

Stockton

NEWS

The Community Magazine of Stockton Council - Spring 2005





Xplore
Every Activity with a Difference

SCHOOL HOLIDAY SPORT ACTIVITIES

For young people aged from 3-16 years

For your FREE Brochure contact:

Sports Development
Tel: (01642) 526274
email: sportsdevelopment@gov.uk
or visit our website:
www.stockton.gov.uk/sportsdevelopment

COACHWIDE

CALLING ALL COACHES

SPORTS DEVELOPMENT ARE LOOKING TO UPDATE THEIR COACHWIDE DATABASE OF QUALIFIED COACHES

The Coachwide database system is a new initiative by Stockton Borough Council Sports Development unit, to assist Schools, Clubs, Community Groups and Leisure Facilities in accessing appropriately qualified sports coaches.

AIMS

- To recommend coaches who meet the identified criteria to Schools, Clubs, Community Groups and Leisure Facilities.
- Allow coaches to further their employment opportunities within the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees.
- Offer discounted sports specific development courses for coaches.

COACHWIDE

Sports Development are looking to recruit coaches for all sports but would especially welcome interest from coaches in the following sports:

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| ● Aerobics | ● Hockey |
| ● Athletics | ● Netball |
| ● Basketball | ● Swimming |
| ● Dance | ● Tennis |
| ● Gymnastics | ● Yoga/Pilates |

For further information please contact:

Trevor Massey
Sports Development
Tel: (01642) 526690

or email: trevor.massey@stockton.gov.uk

Website Address:

www.stockton.gov.uk/sportsdevelopment

Launch of 20-year plan for Tees City means

'It's time to think big'

....that's the message from both Stockton and Middlesbrough Councils following the launch of the Stockton-Middlesbrough Initiative (SMI), a 20-year regeneration plan that will create a 'city core' for the Tees Valley.

The Initiative takes in both Stockton and Middlesbrough town centres and the land between, along the Tees. Described as "a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to transform the area", it is an opportunity to secure the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area.

The SMI will build on developments already taking shape at Stockton's North Shore and Middlehaven in Middlesbrough, bringing new and exciting developments to the 'brownfield' areas in between.

The aim is to create a world-class cityscape where people will want to invest, live, work and visit and which will allow us to compete with the best - anywhere.

The riverbank between the towns will become the 'Green-Blue' heart of the new city core. Developing the area's land and water assets, leisure, commercial and residential developments are earmarked for this area, together with a possible new transport interchange hub.

Along with both Stockton and Middlesbrough Councils, partners including One NorthEast, English Partnerships, Tees Valley Regeneration and the Tees Valley Partnership now have a shared commitment to turning this area around - and attracting new investment.

Stockton-Middlesbrough and the Tees Valley will be the place to watch!

See feature on pages 8/9.

In this issue

Page

- 7 Handle It or Lose It: Council's bike safety campaign to cut high-speed casualties
- 8-9 Stockton-Middlesbrough Initiative: a city vision for the Tees Valley
- 11 Smoke Free Stockton: support for those who want to quit
- 13 Excellent: Stockton Council's top rating
- 16-17 Youth pages: news, awards and things to do for teenagers
- 18-19 Your Council: how we performed in 2003/04
- 20 North Shore: a new development on the banks of the Tees
- 34 What's On: lots of things to do in the coming months



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) 526098 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.

There is an audio version of Stockton News. Please call (01642) 526098 to order a copy or e-mail communications@stockton.gov.uk

Council Tax rise is the area's lowest



Residents of Stockton Borough have once again seen a below-average rise in Council Tax.

The 3.9 per cent increase is the lowest in the Tees Valley area and below the anticipated national average.

The authority's £216 million budget for the coming year will allow the Council to continue improvements to services for children and older people, as well as boosting community safety.

When other increases agreed by the Police and Fire authorities are added, the overall increase will be 4.13 per cent.

For Band A Council Tax payers – approaching half the Borough's homes – this represents a rise for the year of £31.44 including police and fire services.

The Council's budget includes an additional £5m passed directly from the Government to education in line with the Government's requirements and £4.9m for social services to meet increasing demand.



Councillors also agreed additional sums to develop specific services:

- £200,000 for adaptations and equipment to help older people continue to live in their own homes for longer
- £250,000 for modernising children's services
- £250,000 for community safety and tackling anti-social behaviour, including extension of closed circuit tv cover to Stockton's Swainby Road area
- £1 million to prepare for the modernisation of Billingham town centre and anticipated works for the Forum.



The Council, recently rated as 'Excellent' by the Audit Commission for the second successive year, will continue its drive to raise standards across all services and will again maintain its efficiency targets by limiting spending increases for most services to less than one per cent – well below inflation.

The budget will allow key services to continue to improve in both quality and value for money against the background of improved efficiency demanded by the Government.

Progress for children's services

Stockton Council and other children's service providers are working towards developing a Children's Trust from 2006.

The Children Act 2004 requires all Councils to develop a Children's Trust for children and young people and, in the Borough, positive steps have already been made towards the Government's Change for Children Agenda.

Ann Baxter, Stockton Council's new Corporate Director of Children, Education and Social Care, said: "This is an exciting opportunity to develop services across the Borough for all our children.

"Work has begun to deliver integrated services across all agencies based around our communities.

"Extended schools and Children's Centres will be developed, and staff across education, health, social care and the voluntary sector will be working to provide integrated joined up services."

A programme of involving children and young people is being developed to ensure they have the opportunities to say what they need and want.

Work is now under way to identify the extent and range of services for children and young people across the Borough as plans for the Children's Trust progress.

The mapping exercise takes in everything from hospital based services such as children's wards, to schools, social care and voluntary sector services such as the Scouts and Guides.

Once gathered, the information will be shared by service providers.

Anyone involved in the delivery or arrangements of children and young people's services is asked to contact the Council's Children and Young People's Team on (01642) 528478.

Bold future for Stockton's centre

Bold plans for the future regeneration of Stockton town centre have won approval from Stockton Council's Cabinet.

The strategy, drawn up by consultants Drivers Jonas, looks at the opportunities for future development, the market, transportation issues and the overall management of the town centre.

Quality retailing is at the heart of the vision, which also looks to maximise the potential of the town centre's two most significant physical assets, the River Tees and the High Street.

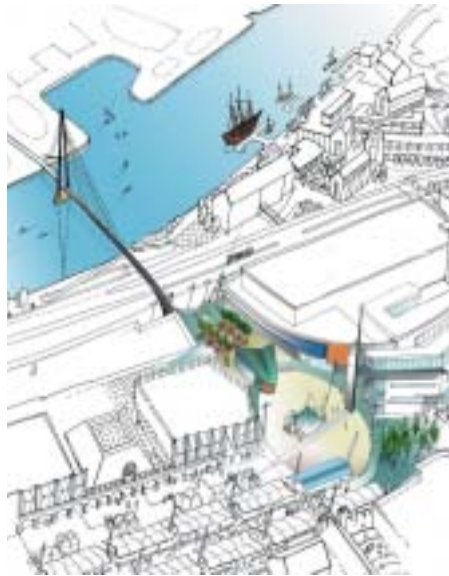
The 15-year strategy could also include a new four-star riverside hotel and more in-town living.

Ian Thompson, Stockton Council's Head of Regeneration and Development, said: "These are forward-looking proposals, which have been drawn up after lengthy consultation with local people, businesses and other stakeholders.

"We will be working closely with our partners in a bid to bring about positive changes to make the town centre a better place to visit, shop, work and relax."

The Stockton Town Centre Strategy is a key priority in the recently launched Stockton-Middlesbrough Initiative (see pages 8/9) and will require significant private sector investment to make it a reality.

Public funding will help attract private investment to some of the proposals and work has begun on identifying possible sources. Over the coming months, further discussions with land and property owners, other businesses and residents will help develop the projects further.



The proposals include:

- Creation of a Southern Gateway – a major development at the southern end of the High Street, designed to deliver a 'sense of arrival', especially from the A66 via the new South Stockton Link Road. A major food retailer is a key element of the proposals, which would also include offices, other shops, a new bus facility and a major new square providing the physical link between the High Street and the River.
- Development of a Market Improvement Plan – a set of proposals by which the full benefit of the Market, as a unique and important element of the strategy, can be realised for the town centre.
- A 'riverside village', featuring bars and restaurants as well as new housing, and better linkages to bring people from the town centre to the river and vice versa.
- Plans to make the most of the cultural and historical elements of the town centre, enhancing the Green Dragon Yard area and upgrading key events spaces.
- A safe and accessible High Street and town centre, through effective public transport arrangements and new bus facilities.

Voting follows new boundaries

The local elections which take place on May 5 will be the first to follow new Ward boundaries across the Borough.

So when you cast your vote, you may find that changes to the boundaries mean you are voting in a different ward area and at a different polling station than you have used in the past.

The new boundaries result from a review by the Ward Boundary Committee for England and reflect many changes across Stockton Borough, particularly in places such as Ingleby Barwick and Wynyard, which have grown dramatically over the years.

The review has resulted in 26 wards served by 56 councillors replacing the current system of 30 wards and 55 councillors.

In the coming weeks, every elector in the Borough who is not requesting a postal vote will receive their poll card. This will contain details of which polling station they must use to cast their vote. The changes only affect electoral wards – they will not affect your postal address, postcode or the catchment areas for your schools.

The forthcoming local elections will also see a return to voting at Polling Stations after a trial with all-postal voting in 2003. However, postal votes will be available to anyone one on the electoral roll who requests one. For details see the advertisement on page 29.

For more information on the review, see the Boundary Committee's website www.boundarycommittee.org.uk or call Stockton Council's electoral services on (01642) 526196/7.

Charter Mark

Tristar Homes, which manages and maintains most of the Borough's 12,000-plus Council houses, has achieved the Charter Mark award for customer service excellence. Charter Mark is the Government's national standard for excellence in customer service standard and achieving it is the result of the efforts of all working in the organisation.

STOP PRESS Council's top team

Stockton has the UK's top Council finance team. In the 2005 LGC Awards for Excellence, Stockton also won a Commendation in the overall Council of the Year category, with Service Stockton Highly Commended in the Management Team award. Comedian Lenny Henry presented the prizes in London on 14 March. More details in the next Stockton News.

Book a date in your diary for SIRF 2005



This year's Stockton International Riverside Festival is fast approaching – so make sure you don't miss it.

Prepared to be mesmerised by an extraordinary range of outdoor performances and street theatre during this year's Festival, which takes place from 3 – 7 August.

One of the highlights will be Clipa Theater's production "Deus Ex Machina", a stunning piece performed in, on and above the River Tees. It dramatises the story of the seven days of creation from the Book of Genesis and grandstand seating will afford visitors a perfect view for the free, ticketed event.

This European premiere will be the final part of the Culture 10 funded 'All the Rivers' project which will feature events such as the famous Tall Ships event on the River Tyne.

Take a walk along Stockton High Street throughout SIRF 2005 and you will be treated to a host of performances from some of the

world's leading street theatre companies.

Celebrating SIRF's partnership with the Chaoyang Spring Festival in China is a highly acrobatic performance from a Beijing company. The partnership is in its early stages and one of the aims is to exchange learning and cultural ideas between partners.

