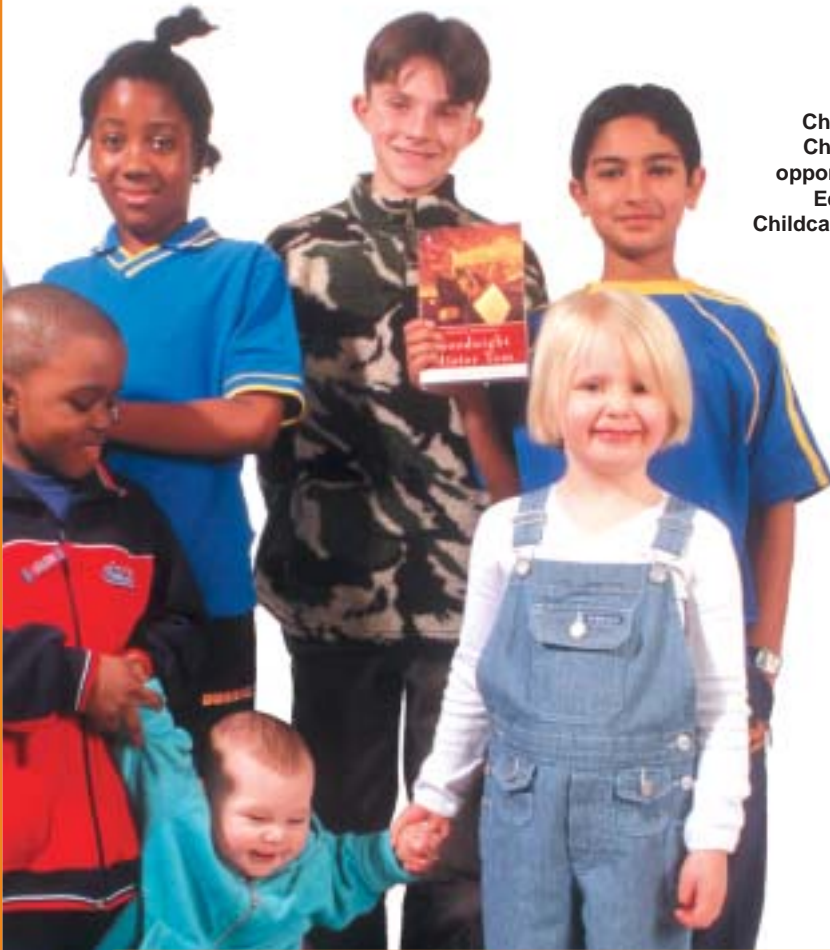
Stockton-on-Tees

Services for Children 0-16 and their families

Our range of services include;

Childcare Information Service ~ Information on Childcare Provides ~ Employment and Training opportunities in Childcare ~ 3&4 Year old Nursery Education Grant ~ Information on becoming a Childcare Provider ~ Early Years Education ~ Parent Support and Parenthood Strategy Quality Assurance Scheme.

For Further Information Contact
Stockton Childcare Information Service
 Tel: 01642 391356/391329



Local Programmes

Hardwick, Mile House & Roseworth	Tel:01642 393590
Newtown, Portrack & Tilery	Tel: 01642 675552
	Tel: 01642 675279
Parkfield & Victoria	Tel: 01642 415749
	Tel: 01642 415750
Mandale, Village & Stainsby	Tel: 01642 358932
Billingham & The Clarendes	Tel: 01642 345699



Making life better for children, parents and communities by bringing together early education, childcare, health, family support and training.

1st Floor, Bayheath House, Prince Regent Street, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 1DF.

Study looks to Town Centre's future

A study into the future regeneration of Stockton town centre has begun with the appointment of consultants.

Over the next four months, shoppers and visitors to the town centre, business groups, councillors, Stockton Renaissance, police, transport operators and community associations will all be consulted on their views for the centre's economic regeneration and future development.

The consultants, Drivers Jonas, will be expected to produce a strategic policy for the town centre, including recommendations for the future structure of town centre management.

They will look at links with the River Tees and Teesdale, the retail and service sectors, the regeneration of Stockton's market, accessibility, marketing of the town centre and street entertainment, among other areas.