On Saturday, 6 August the Community Carnival and Parade will make its way along Stockton High Street to Trinity Gardens – don't miss this colourful community event which is at the very heart of the festival.

SIRF 2005 will draw to a close on Sunday, 7 August with Volcano – a specially commissioned finale featuring Festival favourites The Stroj from Slovenia and firework company Pa Boom. See for yourself a 25 metre tall volcano belching smoke – the action takes place on the Riverside and will be a fitting end to what will doubtless be a festival never to forget.

Keep up to date with the latest festival news at www.sirf.co.uk

Plans for Thornaby continue

Progress continues with plans for the regeneration of Thornaby Town Centre.

Private developers Thornfield Plc are investing more than £10 million to refocus the Town Centre and attract new retailers.

The proposals include demolition of Appleby, Brus and Meynell Houses – they will be replaced with around 9,000sq m of new retail development, including a new foodstore and 400sqm of office floorspace.

New retail units will form a mall opposite Wrightson House and the existing car park will be relocated to the northern end of the Town Centre, with a new access roundabout on Allensway.

A new glazed lift and staircase entrance to Thornaby Pavilion and Bowls Club is to be provided by way of a footbridge over the newly formed shopping mall. The footbridge over Mitchell Avenue is to be demolished and the adjacent pedestrian crossing upgraded.

Other changes will see the market relocate to St Peter's Square and environmental improvements will be made to the Town Centre, with new paving, lighting enhanced CCTV, signage and canopies.

Presently, Stockton Council is working with tenants in Appleby and Brus Houses to relocate them to suitable properties and Thornfield Plc is in negotiations with commercial tenants.

Tennis scores

The National Premier League Tennis Championships attracted emerging tennis professionals to Stockton's David Lloyd Centre in March. They were joined in the finals by the winners of inter-school competitions from across the Tees Valley.

Thanks for their support goes to One NorthEast, Stockton Council, Tees Active Limited, Northumbrian Water, APL Technologies Limited, RST Group, Middlesbrough Council, Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley, Jacksons C&PL, Simply Dutch and The Sporting Lodge Inn, Wise Speke Stockbrokers, Cordell Engineering, Head UK, Frutatrom and BS Freight.

Nappichino

Find out more about modern cloth nappies over a cup of coffee at Splash, in Stockton, on the first Wednesday of each month (10am – 12noon), when experts show the various types now available. Eight million nappies are disposed of daily – but cloth ones are cheaper and more environmentally friendly.

Victor's cracking win

Victor Caldwell from Norton won an amazing £1,000 in TFM's 'Toms Christmas Cracker' competition in December.

The event, run with Stockton Council's 'recycling is easy...lets do it together' awareness campaign, was sponsored by WRAP and J & B Recycling. Victor was selected at random from a raffle draw where participants brought along a massive 4,500 aluminium drink cans to be recycled.



Left to right: Victor Caldwell, Tom Davies (TFM) and Vikki Jackson Smith, J & B Recycling

Tales of the Riverbank

Families have been learning about the fantastic history of the River Tees thanks to Stockton's library service.

As part of Year of the Tees, around 30 families joined Chris Bostock, one of the North East's finest storytellers, at Yarm and Roseworth libraries in January.

Families heard traditional tales of the River Tees, with artwork from the Big Draw Exhibition as a backdrop. A free activity pack for each contained crafts, recommended reads, quizzes and river trails to continue the experience.

Claire Pratt, Reader Development Officer for Stockton Council, said: "It was great to see families enjoying themselves.

"Stories are magical and inspirational. We are celebrating the Year of the Tees by holding events like this to combine the joy of listening to stories with learning more about the river."



Railway supports disaster victims

A miniature railway has done a fantastic fundraising job for the tsunami disaster fund, thanks to a new locomotive.

The Teesside Miniature Gauge Railway opened out of season to raise money for the fund, with club volunteers and families braving the cold to raise an impressive £511 during January.

Its recent addition, the Preston Flyer, can operate in most weather

conditions except persistent rain or snow.

Visitors rode behind the Preston Flyer each Sunday during the special winter opening period for just 50p, all of which has been donated to the disaster fund.

The railway reopened on Easter Monday after essential track maintenance and operations continue until the end of October. For details call Mike Aslin on (01642) 724255.



Pictured Mike Aslin, Ken Tweedle and Jack Brookes

A dishwasher with a difference

Europe's largest dishwasher, which can help protect the planet and create jobs, had its first showing in Stockton.

It is the brainchild of German Belland company - leaders in plastic recycling who have developed the process of recycling plastic equipment used by the catering industry.

The process uses a giant 'dishwasher' to break down used plates, cups and utensils into raw material that is then used to make new plates, cups and utensils.

Werner Fiedler (pictured) demonstrated the process to delegates attending the Interreg Recycling

Forum, organised by Stockton Council at Preston Hall.

Stockton's Waste Management team is part of the 1.7million (Euro) 'Interreg', project, designed to stimulate action through the exchange of good ideas between partners.



Minister opens South Stockton Link

March 21 saw the opening of latest – and almost final – stage of the long-awaited South Stockton Link road.

Transport Minister Tony McNulty visited Stockton to perform the opening of the £31 million highway scheme, designed and constructed by Stockton Council in partnership with Birse Civils.

It improves access between Ingleby Barwick, Yarm and Stockton town centre, relieves congestion on parallel routes in Stockton and Thornaby and opens up brownfield sites for redevelopment.

Running south from a new junction at

Bridge Road, Stockton, the new road crosses over the A66 and the Saltburn to Darlington railway line. It continues through Bowesfield to link with Queen Elizabeth Way and Concorde Way at the roundabout in Preston Farm Industrial Estate.

Where the road crosses the A66, a new interchange has been constructed, with slip roads allowing access to and from Darlington.

Further slip roads to and from Middlesbrough will form the final stage in the scheme. The Highways Agency is building these through its agent A One, as part of work to widen the A66 Surtees Bridge, with opening set for 2006.



Contractors put the finishing touches to South Stockton Link

Having your say on the future of Billingham Town Centre

The first stage of public consultation on the future of Billingham Town Centre has taken place, giving residents, businesses and visitors the chance to have their say.

Two weeks of research took place from February 28 when a team from Research Solutions was in Billingham Town Centre asking people to complete a survey on their thoughts for future developments.

"This is the first stage of consultation and there has been a lot of interest from the public," said Ian Thompson, Stockton Council's Head of Development and Regeneration.

"The initial feedback is being shared with developers Halladale and we will

use this information to help shape outline proposals for the Town Centre and then those proposals will be widely consulted on.

"The early stages of consultation have seen many ideas put forward, some of which conflict with each other and some which are undeliverable. However, there have also been some great suggestions and we are delighted to have received so much feedback."

Officers from Stockton Council have also consulted with resident and community groups, businesses in the Town Centre and youngsters across the Borough, to hear their views and priorities. People also had the chance to fill in an on-line survey. Again, all this information is being included in the outline plans.

What lurks beneath?

The truth behind the tales of a giant pike lurking in the depths of Ropner Park lake was finally uncovered, thanks to work being carried out to drain all the water.

The Council is currently carrying out major refurbishment of the popular Stockton Park and the draining of the lake is part of the work.

Urban myths of a giant pike have long been told and the drainage was the first major clearing of the lake to be carried out for 50 years. However, despite some large carp – one weighed 25lbs – eels and other fish, no giant pike was found!

The Environment Agency relocated the fish and accumulated silt has been removed from the lake bottom. After about ten months, once the silt has dried out, it will be used to improve the condition of shrubbery beds in the Park.

Ropner Park Ranger, Tony Raine, said: "The lake area has already been transformed with the removal of diseased trees and overgrown vegetation. We have re-instated the original Victorian-designed views across the lake, and the major cleaning and improvement to the water quality will only add to the appeal of the park to visitors."

Stockton Council secured £2.5 million of Heritage Lottery funding to help transform the park back to its Victorian glory. Other work includes a new pavilion and the restoration of the fountain.



Handle it or lose it Flying High



Left to right: Dave Carter, a course participant, Neil Ellison, Stockton Council's Course Organiser and Mike Robinson, Stockton Council participant.

Sports bikes and 'superbikes' are marvellous pieces of technology – powerful, quick and rewarding for the increasing number of people motorcycling as a leisure activity.

However, special skills are needed to ride safely and responsibly. As the recent increased casualty figures sadly testify, for some, riding can be cut short or even ended permanently.

Stockton Council's Safer Roads programme actively supports the work of Cleveland Advanced Motorcyclists and RoSPA Advanced Motorcyclists to help riders develop their skills.

Now the Council is leading on the development of a national campaign, specifically targeted at riders of sports and superbikes.

But the traditional advanced riding approach isn't everyone's cup of tea, especially amongst sports bike riders. So for these, a new initiative called 'Handle It Or Lose It' is now gaining widespread support, including many bike retailers such as local stockists Tillstons Motorcycles.

The campaign has its own interactive website – www.handleitorloseit.com – which is full of useful information. Written by experienced and dedicated riders, it is packed with tips, road problem reports and a sharing of cautionary experiences. It also has a MultiMap facility where riders can

view routes and see where riders 'went down'.

Supporting this is a mobile exhibition unit, together with some forthcoming local two-day coaching events. These are designed to help riders learn the higher-level road riding skills whilst addressing the three key issues of casualties, noise and behaviour – without compromising the huge level of satisfaction that riding a powerful machine can bring.

The events, which also feature Stockton's fully liveried Kawasaki ZX10R – one of the most powerful road bikes on the market – are planned for spring, summer and autumn, and are priced at just £80.

Instructors include off-duty police motorcycle riders and other specialist instructors. Further details are available from Mark Robinson on (01642) 526734, or by logging onto the 'Handle It' website.

The whole campaign is delivered in a very untraditional way and is now supported by the Highways Agency, which is particularly keen to receive reports from riders on road problems, to make road improvements before crashes happen.

If you would like to know about the advanced riding courses in the Stockton area just give them a call on (01642) 526734, e-mail mark.robinson@stockton.gov.uk or log on to www.handleitorloseit.com

Thornaby could soon have a museum dedicated to the RAF families based in the aerodrome during the Second World War.

Thornaby Aerodrome Project now has a formally constituted committee and is raising funds to build an Aviation Museum. Chair and Project Manager, Donna Whiting, said: "I want to thank everyone who helped me, it's been a pleasure to work with the group."

The idea grew out of an IT class Donna taught to Senior Citizens, which also researched Thornaby Aerodrome and traced RAF families.

The project, now in its second phase, recently held an exhibition at the South Thornaby Community and Resource Centre featuring photographs and memorabilia of the aerodrome from residents who lived near it during the war, as well as those who actually worked there.

It will also be holding a free party, open to everyone, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of WWII Victory in Europe – VE Day – on Saturday, May 7, inside the David Scott hangar where wartime aeroplanes were based.

For more information about the party and aerodrome project, call the Five Lamps Organisation on (01642) 608316.

Simply a nice place

Improvements made to Wolviston's village pond (pictured) won first prize in the 'Community Small' category of the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust's PANDA awards 2004, sponsored by Npower. Wolviston Parish Council is also installing new village signs and flower tubs, making significant improvements to the locality.



Vision and

– the Stockton-Middlesbrough Initiative



A world-class city region combining the centres of Stockton and Middlesbrough with massive new developments along the Tees riverbanks between.