The study on the town centre's future is being undertaken to ensure that Stockton remains competitive with other centres, such as Hartlepool and Darlington.

It will also identify the future growth potential of the town centre to see that it becomes well used, not just for shopping but also for other activities such as entertainment, leisure, the arts and tourism.

On 21 January, a public consultation will take place so that local people can hear the primary findings and suggestions for the future and discuss their views or concerns with the consultants. Everyone is welcome to attend and details of times and venue will be announced early in the New Year.

Classroom stars scoop top awards

Not one but two local people stepped deservedly into the limelight recently as winners at the national Teaching Awards 2003.

For their contribution to the teaching profession, Judith Howes and Tony Maxwell brought two of the ten national awards back to the Borough from the glittering ceremony, hosted by TV presenter Eamonn Holmes at the London Palladium.

Tony Maxwell retired this year after teaching at St Michael's RC School in Billingham for his entire 37-year professional career, and as headteacher for the past eight. He received a Lifetime Achievement award from soccer legend Sir Bobby Charlton.

Tony's flair for communication enabled him to forge a wide range of community links with organisations including the Red Cross, St. John's Ambulance, the local football club, folk festivals and the Church.

Tony is seen as an 'exemplary' teacher and an outstanding representative of everything that is best in the teaching profession.

Named as Teaching Assistant of the Year after devoting the last 13 years of her career to Hardwick Primary School, Judith Howes received her trophy from ex-Steps star Lee Latchford-Evans.

In one of her roles as an ICT support assistant, she has helped to set up the IT suite and encouraged other staff to raise their ICT skills.

Judith also acts as the school's community and parent liaison officer. This role is vital in reaching out to parents and families, encouraging them and involving them in children's learning. Many have gained qualifications and employment as a result.

Judith's initiatives include starting up a breakfast club for 60 pupils, securing money for a wildlife garden which she set up in the school grounds and organising a 'walking bus' for the pupils.



A big green thank you

Earlier this year some 12,000 households were able to participate in the Council's trial of Green Waste Collection before it came to an end in October.

The Council's recycling team found that local people have a real desire to 'do their bit' for the environment by recycling green garden waste.

Over the trial period, more than 500 tonnes of green garden waste was collected – equivalent to 10 full refuse wagons.

More than 85 per cent of people replying to a questionnaire thought

the trial service was good or excellent.

The trial programme and information from participants has helped put Stockton Council in a better position to meet residents' demands.

Now it is hoped that by the end of next year a new centralised composting facility planned for Haverton Hill will be able to accommodate green waste from every garden in the Borough, with the composted waste available for resale.

If you have any comments regarding the scheme please call (01642) 391959.

Shipbuilding in Stockton and Thornaby

A new book by Alan Betteny gives a concise account of shipbuilding in Stockton and Thornaby.

A host of interesting facts include costs and tonnages of ships built, together with a comprehensive list of builders. Accounts of the building of ships in 1794, the work of children and the shipyard and strikes are followed by a comprehensive

illustrated account showing a shipyard working in 1914.

The book, ref ISBN 0-9546319-0-0, costs £6.95 plus £1.00 postage and packing and will be available at the Tourist Information Centre, Museums, Art Galleries and some local bookshops.

To order a copy, write to Tees Valley Heritage Group, 35 Fairwell Road, Stockton-on-Tees TS19 7HT



What's On

December 2003 / January, February and March 2004

DECEMBER

14 December (5.30-7.30pm)
15-18 December (6.30-8.30pm)

Ice Pantomime

Dick Whittington on Ice at the Billingham Forum

Prices: Adults £6, Children/OAP £3.50
For further details call (01642) 551381

17 December

Farmers' Market

Farmer's Market of local produce at Wellington Square.

19 December

Beagle2Mars

Chart the journey of this brave little spacecraft at Wynyard Woodland Planetarium. Show starts at 7.30pm: advance booking essential. Call Planetarium Director on (01740) 630544.

21 December

Christmas Crackers!

Get into the festive spirit at this seasonal craft session. Advance booking essential; £1.00 per person. 2pm-3.30pm; meet at Tilery Wood car park. For further details of events contact Ranger Services on (01740) 630011.

20-24 December

HO! HO! HO!

Come to Splash and see Santa this festive season.

11am-12noon and 2pm-3pm

For further details call (01642) 393900

22-24 December

Christmas Inflatable, Float and Fun Sessions

Come join us at Thornaby Pool this Christmas. Times: 11-11.45am and 1-2pm. For further details call (01642) 616727.

22-24 December

Christmas Holiday Activities

If you want something fun and festive to do this Christmas holiday, come to Thornaby Pavilion. 10am-12noon and 1-3pm
For further details call (01642) 760971

22-24 and 29-31 December

Christmas Cracker Fun Float Sessions

Come join in the fun at Splash.

11am-12noon and 2-3pm

For further details call (01642) 393900

JANUARY 2004

Until 4 January

Outdoor Ice Rink

Come to the land of ice on the Stockton High Street, open from 10am-8pm.

Costs: adults £5; children £4 per hour, includes skate hire.

For further details call (01642) 777778.

4 January

Tracks and Trails

Come and quest for winter wildlife in and around Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park. Wrap up warm! 10.30am-2.30pm.

For more information call (01642) 415225.

10 January

Sportshall Athletics under 11

At Thornaby Pavilion. For more information contact Sports Development on (01642) 397018.

FEBRUARY

16 February

Local Sportshall Athletics

At Thornaby Pavilion. For more information contact Sports Development on (01642) 397018.

16-20 February

Half Term Holiday Inflatable, Float and Fun Sessions

During your holidays come to Thornaby Pool and have a great time. 11-11.45am and 1-2pm.

16-20 February

Intensive One Week Swimming Course

If you are a beginner or want to improve your swimming, come and get wet at Thornaby Pool. Times to be confirmed; for details call Thornaby Pool on (01642) 616727.

16-20 February

Half Term Holiday Activities

Come to Thornaby Pavilion this holiday and

join in fun activities. 10am-12noon and 1-3.00pm.

For further information contact Thornaby Pavilion on (01642) 760971.

22 February

Regional Sportshall Athletics

At Thornaby Pavilion. For more information contact Sports Development on (01642) 397018.

29 February

Winter Wildlife

Investigate the winter wildlife around Preston Hall Museum. 10-11.30am.

For more information contact the Countryside officer on (01642) 397524 or Stockton Tourist Information Centre on (01642) 393936.

MARCH

14 March

Historic Stockton

Find out about the hidden history of the town built around the widest High Street in the country on this circular walk with Robin Daniels. Meet at the Town Hall, Stockton town centre, 1.30pm.

21 March

Toad of Toad Hall

Explore the watery depths of the ponds and wetlands at Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park this spring, 10.30am-12.30pm.

We have made every effort to ensure that the information on this page is accurate. However, unforeseen circumstances may result in changes and you are strongly advised to check details with the organisers.

For up-to-date listings
of what's on, see
www.stockton.gov.uk

Youth Service Clubs and Projects across Stockton

Stockton Youth Service provides a variety of activities and projects for young people aged 13-19. Activities include drama, arts, sports, crafts, dance, cooking, help with school work, issues such as health, money, careers, and above all, FUN!

Robert Atkinson Youth & Community Centre

Thorntree Road
Thornaby
01642 393579
Wed 7-9pm Thur 6.30-9pm Fri 6-8pm (8-11yrs)

St Patrick's Youth Club

93b Gilmour Street
Thornaby
01642 397368
Mon 6.30-9pm Fri 6.30-9pm

Ingleby Barwick Youth Club

Ingleby Barwick Community Centre
Haresfield Way
Ingleby Barwick
01642 397368
Fri 6-9pm

Chapel Road Youth & Community Centre

Chapel Road
Billingham
01642 397339
Mon 7-9pm Wed 7-9pm

Fairfield Centre for Young People

45 Limbrick Avenue
Fairfield
01642 397368
Mon 7-9pm Wed 7-9pm Fri 7-9pm

Kirklevington Youth Club

Village Hall
Kirklevington
01642 397368
Fri 7-9pm Sun 7-9pm

Egglescliffe Youth Club

Egglescliffe Parish Hall
Butts Lane
Egglescliffe
01642 397368
Thurs 7-9pm

Conyers Youth & Community Centre

Conyers School
Green Lane
Yarm
01642 391814
Mon 7-9pm Tues 7-9pm (sports night)