Welcome to TeesCity. By the year 2025, this will be among the leaders in urban regeneration, competing with the best in this country and overseas.

The Stockton-Middlesbrough Initiative is an ambitious 20-year vision to create a 'city core' for the Tees Valley – a lifetime opportunity to transform the area for the better.

The Government's Northern Way growth strategy has identified the Tees Valley as one of eight key city-regions in the North. Plans for the new TeesCity region were exhibited at a recent government conference on Sustainable Communities at Manchester.

This special feature outlines the vision and the unique opportunity that lies before us.



Our shared commitment

Stockton and Middlesbrough stand together on the brink of a unique opportunity that will benefit the whole Tees Valley. So says the vision document that launched the Stockton-Middlesbrough Initiative early this year.

By strengthening our town centres and bringing to life the area between, Stockton and Middlesbrough Councils

together have a tremendous opportunity to change the landscape and reshape the economic future of the Tees Valley for generations to come.

Never before have the two councils collaborated so closely together but the partnership offers the best chance of bringing rewards for both. The shared aim is to create a distinctive and dynamic city-region that will benefit the whole Tees Valley, transforming the landscape and the

future of the Tees Valley in a way that neither council could achieve alone.

It will also provide the critical mass for them to punch well above their individual weight, to compete with other cities in the UK and Europe.

The SMI is an opportunity to create a unique 21st Century urban landscape at the heart of the Tees Valley. It meets the challenge of the Northern Way and offers a thriving and exciting working and living environment for generations to come.

ambition

aims high for 2025

Main features

- The SMI aims to create a vibrant, diverse urban core where people want to invest, live, work and visit.
- It will build on developments such as Stockton's North Shore and Middlehaven in Middlesbrough.
- Stockton's centre will spread east and south; Middlesbrough centre will spread north and west to the riverbank.
- High-quality, city-scale assets in and around both Stockton and Middlesbrough town centres – plus the 3,000 hectare 'Green-Blue Heart' between them, which currently has several 'brownfield' sites ripe for new development. Sport and leisure facilities will use the opportunities offered by the River Tees.
- Major transport improvements –
Short-term (5-10 years):
 - A174/A19 junction improvements
 - New Teesside Park – Portrack Lane road link, improving access to North Shore**Medium term (10-15 years):**
 - New road linking A19 Mandale interchange to A66 Teesside Park interchange. Boulevard linking Stockton and Portrack Riverside to a new river crossing downstream from Newport Bridge, taking pressure off an improved A19/A66 interchange.**Long-term (15 years plus):**
 - Rationalising the marshalling yards and building a potential new transport interchange on the site – a landmark feature in the blue-green heart. Possible new LRT system.
- New industry – harnessing the potential of the universities, developing the local skill base and innovating new industrial sectors such as renewable energy. The aim is to create a thriving entrepreneurial economy and culture that attracts investment

and encourages graduates from the two local universities to stay in the area.

- The plan will be delivered by Stockton and Middlesbrough Councils in partnership with OneNorthEast, English Partnerships, Tees Valley Regeneration and the Tees Valley Partnership.

The five key development zones:

Stockton East

Includes Stockton town centre and Riverside, North Shore and the Teesdale site. The aim is to open up the town centre to the riverside, Teesdale and North Shore to create a high-quality, mixed-use urban centre.

TeesCity Park

This development zone is focussed on the existing Teesside Retail Park. TeesCity Park will be a major gateway feature to Stockton and Middlesbrough arriving from the south, with improved links to the A19 and A66.

The Green-Blue Heart: Portrack Riverside

A major waterside location incorporating the Portrack Marshes, north of the river. This will be a 'signature project' that will blend wetland areas with sympathetic but stunning developments to create a parkland centrepiece in the new urban landscape – a green space for the city core.

The Green-Blue Heart: South Riverside

Opposite Portrack Riverside, this area includes the current marshalling yards and has the potential for new water leisure facilities around the river, performance spaces, hotel and retail development. There could also be a new river crossing to Portrack Riverside and a new public transport interchange.

Middlesbrough West

Covers much of Middlesbrough town centre and areas to the west and south, across to the River Tees, linking up with the Middlehaven development and cultural projects such as the new mima gallery.

Next steps

To turn the SMI from idea to reality means promoting the vision to local, national and international stakeholders. It's planned that a dedicated Tees City team should market the scheme and co-ordinate delivery of the project.

Both councils are right behind the scheme and all partners agree that such positive collaboration is essential to establish TeesCity as a single entity in the minds of investors and other stakeholders.

A formal agreement will be drawn up to determine how decisions will be made on matters such as resources, communication and consultation.

Over to you

For us, our families, our children and grandchildren, this is an historic, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to transform the area's landscape and economy – we all stand to benefit by turning this vision into reality.

YOU have a real stake in shaping the SMI vision and reaping the rewards. There will be a full programme of consultation and information as the SMI vision unfolds.

To let us know your views and find out more visit the SMI website at www.smi-teesvalley.co.uk

We look forward to hearing from you!

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Carolyn Crean

A desire to make a difference is what drives Stockton Council's Crime and Disorder Manager, Carolyn Crean.

Heading up the Anti-Social Behaviour Team means Carolyn's job is always different, frequently challenging and often rewarding.

She talks of both her job and her team enthusiastically: "We are a proactive team, keen and committed to making a difference. We want to work with the community and help them by offering the best possible service to combat anti-social behaviour."

This help can take many forms. Carolyn may find herself consulted on any given day about closure orders on houses which have been associated with drugs, dispersal orders to move on groups of people causing problems, or giving consideration to applying for an Anti-Social Behaviour Orders.

Carolyn explains: "Anti-Social Behaviour Orders are a last resort. The team uses a range of measures to combat problem behaviour, including warning letters, joint interviews, advice, referrals to other agencies to provide diversion and Acceptable Behaviour Contracts."

Carolyn's team is also committed to prevention and she also gives talks and delivers training to other agencies. The team works closely with local schools, talking to young people about anti-social behaviour, its consequences and effects on the local community.



The team is currently producing a DVD to educate young people on how behaviour that may seem normal and acceptable to some can be seen as intimidating and frightening to others. Young people will be taking part in the production, which will also be used with residents groups to promote understanding and tolerance.

Carolyn, who joined Stockton Council two years ago, says the team can use a variety of methods to resolve problems. "We can undertake joint operations with our partners, such as the police and the Council's enforcement team, to collect evidence in hotspot areas," she said.

"In the past it has been a common misconception that nothing can be done about anti-social behaviour and many people have been too scared or complacent to speak up about incidents affecting them and their community. I would advise people that we have legislation available and there's a commitment from our team and our partners to use whatever methods are necessary to stop anti-social behaviour and to make our communities safe.

"To take action against anti-social behaviour, people have to come forward with information on the problems they are experiencing. In some circumstances we will use professional witnesses and hearsay evidence to protect witnesses'

anonymity – an officer can stand up in court and give evidence on their behalf in an application for Anti-Social Behaviour Orders."

People suffering from anti-social behaviour can contact the team by telephone (01642) 527615, email asbteam@stockton.gov.uk or the Stockton Council website at www.stockton.gov.uk/asb – they don't claim to solve all problems but if they can't help, they will be able to put you in touch with an agency that can.

Carolyn and her team work closely with many other agencies to create a cohesive approach to tackling anti-social behaviour and meet regularly with the police, probation service, housing officers, SWITCH, wardens and other agencies across the Borough.

The feedback is good too – 88 per cent of those whose cases the team takes up rate its performance as good or excellent.

Carolyn said: "I love a challenge and this is a challenging job. It's always changing, always busy. You need to have a good team to deliver this type of service and I'm grateful for having an excellent team.

"We're always fully aware that the reason why we're here is to protect our communities and make Stockton a safer place to live."

If you go down to the woods today...



A walk through Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park will provide a few surprises – thanks to a new sculpture trail.

Part of a Local Heritage Initiative funded project, the trail mirrors the evolution of life on earth, with 12 time periods picked out to guide visitors through.

Five sculptures have so far been installed at the northern end of the Woodland Park. The idea for the trail came about after consultation and several of the sculptures have been created with help from the local community.

The latest sculpture people can be involved with is next to the Sustrans cycle track, where it crosses Cowbridge Beck.

If you walk past a free-standing tree trunk with two snakes coiled around, feel free to hammer in a nail or two, follow the snake's guidelines and help create a monument to DNA. The snakes represent the double helix that makes up the DNA of every living person.

For information on Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park, please call (01642) 415225.

Live longer – in a Smoke Free Stockton

Activities in Stockton to mark the recent National No Smoking Day were the highest profile yet, as the Council, NHS and other local organisations took another step to helping Stockton become smoke-free.

Stopping smoking is the best way to improve your health and increase your life expectancy.

Leaders in the North Tees Primary Care Trust, Stockton Council and the Stockton Renaissance partnership have all committed to an action plan for Smoke Free Stockton.

Their plan is for Stockton to become a community where you can work, relax and play without the fear of harm from second hand tobacco smoke.

In the last year, 1,351 smokers from the Stockton area have successfully quit smoking with the support of the NHS Stop Smoking Service.

Smoke Free Stockton supports employers who want to protect their

employees, clients and customers by implementing smoke-free policies. Employers who provide a healthy, smoke-free environment for their employees are eligible to receive a nationally recognised Clean Air Award. For more information, call Maureen Nicholson at the Tees Startstopping Service on (01642) 223023 or Gillian Corcking at Stockton Council on (01642) 528142.

No Smoking Day activities included smoking cessation advice, live broadcasts from the BBC Radio Cleveland bus, a Swap Shop (pictured below) where cigarettes could be exchanged for fruit, street theatre, healthy strolls and fire prevention advice.

More advice is available on www.givingupsmoking.co.uk

Did you know the NHS offers free help and support to people trying to stop smoking? There are clinics in Billingham, Parkfield, central Stockton, Thornaby, and Yarm. For details call the Tees Startstopping Service on (01642) 223023.



SureStart Inspection success

SureStart Stockton-on-Tees is celebrating after all five of its day care nurseries received the highest rating possible in a recent Ofsted inspection.

The five Stepping Stones nurseries managed by SureStart Stockton are in the heart of the communities they serve, at Tedder Avenue and Gilmour Road in Thornaby, Ochil Terrace in Billingham, Bath Lane in Stockton and

Redhill Road in Roseworth. Tedder Avenue offers 70 childcare places whilst all the other nurseries offer 50 places, within a safe and stimulating environment.

Judy Walker, Quality Assurance Manager for SureStart Stockton-on-Tees, said: "To be rated good in our first Ofsted inspection is very much down to the commitment and hard work of all our staff."

Champions wrestle

The English Junior and Schoolchild Freestyle Wrestling championships take place on 2 April at Stockton Sports Centre (10am – 3.30pm). Hosted by Tees Active Ltd with the British Wrestling Association, it features male and female wrestlers aged 9–18 in various age and weight brackets.

Building a career in construction with TES



A teenage trainee has shown he has what it takes to build a career in construction following his achievements on the course.

John Russell, 18 (pictured), has earned a place on the Foundation Modern Apprentice programme with Stockton Council's Training and Employment Service (TES) after achieving level one Key Skills in Communications and Number Power and also starting two units towards NVQ level two.