Egglescliffe Youth & Community Centre

Egglescliffe Secondary School
Urlay Nook Road
Egglescliffe
01642 352570
Tues 6-8pm Wed 6-8pm

Elmwood Youth & Community Centre

Darlington Road
Hartburn
01642 391722
Tue 7-9 Thurs 7-9

Grangefield Youth & Community Centre

Oxbridge Lane
01642 393531
Mon 7-9pm Tues 7-9 Wed 7-9

Long Newton Youth & Community Centre

Long Newton
01642 397368
Tues 7-9

Kiora Hall Youth & Community Centre

Ragpath Lane
Roseworth
01642 393574
Mon 6.30-9 Tues 6.30-9 (D of E drop in)
Wed 6.30 - 8.30 (special needs)

Stillington Youth & Community Centre

Lowson Street
Stillington
01642 397368
Mon 7-9pm Wed 7-9pm

The Willows Youth Club

The Willows Centre
Northport Road
01642 393549
Mon 6-8pm Tue 6.30-8.30pm

Hardwick Youth & Community Centre

Ketton Road
Hardwick
01642 397368
Mon 6.30-9pm Wed 6.30-9pm
Thur 6.30-9pm (family night)

Norton Youth Club

Norton School
Berkshire Road
01642 397332
Mon 6.30-9pm Wed 6.30-9pm

Primrose Hill Youth & Community Centre

Appleton Road
Primrose Hill
01642 397368
Tues 7-9pm

Youth Bus

01642 397368
7-8.30pm
Mon - Long Newton Youth Club
Tue - Ingleby Barwick Youth Club
Wed - St Michael's School, Billingham
Thur - Northfield School, Billingham

Entry to Employment

01642 397367
Engaging young people through an intensive personal development programme and individual learning plans to develop their skills and confidence to move into mainstream options.

Peer Mentoring

01642 397367
Delivering a 6 week training programme to young people between years 7 and 10, preparing them as peer mentors to effectively support the transition of year 6 pupils into secondary schools .

Citizenship and Democracy Headquarters

Promotes giving a voice to young people
Tel: 01642 607817 Fax: 01642 634424
cdhq@stockton.gov.uk

Outreach workers around ...

Ragworth & Primrose Hill
Norton Grange
Portrack and Tilery
Billingham

...Evenings throughout the week.

Mobile Unit on the streets around Stockton and Billingham throughout the week.

For further Information contact Stockton Youth Service at:
Frederick Natrass School Site
Darlington Lane
Norton
Stockton-on-Tees
TS20 1BZ

Youth.service@stockton.gov.uk
01642 397368
fax 01642 397369

Ward Surgeries

January 2004 - April 2004

www.stockton.gov.uk/yourcouncil/your_councillors/councilors_ward_surgeries/

BISHOPSGARTH WARD (STOCKTON)

13th Jan Fairfield Infants School 6.30pm – 7.00pm
10th Feb Bishopsgarth School 5.30pm – 6.00pm
9th Mar Fairfield Infants School 6.30pm – 7.00pm

COUNCILLORS S. HALL TEL: 654895
W. WOODHEAD TEL: 584409

BLUE HALL WARD (STOCKTON) 6.00PM – 7.00PM

7th Jan Norton United Reform Church
21st Jan The Forge Community Centre
4th Feb Frederick Natrass School
17th Mar Norton United Reform Church

COUNCILLORS M. FRANKLAND TEL: 552667
MRS K. NELSON TEL: 397921

CHARLTONS WARD (BILLINGHAM) 6.30PM – 7.30PM

5th Jan Clarences Community Centre
9th Feb The Darby & Joan Club, Cotswold Crescent
8th Mar Clarences Community Centre

COUNCILLORS MRS A. McCOY TEL: 533554
R. McCALL TEL: 554452

EGGLESCLIFFE WARD

20th Jan Egglescliffe Community Centre,
Durham Lane 6.30 – 7.30pm
6th Feb Trinity Methodist Church 6.30 – 7.30pm
(Joint surgery with Preston Ward)
17th Feb Egglescliffe Parish Hall, Butts Lane
6.00 – 7.00pm
5th Mar Trinity Methodist Church 6.30 – 7.30pm
(Joint surgery with Preston Ward)
16th Mar Egglescliffe Community Centre,
Durham Lane 6.30 – 7.30pm
20th Mar Egglescliffe Parish Hall, Butts Lane
6.00 – 7.00pm
2nd Apr Trinity Methodist Church 6.30 – 7.30pm
(Joint surgery with Preston Ward)

COUNCILLORS J. FLETCHER TEL: 786456
MRS M. RIGG TEL: 782009

ELM TREE WARD (STOCKTON)

13th Jan Elm Tree Community Centre
4.30 – 5.30pm (Young Peoples Surgery)
6.00 – 7.00pm (Adults Surgery)
17th Feb Elm Tree Community Centre
4.30 – 5.30pm (Young Peoples Surgery)
6.00 – 7.00pm (Adults Surgery)
16th Mar Elm Tree Community Centre
4.30 – 5.30pm (Young Peoples Surgery)
6.00 – 7.00pm (Adults Surgery)

COUNCILLOR MRS S. FLETCHER TEL: 786456
Email: sfletcher@cix.co.uk

FAIRFIELD WARD (STOCKTON) 6.00PM – 7.00PM

21st Jan Fairfield Library
11th Feb (as above)
17th Mar (as above)

COUNCILLORS MRS F. HAWKINS TEL: 671422
MRS J. WADE TEL: 583549

GLEBE WARD (STOCKTON) 6.30PM – 7.30PM

13th Jan The Education Centre, Junction Road
3rd Feb (as above)
2nd Mar (as above)
6th Apr (as above)

COUNCILLORS MRS A. CAINS TEL: 555394
R. CAINS TEL: 555394

GRANGE WARD (BILLINGHAM) 5.00PM – 6.00PM

30th Jan New Life Resource Centre,
Low Grange Avenue
27th Feb (as above)
26th Mar (as above)

COUNCILLORS A. CUNNINGHAM TEL: 551251

Email: Alexander.Cunningham@stockton.gov.uk and

M. STOKER TEL: 648069

Email: mickstoker@aol.com or mick@grangeward.co.uk

GRANGEFIELD WARD (STOCKTON)

12th Jan Grays Road Institute 10.00 – 11.00am
21st Jan Sundell Court Residents Home 5.15 – 6.15pm
28th Jan Oxbridge Primary School 5.45 – 6.45pm
9th Feb Grays Road Institute 10.00 – 11.00am
18th Feb Sundell Court Residents Home 5.15 – 6.15pm
25th Feb Oxbridge Primary School 5.45 – 6.45pm
8th Mar Grays Road Institute 10.00 – 11.00am
17th Mar Sundell Court Residents Home 5.15 – 6.15pm
24th Mar Oxbridge Primary School 5.45 – 6.45pm

COUNCILLORS T. BEAN TEL: 870110
MRS E. JOHNSON TEL: 673952

HARDWICK WARD (STOCKTON) 6.00PM – 7.00PM

9th Jan Hardwick Community Centre, Wheatley Road
16th Jan (as above)
23rd Jan (as above)
30th Jan (as above)
6th Feb (as above)
13th Feb (as above)
20th Feb (as above)
27th Feb (as above)
5th Mar (as above)
12th Mar (as above)
19th Mar (as above)
26th Mar (as above)
2nd Apr (as above)

COUNCILLORS MRS E. NESBITT TEL: 803658
W. NOBLE TEL: 602299

HARTBURN WARD (STOCKTON) 6.45PM – 7.30PM

12th Jan Rosehill Infants School
2nd Feb Elmwood Community Centre
8th Mar Rosehill Infants School

COUNCILLORS K. LUPTON TEL: 589863
S. SMAILES TEL: 581574

INGLEBY BARWICK WARD

Please confirm dates and venues with Cllr Mrs Beaumont on the telephone number below or email jennifer.beaumont@stockton.gov.uk