John started work with TES in July 2004 after joining the Council's E2E Entry to Employment programme. Keen to work with trowel occupations, he was placed at our construction training site at Portrack.

Settling in well to the course, with excellent time keeping and attendance, John was given the chance to join PJS Construction on a permanent basis.

Fiona MacDonald, Assistant Manager for the Training and Employment Service, said: "John has really shown his dedication and enthusiasm for construction work. Being offered a place on the Foundation Modern Apprentice programme, as well as the opportunity to join PJS Construction permanently, demonstrates the quality of his work. Well Done John!"

Tristar Homes improvement progress

More than 850 properties are to be brought up to Decent Standard in the Tristar programme of works up to March 2006.

Julie Lickess of Tristar Homes says: "These will be brought up to a general Decent Standard with such improvements as new windows, kitchen and bathroom suites and doors.

"The homes will be surveyed before work gets underway to decide what needs to be done to the properties." Building and refurbishment contract partners in the programme - Connaught, Dunelm, Mears and Frank Haslam Milan - arrange consultation days when tenants are invited to go along to show homes.

Here they are given information about the programme, meet contractor representatives and make choices

about items to be installed in their homes.

Works in the coming year include:

The Green,	Billingham
Monkseaton	Billingham
Chapel Road	Billingham
Wolviston	Billingham
Hardwick D Section	
Phase 2	Stockton
Grangefield	Stockton
Oxbridge Court	Stockton
Primrose Hill Phase 2	Stockton
Parkfield	Stockton
Wren Close	Stockton
Balmoral/Holyrood	
/Littlebooy	Thornaby
Maltby	Thornaby
Hilton	Thornaby
Eldon/Teesdale	Thornaby
Derby Close	Thornaby
Hartington Street	Thornaby

Full programme for 2005/06 Total 857 Homes

Visit www.tristarhomes.co.uk

Helping the move to secondary school

A mentoring scheme is successfully easing primary pupils into secondary school in Billingham.

Stockton City Learning Centre (CLC) has used Virtual Classroom technology to set up mentoring links between children in primary school and secondary school year seven pupils.

The scheme, which has already linked pupils in Billingham South Primary School to those at Billingham Campus, allows the younger children to talk to older pupils at their likely secondary school.

Stockton CLC Director Steven Kirby said the results of the scheme have been fabulous.

"The children are creating and developing relationships and understanding of secondary school and voicing their fears and concerns, which are then answered by the year seven kids," he added.

An assessment by the DfES in December recognised Stockton CLC as 'comprehensively excellent'. Along with the Teesside CLC, it was awarded the highest possible grade for all aspects of its work.

Have your say on transport

Stockton Council wants to hear your views on the Borough's transport strategy.

By improving the quality of roads, reducing traffic congestion and giving everyone a choice in how they travel, the Council plays a vital role in helping people make their daily journeys.

Now its transport planners are working on the Borough's second Local Transport plan, setting out its strategy from 2006 and 2011.

They want you to join in the public consultation - and everyone who takes

part could win a £50 shopping voucher in a free prize draw.

To enter, you can:

- fill in the online questionnaire at <http://213.106.232.43/ltp/index.htm> (if the questionnaire appears cut off hit F5 or Refresh).
- email your views to highways@stockton.gov.uk
- or write a letter to The LTP Team, Stockton Council, PO Box 229, Kingsway House, Billingham TS23 2YL

Freda goes for gold



Freda with thousands of cans which can be recycled

Freda the Frog, Stockton Council's recycling mascot, snapped up a gold award from the Green Organisation, an independent, non political, non-profit environmental group, at a prestigious event at the Houses of Parliament in London.

Since 2003, Freda has inspired, motivated and encouraged young people to take an interest in and contribute to waste reduction with her slogan 'It's easy to be green'.

Freda has her own fanclub with more than 3,500 members. To learn more about Freda and her work just visit www.fredathefrog.co.uk

'Excellent' rating keeps Stockton amongst Council front runners

Stockton Council continues to be one of the country's top performing local authorities, according to performance ratings by Government inspectors the Audit Commission.

Stockton has earned an 'Excellent' classification in the annual nationwide Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) for the second successive year.

The Audit Commission says that Stockton Council is excellent in the way it serves local people, and has made improvements in street cleanliness, housing, libraries and planning over the last year, with adult education described as "outstanding".

The Council is 'clear about what matters to local people' and is 'well-placed to continue to improve the way it works and the services it provides'.

The CPA allows the performance of councils across England to be compared and takes into account the results of other inspections carried out over the year. Stockton is one of just six single-tier and county councils in the North East, and 41 nationwide, to rank as 'Excellent'.

Stockton Council first achieved 'Excellent' status a year earlier and, to maintain this top rating, has had to demonstrate commitment to continually improving its services.

Chief Executive George Garlick commended Council employees for their part in achieving the success, praising their effort and dedication for making services work.

He said it is important to local people that Stockton ranks amongst the country's best local authorities because they rely on the Council's services.

"As a thermometer of council performance, the CPA result shows Stockton well placed to continue to improve as a Council," he added.

"There will always be more for us to do but we have strong plans in place to achieve our aims and I am delighted that the inspectors recognised this strength."

As Stockton News went to press, Stockton Council was waiting to hear whether it had won a major national award.

Stockton had already been one of six UK councils to be shortlisted to become "Council of the Year" in the annual competition run by the magazine Local Government Chronicle.

The awards highlight and celebrate the successes of local government which, in Stockton's case, include a rating as "Excellent" by the Audit Commission for the second consecutive year.

Judges visited each of the six shortlisted finalists during February and the results were due to be announced in London on 14 March.

Stockton Council was also shortlisted for awards in the categories of Finance Team of the Year and its Service Stockton arm for Management Team of the Year.

Design awards celebrate exceptional developments

The Borough's Residents can still nominate a building project they feel make the area a more pleasant place to live – but time is running out!

Entries for Stockton Council's new 2004-05 Design Awards close on 30 April. Buildings, developments and even landscaping can be entered in one of five categories – including residential projects, residential extensions, non-residential developments, environmental improvements and environmentally sustainable buildings.

Anyone can nominate a deserving scheme, not just owners or developers.

Andy McMillan, Council Design Awards coordinator, said: "We launched the awards to improve awareness of the importance and benefits of good design and to reward projects that achieve high design standards in appearance, sustainable construction and innovative construction techniques."

The awards are open to projects located within Stockton Borough completed between April 2004 and

April 2005. They will be judged by senior Planning and Building Control officers, representatives from the Building Industry Forum, a major local employer and the Chair of Stockton Council's Planning Committee. Winners will be announced in May.

Send entries to Andy McMillan, Stockton Council Planning Section, PO Box 34, Church Road, Stockton or email to andrew.mcmillan@stockton.gov.uk

Minister visits Mandale regeneration

The £30 million regeneration of Thornaby's Mandale Estate came under the spotlight when Housing Minister Keith Hill visited in March.

Work has started on phase one of the overall scheme which will see around 800 high quality rented and private homes built, some of them for low cost ownership by local people.

Keith Hill saw for himself how the partnership between Stockton Council, Barratt Homes, Haslam Homes, Nomad Housing Group and Tristar Homes Ltd will reap rewards for the local community.

Nomad Housing Group will build up to 250 homes for rent and shared

ownership and have already received £4.27 million from the Housing Corporation.

Sharon Lonergan, Stockton Council's Regeneration Housing Manager said: "This is an exciting time for residents as they can see work starting on the scheme - one of the most ambitious redevelopment schemes in the region."

Residents viewed plans for the scheme at a community consultation event at Robert Atkinson Centre, where they could talk to representatives from Stockton Council and the housing organisations, along with ward councillors.

The scheme will also include a new £1 million park and job and training

opportunities will be created for local people.



Heart attack leads Leslie to new career



A heart attack set Leslie Smith on the path to a new career helping keep others healthy and active.

Leslie's husband, Ray, had a heart attack in July 2003. After surgery and an eight week stay in hospital, Ray began his cardiac rehabilitation programme followed by 12 weeks of exercise on prescription.

Going to the classes with him, Leslie was struck by the great benefits gained by the people taking part and thought she would love to be a part of the Healthy Lifestyle Team.

It was only when she left the mobile phone company she was working for

that Leslie embarked on her career change.

Leslie said: "After his heart attack, Ray joked it was nearly my independence day and in a way he was right. I didn't realise it at the time but this event was to change my life completely."

She shadowed Stockton Council's Healthy Lifestyle Programme Co-ordinator Andrea Hogg, who encouraged her to take an Exercise to Music course at Kirby College, Middlesbrough, so Leslie could teach classes herself. Leslie qualified as a teacher in June last year.

From there, Leslie was invited to teach some follow-on classes for people who had been through the Exercise on Prescription programme, so she enrolled on the GP Referral Course and passed that in August.

Since then she has passed a Speedo Shallow Wave with Mitt course to enable her to teach an aqua class and now works part-time with the Council's Active Health Team.

Leslie said: "I love what I do and I've made new friends and met some wonderful people. I was 61 when I passed by Exercise to Music course and am currently thinking about what training I would like to do next.

"It just goes to show you are never too old to change."

Explore our hedgerow history

Volunteers are needed to investigate the Borough's historic hedges, some of which could date back to medieval times.

Thanks to a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Wildflower Ark based at Nature's World in Acklam, is now looking for people interested in researching and surveying the ancient hedges in Stockton.

It could involve anything from indoor detective work and looking at old maps and documents to conducting outdoor surveys on hedges still present today.

Although considered to be highly industrial, 50 per cent of land in Teesside is still agricultural. Locating and investigating the hedges will help to uncover some interesting agricultural history and reveal man's impact on the local environment.

As well as holding secrets of past times, ancient hedges are an important plant and animal habitat. Volunteers' work will help the Wildflower Ark to find hedgerows rich with various species so conservation action can be taken.

To find out more about the project, or offer information that could be of interest, contact Helen Herring at Nature's World, tel (01642) 576611 or email wildflowerark@hotmail.com

An inspector's about



Inspectors (left to right) Ronnie Allen, Richie Beddard, Richard Sidgwick, Ken Bousfield and Harry Watson.

You may be aware that Care For Your Area (CFYA) are responsible for refuse collection, street cleansing, grounds maintenance and kerbside recycling. But did you know that CFYA also maintains the Borough's highways and pavements?

In April 2003, Stockton introduced a new "zonal" inspection process to help make the Borough a safer place by monitoring the condition of our adopted highways, so that repairs can be identified and treated.

To do this the Borough is divided into six areas, each inspected every six months.

A team of Asset Inspectors walks and checks every adopted street in the Borough, carrying out a detailed inspection to identify any faults and necessary action, following set national criteria.

Where they find a fault, the CFYA team responds to repair it - depending on the degree of urgency, this could be within 24 hours or up to 28 days.

Some locations, such as busy shopping areas, have an added priority. These are identified and included in a monthly inspection to ensure they are targeted to help reduce accidents.

Richard Bradley, Care For Your Area Service Manager, said: "An effective regime to inspect and maintain the public highway is key for our goal of delivering a clean, green and safe environment."

Jim Bell is Stockton Council's Corporate Risk and Insurance Manager. He said: "This approach has proven very effective. Our priority is to keep accidents to an absolute minimum but it will also help the Council to successfully defend an increasing proportion of future accident claims."