COUNCILLOR MRS J. BEAUMONT TEL: 785304

MANDALE WARD (THORNABY) 12.00 NOON – 1.00PM

10th Jan Robert Atkinson Youth & Community Centre
24th Jan The Mandale PH
7th Feb Robert Atkinson Youth & Community Centre
21st Feb The Mandale PH
6th Mar Robert Atkinson Youth & Community Centre
20th Mar The Mandale PH
3rd Apr Robert Atkinson Youth & Community Centre

COUNCILLORS MRS A. TRAINER TEL: 647421
S. WALMSLEY TEL: 881886

MARSH HOUSE WARD (BILLINGHAM) 6.30PM – 7.30PM

12th Jan Low Grange Community Centre
9th Feb North Billingham Methodist Church
8th Mar Low Grange Community Centre

COUNCILLORS MRS L. APEDAILE TEL: (01740) 645216
C. LECKONBY TEL: 872896

MILE HOUSE WARD (STOCKTON) 7.00PM – 8.00PM

15th Jan Salters Lane Community Centre
17th Feb Redhill Centre, Redhill Road
18th Mar Salters Lane Community Centre

COUNCILLORS D. COOKE TEL: 803648
K. LEONARD TEL: 894191

NEWTOWN WARD (STOCKTON) 6.00PM – 7.00PM

2nd Jan Newtown Community Centre
16th Jan Appleton Road Community Centre
30th Jan Newtown Community Centre
13th Feb Appleton Road Community Centre
27th Feb Newtown Community Centre
12th Mar Appleton Road Community Centre
26th Mar Newtown Community Centre

COUNCILLORS P. BAKER TEL: 655607
R. GIBSON TEL: 614482

NORTHFIELD WARD (BILLINGHAM) 6.00PM – 7.00PM

30th Jan Wolviston Court Community Centre
27th Feb (as above)
26th Mar (as above)

COUNCILLORS MRS M. B. WOMPHREY TEL: 555755
M. E. WOMPHREY TEL: 555755

NORTON WARD 6.00PM – 7.00PM

9th Jan Albany Resource Centre
23rd Jan St. Michael's Club Room
6th Feb Norton Library
27th Feb Albany Resource Centre
12th Mar St. Michael's Club Room
26th Mar Norton Library

COUNCILLORS R. COOK TEL: 890058
Email: Steve.Nelson@stockton.gov.uk and

S. NELSON TEL: 534417

Email: Robert.Cook@stockton.gov.uk

PARKFIELD WARD (STOCKTON) 6.00PM – 7.00PM

8th Jan Cornerhouse Community Resource Centre
15th Jan Parkfield Community Centre
22nd Jan Caretakers House,
Rear of Richard Hind Centre
5th Feb Parkfield Community Centre
12th Feb Cornerhouse Community Resource Centre
19th Feb Parkfield Community Centre
26th Feb Caretakers House,
Rear of Richard Hind Centre
4th Mar Parkfield Community Centre
11th Mar Cornerhouse Community Resource Centre
18th Mar Parkfield Community Centre
25th Mar Caretakers House,
Rear of Richard Hind Centre
1st Apr Parkfield Community Centre

COUNCILLORS C. COOMBS TEL: 645759
S. LUNN TEL: 866982

PORTRACK & TILERY WARD (STOCKTON) 5.00PM – 6.00PM

9th Jan Portrack Community Centre
16th Jan The Community House
23rd Jan Frank Wiseman Hall
6th Feb Mill Lane Primary School
13th Feb Portrack Community Centre
20th Feb The Community House
27th Feb Frank Wiseman Hall
5th Mar Mill Lane Primary School
12th Mar Portrack Community Centre
19th Mar The Community House
26th Mar Frank Wiseman Hall
2nd Apr Mill Lane Primary School

COUNCILLORS D. COLEMAN TEL: 673952
P. KIRTON TEL: 532076

PRESTON WARD 6.30PM – 7.30PM

16th Jan The Wilson Institute, Long Newton
6th Feb Trinity Methodist Church, Eaglescliffe
(Joint surgery with Egglescliffe Ward)
20th Feb The Wilson Institute, Long Newton
5th Mar Trinity Methodist Church, Eaglescliffe
(Joint surgery with Egglescliffe Ward)
19th Mar The Wilson Institute, Long Newton