In addition to the routine inspections, the Asset Management unit responds to requests from the public. From April 2004, the CFYA team repaired 100 per cent of faults identified within the 28-day deadline.

Look out for our Inspectors, whose navy coloured uniforms make them easily recognisable.

To find out when your area is being inspected call CFYA on (01642) 391959 or visit www.stockton.gov.uk/cfya-highways

Household Waste facility proves a hit

The Household Waste Recycling facility at Haverton Hill is proving a big hit, latest user figures show.

The site is an essential outlet for waste that is either too large for wheeled bins or cannot be recycled via the kerbside 'blue boxes'.

In 2004 more than 260,000 people visited the site, which Sita manages for residents of both Stockton and Middlesbrough. It processes more than 24,000 tonnes of waste each year and forms an important part of Stockton Council's strategy to increase recycling to meet Government recycling targets.

More items than ever can now be recycled, including wood, green waste, cardboard, metals, fridges, freezers, electrical goods, glass, cans, paper,

textiles, plastic bottles, gas bottles, paint, batteries, fluorescent tubes, printer cartridges and, very soon, IT equipment.

With funding from DEFRA, Stockton Council is now considering how to recover more materials at the site and make it more cost effective. Recycling officers will commission a users' survey, analyse waste being sent for incineration and review the permit scheme which allows household waste to be delivered to the site in commercial vehicles.

Stockton Council is also working at the site with community recycling organisations FRADE and SFS to recover and reuse furniture, bicycles and working electrical goods, thanks to funding from a European Interreg project called 'Making Waste Work'.

This itself is part funded by the EU Interreg North Sea Programme, which involves four other European local authorities as well as Stockton, and is worth £1.7m over three years.

The most visible aspect will be the provision of a store at the site for items such as furniture and bicycles recovered for refurbishment and redistribution to the community

Further funding in 2005 from WRAP (Waste Resources Action Programme) will see additional 'recycling champions' being employed at busy times to ensure that as much material as possible is placed in the correct container for recycling.

A demonstration area to promote home composting is also planned with improved signage and infrastructure.

Dust off your bike!

Dust off your bike and cut congestion, climate change and your weight – there are miles of car-free cycle paths, segregated cycle lanes and signed cycle routes, plus many 'Toucan' crossings, cycle hoops and secure parking facilities to encourage cycling.

Now there's a programme of guided rides, led by experienced marshals and suitable for most riders. Each following a particular theme and taking in interesting sites, the rides are great fun.

See What's On (page 34) for details or call (01642) 526735 or e-mail george.callaghan@stockton.gov.uk

Nicola shows she's best

A Billingham student won a top national IT award for a website she created as part of her coursework.

Nicola McCulloch, from Bede College, won the Axios Star Award for the country's best female computing

student. Former Blue Peter presenter Katy Hill presented the award at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

IBM and Microsoft executives judged websites created by the UK's 30 leading A Level students and judged Nicola's the best in England.



Nominate now – it's the SMART thing to do

Every year the SMART Awards offer a chance to say 'thank you' to young people across the Borough for all the good that they do.

Sponsored by Tfm and Connexions Tees Valley, the awards are open to young people aged up to and including 19, and recognise their good work, effort and achievement in all walks of life.

The SMART – Stockton Mayor's Achievement Recognition Trophy – awards were set up to reward young people who may not achieve the best grades in their school but work hard to overcome difficult circumstances or disabilities, and those who work in the community. There is also a special award for outstanding achievement by primary schoolchildren.

Nomination forms for this year's Awards are now out and about in schools and libraries across the Borough.

Anyone can nominate a young person, a friend, parent, teacher or relative.

The SMART Awards are run by young people for young people, assisted by Stockton Council's Youth Service, and each year a selected panel of teenagers is chosen as judges.

Everyone put forward for an award receives a certificate to mark their nomination.

This year's awards include education effort and achievement, community work, bravery and special needs.

Marc Mason, Stockton Council's Manager of Community Education, said: "Over the years, these awards

have proved very popular both with the young people who are nominated and those who nominate them.

"Nominating a young person is a special way to say thank you for the many things they do, day in and day out.

"It's easy to forget when we hear stories of a small, unpleasant minority that there is in fact a large majority of young people out there working hard and making a difference to other people's lives, without any public recognition."

The award winners are expected to be named at a special ceremony in May.

To make a nomination, contact the Youth Service on (01642) 526398 for a nomination form or complete the nomination form online at www.stockton.gov.uk/smart



word on the street...

Pupils catch the reading bug

Youngsters from Stockton schools have caught the reading bug as part of two highly popular annual awards.

First they chose Varjak Paw, the first book written by SF Said, as the Stockton Children's Book of the Year.

The award, now in its ninth year, saw more than 1,000 youngsters from 26 primary and secondary schools across the Borough choose from a shortlist of four books – the others were The Divide, by Elizabeth Kay; Eager, by Helen Fox; and The Garbage King, by Elizabeth Laird.

SF Said, who also won the Nestle Smarties Book Prize for 2003, said: "Anything that makes people interested in reading and talking about books is a good thing."

Badger for Books, North Stockton Education Action Zone, Write to Read

and The Retired Members Association sponsored this year's awards.

Youngsters also took part in Stockton Libraries Book Review of the Year, which saw them writing reviews of the books they read as part of the Book of the Year award.

Zoe Fraser from the Glebe Primary School won the award with her review of The Divide.

Alison Lambert, Stockton Libraries Books, Reading and Learning Officer, said: "Authors value events like this where their young readers are the only voters, giving the children and young people the choice."



Young people hear veterans' stories

Young people are getting to know Second World War veterans and discovering their wartime experiences.

They are part of the Learning to Listen project organised by Stockton Council's Youth Service to help them learn about different experiences of war and build on the knowledge for the future.

Those taking part will discover the impact of war through the eyes of the people who lived through World War II.

John Tierney, Citizenship and Democracy Officer with Stockton Council's Youth Service, welcomed the project, which has won a £7,500 grant from the Big Lottery Fund.

He said: "The project will enable young people and older veterans to work together to preserve, present and record for future generations.

"The young people will gain new skills about the roles people have in democracy and will have a greater motivation to learn about the relevance of the past to the present and future."

Young team's garden secret

A stunning secret garden, complete with sculptures, a mini stage for concerts and Braille boards, is being created by a group of young gardeners.

The 13 to 17-year-olds are transforming the area behind Butterfly World in Preston Park into a community park to give pleasure to visitors and encourage wildlife.

They came up with the concept of a secret garden and fencing it in with large oak doors – the idea being that everyone loves to know a secret.

The teenagers, who are part of Stockton Council's Youth Service Environment or Young Environment Activists, are developing a pond and hope to attract species of British butterfly. They want to see sculptures, a mini stage and Braille boards to

inform visually impaired people what flowers are in the garden.

John Tierney, the Youth Service's Citizenship and Democracy Officer, said: "The young people are keen to develop the garden so that everyone can enjoy it. They have worked through cold, windy days and are determined to create something they can be proud of and that people will visit and take pleasure from for years to come."



Having a say on disability

A new group is giving young people the opportunity to have their say about disabilities and the problems faced by people with a disability.

Stockton Council's Youth Service in partnership with Stockton Parent Support is setting up Stockton Disabilities Youth Forum for young people aged 11 to 19 who may either have a disability or an interest in disability.

The group will tackle barriers against young people with disabilities and undertake debates and consultation with other young people.

Stockton Council's Young People's Co-ordinator, Mark Davis, said: "We are keen for anyone interested to come along to the meetings to discuss relevant issues relating to their own particular school or living with a disability in general."

Anyone interested should call Mark on (01642) 527976 or Stockton Parent Support on (01642) 527825 or email mark.davis@stockton.gov.uk

Your Council

– how we performed in 2004-05

About your Council

Stockton Council is the unitary council for your area, providing all your local authority services. We employ more than 8,000 people to provide services to over 186,000 residents living in some 78,000 households. In the year up to 31 March 2005, our budget to deliver local services was £202.7 million.

Here we show how we performed in 2004/05, including what Government inspectors have said about the Council and details of how we compare with other councils.

Overall performance

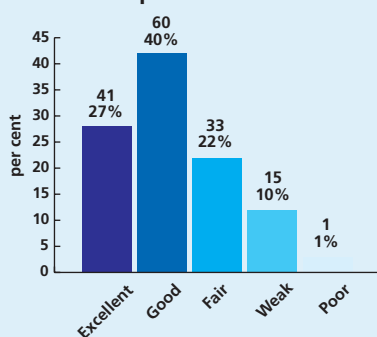
So that you can see how well we are delivering our main services, Government inspectors from the Audit Commission give each council an overall performance rating, or 'Comprehensive Performance Assessment' (CPA). Each council is categorised as 'Excellent', 'Good', 'Fair', 'Weak' or 'Poor' for the way it serves local people.

After re-assessing our performance in December 2004, the Audit Commission has rated Stockton Council as 'Excellent' for the second year running.

Stockton is one of just six single-tier and county councils in the North East, and 41 (27 per cent) nationwide, to rank as 'Excellent' – the highest rating.

However, we are not complacent and recognise that even with excellence there is still room for improvements – so we are committed to continuously improving our services.

How we compare with others



The percentage of the 150 single-tier and county councils assessed in each category.

How well is Stockton Council run?

Our overall 'Excellent' classification was made from two separate judgements about how well the Council is run and the quality of main services.

The Audit Commission stated "Stockton Council continues to be an excellent council", awarding us a score of 4 out of 4 for the way we are run. The Commission also said:

- The Council has made improvements in street cleanliness, housing, libraries and planning over the last year.
- We have further improved street cleanliness and our response time to remove fly tipping.
- The library service now meets all but one of the national standards resulting in better public satisfaction.
- Improved housing services have significantly reduced the number of non-decent homes.
- More planning applications were completed on time.
- Adult education is outstanding and some children's results have improved.
- GCSE results are not as good as last year.
- Social services for children and adults have remained the same while the benefits service has declined.

The Audit Commission said the Council is clear about what matters to local people and has good systems for managing performance and making improvements. Plans are in place to

improve areas such as the time taken to process benefit claims. Based on its plans, the Council is well placed to continue to improve the way it works and the services it provides to local people.

How do our main services perform?

The Audit Commission measured performance in seven services. Below you can see how our main services were scored in December 2004, compared with the previous year. Each service is scored between 1 to 4, with 1 being the lowest and 4 the highest.

Education and Social Care are given more importance in reaching the overall service score than in other areas. Overall service performance is 4 out of 4.

Service Area	2004 result (1=lowest)	2003 result (1=lowest)
Education	4 out of 4	4 out of 4
Social Care – children	2 out of 4	2 out of 4
Social Care – adults	3 out of 4	3 out of 4
Environment	3 out of 4	3 out of 4
Housing	3 out of 4	3 out of 4
Libraries & Leisure	3 out of 4	3 out of 4
Benefits	3 out of 4	4 out of 4
Use of Resources	4 out of 4	4 out of 4
Overall score	4 out of 4	4 out of 4

National performance indicators

Each year the Government sets a range of 'Best Value' performance indicators that allow all councils to compare their performance. We have compared

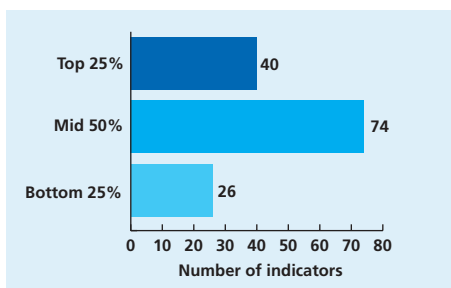


Stockton-on-Tees

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Stockton's performance with that achieved by other similar authorities in 2003/04 (excluding financial indicators) and found:

- 40 (29 per cent) of our indicators are in the top 25 per cent nationally for unitary and metropolitan councils.
- 74 (53 per cent) are in the middle 50 per cent.
- Just 26 (18 per cent) fall in the bottom 25 per cent.



Residents' views

Every two years we carry out a Residents' Survey, with the most recent in Summer 2004. Key findings indicate:

- 85 per cent of you are satisfied/very satisfied with this area as a place to live - 7 per cent more than 2002.
- 64 per cent are satisfied/very satisfied with the way the Council provides services in the Borough.
- Over the next couple of years: 21 per cent think the local economy will improve and 66 per cent think their local area will either improve or stay the same.
- Feelings of safety are improving - 94 per cent of residents feel safe outside during the day and 54 per cent feel safe after dark.

The survey highlighted continued improvements in residents' satisfaction

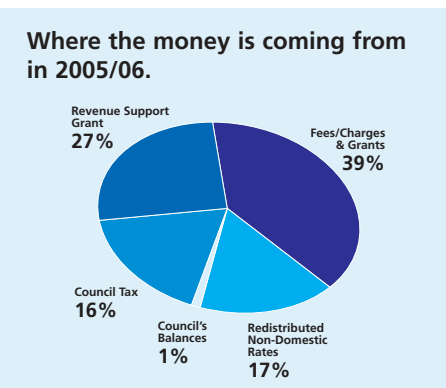
ratings for key environmental services like refuse collection, street cleaning and recycling. Local people also identified six key areas they would like us to improve:

- Dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Improving youth clubs and facilities for children and young people.
- Regenerating town centres.
- Improving road and pavement maintenance.
- Creating jobs and improving the local economy.
- Continuing to improve leisure centres.

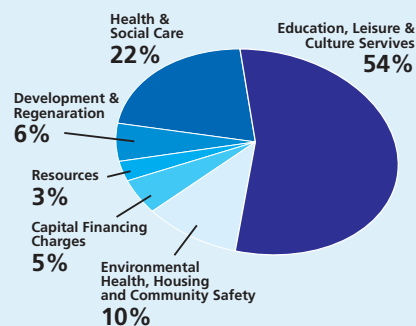
Findings from the survey are helping us tailor our future plans to continue to improve all our services and meet the priorities of local people.

Financial summary

The money we spend on services comes partly from Council Tax payers and partly from the Government. For 2005/06, the Council's net revenue budget is 6.6 per cent higher than in 2004/05 - from £202.7m to £216.1m - and our Council Tax has risen by 3.9 per cent.



Where will your Council tax go in 2005/2006?



Within this rise we have been able to increase spending on Education in line with Government requirements, allocate the full increase in funds identified by the Government to Health and Social Care and continue investment in Care For Your Area and Community Safety services in response to the Residents' Survey.

Full information on how we have performed will be set out in the Annex to the Council Plan 2005-2008 - Performance Information, to be published by 30 June 2005. You will be able to download a copy from our website at www.stockton.gov.uk and paper copies are also available on request. For more information on any aspect of the Council's performance, please call us on (01642) 526087, email ppsu@stockton.gov.uk or you can write to us at:

Head of Policy and Performance,
Stockton Council,
PO Box 11,
Municipal Buildings,
Church Road,
Stockton-on-Tees,
TS18 1LD

North Shore

– a new face for Stockton

Stockton has an exciting new development opportunity on the banks of the River Tees.



The North Shore development promises significant benefits for the town including new homes, leisure facilities, a hotel, cafes and restaurants. There will also be prime office accommodation, potential new residential and conference facilities and a new academic research centre for the University of Durham.

More than 2,500 permanent jobs will be created in a high quality scheme worth over £300 million when complete. In addition, a stunning new pedestrian and cycle bridge will cross the River Tees.

Tees Valley Regeneration, the urban regeneration company behind the development, will now seek private sector partners for the scheme and has already attracted a great deal of interest.

North Shore boasts an amazing waterfront setting and is within easy reach of Stockton town centre and Teesdale Business Park.

TVR chief executive Joe Docherty said: "North Shore is a fantastic opportunity and one that we believe the major developers will wish to grasp with both hands. It is a great location with a host of natural advantages and a master plan of which we are truly proud."

Stockton Council supports the scheme, both as a key component in the town's regeneration and expansion and as a vital feature of the Stockton-Middlesbrough Initiative (see pages 8/9).

Award-winning architects and masterplanners Benoy have designed the 56-acre scheme to lead people down to the water. From waterfront public spaces, people will be able to enjoy the river and view water sports events.

Tees Valley Regeneration will continue working with a number of regional partners to deliver the scheme. John Holmes, director of regeneration and tourism at One NorthEast, says: "It is good to see the reclamation work at North Shore substantially complete. We hope the new bridge will become a positive symbol for the Tees Valley, in the same way as the iconic Gateshead Millennium Bridge has become synonymous with Tyneside."

The University of Durham has welcomed progress on the development, which offers future options for its expansion and will strengthen the link between education and economic development.

Neil Bradbury, regional director for English Partnerships, says North Shore has excellent development potential: "We have been working closely with Tees Valley Regeneration by funding site infrastructure works and land assembly. We are confident there will be strong developer interest and we will continue to work closely with TVR to secure a scheme of the highest quality."

North Shore will see recreational and sporting facilities on the Tees further enhanced. It has been welcomed by British Waterways, which manages the river, as a step toward its goal of

making the River Tees an internationally recognised watersports destination.

The scheme will take approximately eight years to complete, with a start on the first phase expected in 2006. With £18 million, much of it from English Partnerships, already invested on infrastructure and reclamation, the site really is ready to go once the private sector partner is in place.



People across the Borough had the chance to look at the plans at an information day at Arc in February where representatives from Tees Valley Regeneration and Stockton Council were on hand to talk about the scheme.

Schools praised

Three local schools have been singled out as "outstanding" by David Bell, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools, in his annual report for 2003/04.

Bewley Infant School in Billingham, Harewood Infant School in Thornaby and Ingleby Mill Primary School in Ingleby Barwick have each been praised by David Bell for their high standard of education.

The report, which highlights ten schools and colleges in the Tees Valley and only 393 nationally, found the schools provided inspirational leadership, an "innovative curriculum" and "very good teaching" ensuring "that pupils achieve very well."

Cooking up a treat

James Bell began his catering career in 2003 with Stockton Council's Training and Employment Services.

Described as 'a quiet lad', he was placed at Emardi restaurant in Yarm, where he soon began to show his worth. Grit and determination helped him achieve a full FMA framework and the restaurant took him on full time.

Stockton Council training officer Pauline Playfair says: "James is now a confident, chatty individual who's a pleasure to work with."

Pledge protects children

SureStart Stockton is asking parents to sign up to one of three pledges to protect their children from passive smoking.

In the Gold Pledge, parents agree not to smoke where young children are; the Silver Pledge is to keep their home smoke-free; and the Bronze Pledge asks parents not to take children into smoky atmospheres.

SureStart and North Tees NHS Primary Care Trust are organising the scheme to support parents who want to stop smoking through a local Health Visitors programme. For details call Claire Jones on (01642) 528059.

£500,000 facelift for Parkfield



Pictured (left to right): Janice Hawkins (Accent Regeneration), Dave Stamper (Stockton Council), Mrs Jennifer Alford (Walter Street resident) and Patricia Thompson (Accent Regeneration).

A £500,000 environmental facelift for housing in Stockton's Parkfield/Mill Lane area has begun.

The project – part of an exciting new regeneration programme – is run jointly by Stockton Council and the Parkfield/Mill Lane Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder programme.

The work features external improvements to the front of properties, including the renewal of gutters and rainwater pipes, brick cleaning and repainting, repainting of stonework/external woodwork and paving/topsoiling of gardens areas.

Accent Regeneration will manage the work and have already made a start in Walter Street and The Groves area. This will continue street by street during 2005/06. Residents have welcomed the scheme and more than 95 per cent of owner/occupiers and landlords signed up to the first phase.

Mrs Jennifer Alford, of Walter Street, was the first resident to sign up to the scheme. She said: "The works that are being carried out to my house, I would never have been able to afford to do myself.

"It will totally improve the area we live in. Everyone is commenting on how marvellous it looks, even strangers visiting. The builders, from Dinsdale Construction, are all very friendly, good workers and always very tidy."

The scheme follows lengthy consultation with residents over the area's future.

Chair of the Neighbourhood Management board, local resident Alex Bain, said: "Despite the fact that the project has only just started, the improvements have already had a significant impact on the areas involved. It is an excellent scheme for the residents of Parkfield and Mill Lane."

The Parkfield/Mill Lane initiative is part of Stockton Council's wider regeneration plan and complements other strategies, in particular the Stockton-Middlesbrough Initiative (see pages 8/9). It is also part of the area's neighbourhood management programme, complementing measures to reduce crime, tackle environmental issues and improve health.

Robin Cousins returns to Forum



Olympic gold medallist Robin Cousins (pictured) skated along to Billingham Forum to help coach budding young figure skaters in March. The 1980 Olympic gold medallist gave a Master Class for youngsters from all over the country – at the same venue he won his first championships. In 1972, Robin Cousins took the British Juniors title at Billingham Forum and he was delighted to return to pass on his expertise.

Double success

Thornaby-based charity Everyday Language Solutions (ELS) has scooped two awards.

Investor in People assessors said that ELS is 'recognised throughout the North East and Tees Valley for their good practice' and 'went beyond the call of duty' in offering development opportunities to its 160 self-employed interpreters and translators.

ELS has also achieved the Jobcentre Plus Disability Employment award.

ELS, which produces Audio Stockton News for Stockton Council, helps non-English speaking people access community, legal or other services and encourages bi-lingual adults into education and training.

For details visit www.everydaylanguagesolutions.co.uk

Hollywood Bowl helps youngsters learn about work

A group of young people in the Borough have learned all about the different aspects of working life after completing a Business and Bowling Programme.

Ten Year 11 pupils from Thornaby Community School completed a nine week course at Hollywood Bowl, organised as part of a "Getting Connected" programme with the Youth Service Inclusion Team.

The course, run by Liz Horrigan at Hollywood Bowl, covered things such as business plans, health and safety, interview techniques and employer expectations.

Lou Moore, Life Skills Officer for the Youth Service identified that "the course is an excellent way to introduce young people to the world of work and employer's expectations in a fun way."

Hollywood Bowl were pleased to run the course with the Council's Youth Service to help youngsters learn about what it is like to work in this type of employment.

The course is an ongoing project used as part of programmes for the Getting Connected and Entry to Employment programmes. For further information contact (01642) 528261.

At the centre of Newtown's community

Newtown residents celebrated the official opening of their £2m Community Resource Centre by MEP Stephen Hughes in March.