Ward Surgeries

January 2004 - April 2004

2nd Apr Trinity Methodist Church, Eaglescliffe
(Joint surgery with Egglescliffe Ward)
COUNCILLOR M. CHERRETT TEL: 783491

ROSEWORTH WARD (STOCKTON) 5.15PM – 6.15PM
12th Jan Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre
9th Feb Kiora Hall Youth & Community Centre
8th Mar Ragworth Neighbourhood Centre
COUNCILLORS M. INGRAM TEL: 789372
MISS B. INMAN TEL: 582644

STAINSBY WARD (THORNABY) 5.00PM – 6.00PM
15th Jan South Thornaby Community Centre
19th Feb (as above)
18th Mar (as above)
COUNCILLORS K. CRAGGS TEL: 896378
R. GODWIN TEL: 763326

ST. AIDANS WARD (BILLINGHAM) 6.30PM – 7.30PM
21st Jan Billingham Youth & Community Centre
11th Feb (as above)
17th Mar (as above)
COUNCILLORS N. TEASDALE TEL: 803657
B. WOODHOUSE TEL: 561899

ST. CUTHBERT'S WARD (BILLINGHAM) 6.00PM – 7.00PM
8th Jan Billingham Branch Library, Bedale Avenue
12th Feb (as above)
11th Mar (as above)
8th Apr (as above)
COUNCILLORS MRS J. O' DONNELL TEL: 559717
M. SMITH TEL: 866573

VICTORIA WARD (THORNABY)
10th Jan Westbury Street Library 11.00 – 12.00 Noon
24th Jan The Youthy, Thornaby Road
12.00 Noon – 1.00pm
7th Feb Rochester Court Sheltered Housing
11.00 – 12.00 Noon
21st Feb Westbury Street Library 11.00 – 12.00 Noon
6th Mar The Youthy, Thornaby Road
12.00 Noon – 1.00pm
20th Mar Rochester Court Sheltered Housing
11.00 – 12.00 Noon
3rd Apr Westbury Street Library 11.00 – 12.00 Noon
COUNCILLORS MRS E. FLEMING TEL: 646463
MRS S. WALMSLEY TEL: 881886

VILLAGE WARD (THORNABY) 4.30PM – 5.30PM
12th Jan Thornaby Pavilion
9th Feb (as above)
COUNCILLORS MRS E. CRAGGS TEL: 896378
I. DALGARNO TEL: 882985

WHITTON WARD
5th Jan The Chapel School Room,
Carlton 7.00 – 7.30pm
6th Jan Manor House, Stillington 6.30 – 7.00pm
10th Feb Grindon Parish Hall,
Thorpe Thewles 7.00 – 7.30pm
27th Feb Wolviston Court Community Centre
6.00 – 7.00pm
1st Mar The Chapel School Room,
Carlton 7.00 – 7.30pm
2nd Mar Manor House, Stillington 6.30 – 7.00pm
COUNCILLOR F. SALT TEL: (01740) 630771


WOLVISTON WARD (BILLINGHAM) 7.00PM – 8.00PM
6th Jan The Common Room, Wolviston High Street
13th Jan High Grange Community Centre
20th Jan The Common Room, Wolviston High Street
27th Jan High Grange Community Centre
3rd Feb The Common Room, Wolviston High Street
10th Feb High Grange Community Centre
17th Feb The Common Room, Wolviston High Street
24th Feb High Grange Community Centre
2nd Mar The Common Room, Wolviston High Street
9th Mar High Grange Community Centre
16th Mar The Common Room, Wolviston High Street
23rd Mar High Grange Community Centre
6th Apr The Common Room, Wolviston High Street
COUNCILLOR S. PARRY TEL: 879478

YARM WARD 6.00PM – 6.45PM
13th Jan Challoner House
10th Feb Yarm Library
9th Mar Challoner House
COUNCILLORS B. JONES TEL: 576855
MRS M. SIMPSON TEL: 790691

SURGERIES

Stockton South: Dari Taylor MP
Tel: (01642) 604546 for information
Stockton North: Frank Cook MP
Tel: (01642) 643288 for information

Home visits can be arranged where circumstances require them and adequate notice is given.




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www.StocktonBusinessCentre.org



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and
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