The dedicated staff and partners from the local community are putting the Centre at the very heart of its local community and making a real impact on peoples' lives.

The Centre was completed in October 2003 with funding from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, the Big Lottery, Single Regeneration Budget and £1m from the European Regional Development Fund. The original building opened as a school in 1906 at a cost of £12,000 and has served generations of the local community.

A new community cafe has now opened and moving the community police team into the Centre is under discussion. The Centre also offers many community activities – for details call (01642) 614126.

Parents in Newtown, Portrack and Tilery can benefit from a range of family orientated SureStart programmes at the centre, including parent training, midwifery appointments, health visitor drop-ins, stay and play sessions and Parent Time Out sessions, among others. For more information about these call (01642) 614072.

Pathfinder hat-trick

A project led by residents of Parkfield and Mill Lane in Stockton to make their neighbourhood a cleaner, safe place to live swept the board in the national Neighbourhood Management Awards for 2004.

The Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder project was named as the Partnership of the Year in the awards, organised by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. At the same time, Mill Lane resident Jean Oliver was named Resident of the Year, recognising her commitment to making the most of the area she lives in.

Completing the hat-trick, Stockton Council also carried off the Community Cohesion award.

Special news for Bishopsgarth School

Bishopsgarth School is celebrating its award of Specialist Status in Maths and Computing.

Making the news even more welcome the £100,000 capital grant it brings with it, which will be used to build a new ICT learning centre.

Head teacher John Golds said: "This is excellent news and means we can build a new ICT centre for pupils and the wider community. We can also roll out ICT throughout the school for all subjects."

Introduction of GNVQ ICT has dramatically improved the Stockton school's results in recent years.

A great honour

Staff and pupils alike at Hardwick Primary School are delighted that teaching assistant Judith Howes was nominated in the Queen's New Year Honours list to receive an MBE for her services to education.

The award follows Judith's 2003 title as National Teaching Assistant of the Year and was given for her day-to-day work supporting ICT across the whole school, from Nursery level to Year Six.

New home for Tristar

A £3.5m development at Preston Farm, Stockton, is to be the new headquarters of Tristar Homes, which looks after more than 12,000 Stockton Council properties.

The move to Unit One in Lockheed Court involves about 60 staff. It brings all the organisation's office operations under one roof and should be completed in April. In February, other Tristar workers moved from Sun Street, Thornaby, to a new depot at Billingham Reach.

Tristar has also opened a new show home at Hardwick to show tenants how their homes will be after modernisation to the Government's 'Decent Standard'. Hardwick, Primrose Hill and Central Stockton tenants can see items such as tiles, worktops and bathroom suites, including suite and tile colours where these are included in the improvements.

Setting a good example

A pilot scheme at St. Bede's Primary School is proving a big success in teaching citizenship skills and leading by example.

Wardens from Stockton Council have been working with seven Year Five pupils at the Stockton school on becoming more aware of their environment and community, as well as how to spot anti-social behaviour.

The Council will be inviting another 20 local schools to set up junior community warden schemes.

Doug Carhart, Head of Security Services for Stockton Council, said: "This is a great way to encourage and guide young people to help make their community a safer and better place to live."



Shaheen Begum, Stockton Senior Community Warden (centre) pictured with Nigel Mafa and Jessica French from St. Bede's Primary School.

Stockton earns transport accolade

Stockton has been named as a national centre of excellence in local transport delivery.

The Government named the Council as one of just 17 such centres nationwide. The accolade reflects Stockton Council's transport achievements – in particular its work on the South Stockton Link. It has also carried out a number of other innovative initiatives, notably in the fields of road safety and public transport.

The Department for Transport will provide £100,000 a year to the new Centres of Excellence to support them in sharing their good practice in transport planning and delivery amongst other transport authorities.

The completion of the £31 million South Stockton Link road to budget and 12 months early (see page six) was central to Stockton's selection under the category of 'efficient programme delivery'.

In 2003-04, Stockton's innovative approach to highway construction earned it the status of Beacon Council, awarded by the Government under the theme "Rethinking Construction".

The Government invited Stockton to apply for this status as a result of the Council's performance in recent years. The status reflects highly on the achievements of the engineering and transportation team in the way it has developed and delivered the Local Transport Plan for Stockton.

Other leading projects include the Pathfinder and Trailblazer travel schemes for young people, and road safety campaigns such as the 'Handle It or Lose' It project for motorbike safety and encouraging our kids to walk to school with Robbie the Amazing Kid.

The Council will now share its experience with other councils across Britain and is now planning open days, information leaflets and other activities.

What's new at the Woodland Park

Visitors to Wynyard Woodland Park, near Thorpe Thewles, will have seen quite a few developments recently - and more are under way.

In Tilery Wood, at the north of the Woodland Park, forestry work is encouraging natural regeneration. Many of the thin, young coniferous species and dead or dying trees (pictured) have been felled, leaving the larger coniferous trees. This will encourage native broad-leaved species such as oak, ash, silver birch and hazel to grow and attract a greater diversity of wildlife.

A £46,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund grant is behind the installation of art features on a new sculpture trail this summer. The sculptures – The Story-Teller's Chair, Woodland Seating and The Celestial Kitchen will support and promote environmental education and be the focus of future guided walks and public events.

The newly-refurbished Station House visitor centre, gift and farm shops and tea rooms are all proving popular.

Thanks to a £50,000 grant from English Nature's Aggregates Sustainability Fund, two touch-screen computer screens will soon allow visitors to take a virtual tour of the Woodland Park from the comfort of

the tea room, with information on wildlife, local history and where to walk.

The Farm Shop stocks a selection of speciality foods, such as honey, jams and chutneys and, in future, fresh meat and poultry, cheese and cooked meats will also be on sale.

The gift and farm shops are open 10am - 4pm Sundays - Fridays (closed

Saturdays); the tea rooms are open every day except Tuesdays. To find out more about Wynyard Woodland Park, please call (01740) 630011.

For details of the work of Stockton Council's Countryside Service, on (01642) 526877 or email parksandcountryside@stockton.gov.uk



Helping to end anti-social behaviour

An expert at tackling anti-social behaviour visited Stockton early this year to inspire and encourage Council staff, police, housing providers and other partner agencies to put the needs of our witnesses and communities first in taking action against ASB.

Bill Pitt, Head of Manchester City Council's Nuisance Strategy Group, came to Stockton for a Home Office Together Action Day, designed to encourage councils and their partners to use the best means available to bring an end to anti-social behaviour.

Mr Pitt provided an insight into incidents he had dealt with over the years in Manchester and revealed the measures he had used to deal effectively with anti-social behaviour.

Stockton Council's Crime and Disorder Manager, Carolyn Crean, said: "Mr

Pitt's years of experience provided us with some new ideas to deal with anti-social behaviour incidents.

"We are serious about bringing an end to anti-social behaviour, which can blight people's lives. Inviting Mr Pitt to give us the benefit of his experience shows our commitment and that of our partners. Stockton's ASB Team, which includes two police officers, is already putting into practice some of the suggestions he made."



Print team thanks businesses

The Design and Print team from Stockton Council's Training and Employment Services has thanked local businesses for their support in offering work placements and employing trainees.

In the last year, five students have started full-time work for local businesses: Lee Fleming (Colourscreen), David Dovaston (Intersign), Stephen Icton (Glazetech), Dean Gordon (Stockton Council design+print shop) and Ben Marshall (Armstrong UK).

Several others have also found work not directly linked to design and print, while one has progressed to college.

An impressive record for a small programme – but training places are currently available so, if you've a creative future in mind, call Christine on (01642) 528261 for details.

Barge project doing well

The St Ann's Community Barge Project – up and running since last July – has already attracted much positive interest.

The 55-foot Angus Ferguson, named after one of the charity's founders, is based at the Tees Barrage. Fully accessible to disabled people, it is centrally-heated, has cooking and shower facilities and can accommodate up to eight people.

Barge Co-ordinator, Iain Fishburn, says: "With the facilities we have on board, we can arrange trips for a very large range of organisations and individuals".

The Barge Project is currently setting up projects with black and minority ethnic people and asylum seekers with help from the National Community Boat Association.

To contact the project, call (01642) 613434.



Think twice before you tamper with trees!

Stockton Council is advising anyone thinking of trimming or cutting down a tree to seek advice beforehand.

With spring on its way, many people may be tempted to trim the trees near their homes after the seasonal growth burst. But interfering with a council-owned tree could prove costly.

Fines for tampering with trees can be hefty, with the possible cost of damaging an individual tree being well over £1,000.

A Billingham man was fined recently after he cut down a Council-owned tree outside his house, and the authority's Parks and Countryside section will pursue similar incidents.

For more information call (01642) 526979.

Doorstep advisors help recycle waste



Two advisors, Gavin Smith and Rebecca Henderson

Stockton Council is taking the fight to recycle more waste to people's doorsteps, with a team of community advisors.

The Council recently recruited a team of Community Home Recycling Advisors to play a vital role in supporting our 'Recycling is easy...lets do it together' awareness campaign funded by WRAP.

The team is visiting homes across the Borough offering residents simple advice and facts to help them to recycle their household waste more efficiently. The advisors also listen to residents' concerns and thoughts on how the service can be improved.

This has been extremely well received, with more than 500 householders agreeing to recycle their waste to date following doorstep visits.

Sue Barker-Schneider, Stockton Council's Waste Awareness Officer, said: "We are extremely pleased with the team's progress so far. They are proving to be a great help in motivating people to do their part to recycle waste."

Community groups and residents associations can arrange a visit by the team – simply call Care For Your Area on (01642) 391959 or email careforyourarea@stockton.gov.uk

Arts fun for all the family

Families and groups of all ages are being offered the chance to join in a range of free arts activities.

Stockton Council's Arts Development service is working with young people on a variety of projects involving all generations throughout four of the Borough's Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.

Activities include an arts project called 'This Is Me' for people of all ages from families, community groups, schools and church centres. Participants will work with experienced artists to create anything from short animations of their family tree using pictures from the family album to huge wall hangings made of plaster casts of relatives' hands, feet and faces.

Families in the Newton and Primrose Hill, The Clarences, Portrack and Tilery and Hardwick and Salters Lane areas will be invited to join in the projects.

The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund has provided the funds through Stockton Renaissance, so all the activities are free and great fun.

Invitations to join in will be sent out soon and anyone interested should contact Gill Adams, Arts Development Officer, tel (01642) 526466.



Buy the bin that makes your garden more beautiful.



From only
£5
including delivery

WITH A
COMPOST BIN,
IT'S EASY TO
HAVE A MORE
BEAUTIFUL
GARDEN.

 **recycle**
Compost at home.


Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

To order your bin call **0845 077 0757**

It's time to renew your Bus Pass!

Do you have a Stockton Bus Pass?

If so, your 'Gold' or 'Silver' Card will expire at the end of June 2005. You will need to renew your pass to make sure that you don't miss out on reduced price bus travel over the coming year.

The **Gold Card** scheme covers men and women aged 60 and above and the registered blind. Passes, which cost £5 per year, entitle holders to travel anywhere within the Boroughs of Stockton-on-Tees, Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland, and on certain services in Hartlepool, for a flat fare of 30 pence per journey (registered blind people qualify for a free pass and free travel).

The **Silver Card** scheme covers men and women aged 60 and above and people with disabilities. Passes are free, and entitle holders to travel at half fare on bus services throughout Stockton-on-Tees, Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland, and on certain services in Hartlepool. Both schemes operate throughout the day, seven days a week, including bank holidays.

New passes, valid from the 1st of July 2005 to the 30th of June 2006, will be issued during June 2005 at venues across the Borough. To renew your pass, you will need to attend the centre identified by your postcode, and on the date and time indicated by the initial letter of your surname, as shown below.

Please note that the Stockton Baptist Tabernacle will be closed on Thursdays

Billingham Forum TS2, TS22 & TS23	Stockton Baptist Tabernacle TS18, 19, 20 & 21
Tuesday 31 May 9am to 12 noon A - B 1pm to 4pm C - D	Wednesday 15 June 9am to 12 noon C - D 1pm to 4pm C - D
Wednesday 1 June 9am to 12 noon E - G 1pm to 4pm H - K	Friday 17 June 9am to 12 noon C - D 1pm to 4pm E - F
Thursday 2 June 9am to 12 noon L - M 1pm to 4pm N - R	Monday 20 June 9am to 12 noon G 1pm to 4pm H - I
Friday 3 June 9am to 12 noon S - T 1pm to 4pm U - Z	Tuesday 21 June 9am to 12 noon H - I 1pm to 4pm J
Yarm Community Centre (High Church Wynd) TS15 & TS16	Wednesday 22 June 9am to 12 noon K 1pm to 4pm L - M
Monday 6 June 9am to 12 noon A - D 1pm to 4pm E - J	Friday 24 June 9am to 12 noon L - M 1pm to 4pm L - M
Tuesday 7 June 9am to 12 noon K - R 1pm to 4pm S - Z	Monday 27 June 9am to 12 noon N 1pm to 4pm O
Thornaby Pavilion TS8 & TS17	Tuesday 28 June 9am to 12 noon P - R 1pm to 4pm P - R
Wednesday 8 June 9am to 12 noon A - C 1pm to 4pm D - G	Wednesday 29 June 9am to 12 noon P - R 1pm to 4pm S
Thursday 9 June 9am to 12 noon H - K 1pm to 4pm L - O	Friday 1st July 9am to 12 noon S 1pm to 4pm S
Friday 10 June 9am to 12 noon P - S 1pm to 4pm T - Z	Monday 4th July 9am to 12 noon T 1pm to 4pm T
Stockton Baptist Tabernacle TS18, 19, 20 & 21	Tuesday 5th July 9am to 12 noon U - Z 1pm to 4pm U - Z
Monday 13 June 9am to 12 noon A - B 1pm to 4pm A - B	Wednesday 6th July 9am to 12 noon U - Z 1pm to 4pm U - Z
Tuesday 14 June 9am to 12 noon A - B 1pm to 4pm A - B	

If you are renewing your pass, you will need to bring:-

- Proof of your residency within the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees, such as a recent bill with your name and address on it;
- Your current bus pass; and
- Payment of £5 for Gold Cards (free for registered blind people). Silver Cards are free of charge.

Any Queries? Please phone the Helpline on (01642) 397106

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

Infection Prevention and Control Department The National Patient Safety Agency cleanyourhands campaign.

North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust has been selected to take part as a partner site for this campaign, which was launched in January 2005.

The cleanyourhands campaign aims to reduce the risk to patient safety caused by low compliance with hand hygiene by NHS staff.

Pilot sites for the campaign have found it very effective in increasing hand hygiene and patient confidence about their safety in hospital. An important part of the campaign is the requirement for organisations to actively involve patients and public in hand hygiene improvement. Part of the core materials promote this with the message "It's OK to ask" on posters and badges.

The campaign is one part of a national drive to promote cleaner and safer hospitals, which includes the recent Matrons Charter and "Think Clean" day on 28th February. All of these initiatives have the full support of the Trust Board and reflect the fact that North Tees and Hartlepool staff want to ensure that patients are safe and well cared for during both in patient and out patient visits.

The key message is:
Hand hygiene is a simple measure that makes a big difference and protects everyone.

The campaign involves:

- Placing disinfectant rubs near to where staff have patient contact. This will enable staff to clean their hands at the right time and in a quick and effective manner. Healthcare staff are washing their hands, just not as often as they could. There are many barriers to hand washing and the near to patient alcohol rubs will help to overcome some of these barriers
- Displaying posters and promotional materials where they will influence staff and patients. The posters are changed monthly and some feature photographs of staff champions who give their support to the campaign. All grades of staff are involved in the campaign, including porters, domestic staff, doctors and nurses. The Infection Control link workers in all wards and departments are co-ordinating the campaign in their area
- Patients' involvement. The campaign has been designed to 'invite' rather than 'oblige' patients to be involved. The feedback from the pilot sites showed that patients want to be involved, but need to be given information and made to feel comfortable about their own care.



Don't lose your Right to Vote



District Elections - Thursday 5th May 2005

A Possible Parliamentary Election on the Same Day

Elections will be held on **New Ward Boundaries**

Elections this time will be back to **Polling Stations**

OR

Voting by **Post** or **Proxy** **THE CHOICE IS YOURS**

Don't miss out on having your say

- You can have a postal vote for any reason
- You can have a proxy if eg.
 - you cannot get to a polling station
 - you are away on holiday
 - or cannot reasonably be expected to vote in person

Last day for postal and proxy
applications

Tuesday 26th April 2005

Contact: Electoral Services

Helpline: 01642 526196

Email: electoral@stockton.gov.uk

Or visit our website:
www.stockton.gov.uk



Every year Cleveland Police carry out a Quality of Life Survey to research what police issues and views are prevalent in Cleveland's communities. In July 2004 over two thousand Cleveland residents completed this survey. The results from the survey remain a valuable source for identifying what Cleveland residents believe the policing priorities should be for Cleveland Police. The aim of the Quality of Life Survey is to obtain feedback from members of the public in connection to perceptions of crime, quality of service, continuous improvement and future policing priorities.

The following list has been identified through the 2004 Quality of Life survey responses and demonstrates what residents think the policing priorities for Cleveland Police should be in 2005 - 2006.

- **Targeting Drug Dealers**
- **Reducing Violent Crime/Assaults**
- **Reducing Burglary**
- **Responding to Emergency Incidents**
- **Bringing Offenders to Justice**

As well as the Quality of Life Survey, Cleveland Police and Cleveland Police Authority held a number of public meetings throughout Cleveland in September 2004. The public meetings identified similar priorities as found through the Quality of Life Survey, but also identified **Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour** and **Providing High Visibility Patrols** as priorities for Cleveland Police in 2005 - 2006.

There are many factors that contribute to deciding what the policing priorities for Cleveland will be. The results from the Quality of Life Survey are one factor, as are the results from the public meetings. Therefore these are not the final policing priorities, but will contribute to identifying what Cleveland residents want to be the main policing priorities for Cleveland in 2005 - 2006.

For more information about the policing priorities, please contact Judith Nellist on 01642 301787 or by email: judith.nellist@cleveland.police.uk. If you would like any further information on the Quality of Life Survey or the community meetings you can contact Sian McConville on 01642 301220 or by email: sian.mcConville@cleveland.pnn.police.uk.

Cleveland Police and Cleveland Police Authority are committed to listening and acting upon your views and opinions. We want to help make Cleveland a safer place to live and work. Your views really can shape the delivery of services provided by Cleveland Police. If you would like to share your views, you can visit Cleveland Police Website and fill out the on-line survey. The survey can be found at http://www.cleveland.police.uk/have_your_say/consult_q_long.htm.

Cleveland Police Authority

Cleveland Police Authority is an independent body made up of local people. It is our job to ensure that there is an efficient and effective police force for the Cleveland Police area and to make sure that the chief officer and force are accountable to you in carrying out their responsibilities and serving our communities. If you would like any other information on the roles and responsibilities of Cleveland Police Authority you can visit our website: <http://www.clevelandpa.org.uk/>.

The Authority sets the strategic direction for policing in the Cleveland Police area and holds the chief officer to account for the policing service delivered. Delivery of local policing services is the job of the chief officer of police. The Authority has a responsibility to reflect the interest of Cleveland and provide a democratic link between the public and the police. Over the next three years Cleveland Police Authority will endeavour to become a more publicly visible organisation.

We will achieve this through:

- **Strengthening ties with local government**
- **Ensuring that effective arrangements are in place for engaging with the public at district and neighbourhood level**
- **Ensuring that every household is provided with information about local policing matters**
- **Working collaboratively with our Crime and Disorder Reduction Partners**

Cleveland Police Authority plan to carry out consultation activities in 2005 to help inform what the 2006 - 2007 policing priorities for Cleveland should be. If you would like more information on how you can be involved in these consultation activities, or any of our other initiatives you can contact and Lisa Anderson on 01642 301626 or by email: lisa.anderson@cleveland.pnn.police.uk.



POLICE BEAT

Your Views

Stockton Police District under the command of Chief Supt. Dave Pickard is keen to hear the views of people who live and work in the area it polices. Regular consultation meetings are held across the Police District and all residents are welcome and encouraged come along. The consultation may be with the local area Constable, the Geographical Inspector or even the Chief Superintendent.

We are looking to meet 'hard to reach' groups and understand that not all groups of society manage to go along to the meetings and some may not feel comfortable meeting officers. One such group has already met, specifically for people from an ethnic minority background. The turn out was very favorable and it has been felt to be a very progressive step.

If you feel you have a point to make and would like the chance to speak with your local Police Officer or the District Commander, please call Pam Twinn to find out when the next meeting is in your area. Pam can be reached on (01642) 302257.



Young people

Junior Crime Prevention Panels are taking off in the Borough. The most recent is William Cassidy Junior School in Stillington with another 20 schools now involved.

Under the watchful eye of Head teacher, Jean Peart, 60 pupils were recruited into a panel. The idea is that children take home the crime prevention message. With some excellent feedback through the pupils' home contact books, the scheme helped raise more than £260 at the

Christmas school fair with the sale of crime prevention products.

DC Eddie Lincoln, said: "We are keen to get the crime prevention message out, in whatever way is successful. It appears that adults do take notice of the information the children give them and this is proving extremely successful."

If you require further information on this scheme, or any crime prevention advice please contact DC Lincoln on (01642) 302271.

Crime reporters...

The Local Education Authority run a scheme called "Pathfinders 14-19" where youngsters can learn about the local community from a variety of organizations then made into a supplement printed in the Evening Gazette.

Youngsters have been looking at Stockton Police and learning about a variety of policing issues which included a trip to Billingham Station, a tour of the cells, trying on of Police protective equipment used in disorder situations and an appreciation of police transport. Insp. Mark Thornton was also interviewed on a variety of legal and topical matters. The young reporters really enjoyed the experience and the supplement should go to press in early spring.

Insp. Thornton, said: "The scheme illustrates that children not only have a lot to learn about the Police Service but also they can do so in a fun way and pass on important messages to their peers. I have fully enjoyed my involvement with it."

The group's tutor, Karen Smith, said: "The Evening Gazette and Gazette Media Centre always strive to play an active part in the community. Joining together with the Police on this project has shown the young people how they can also make a positive contribution to the local area."

Ward Surgeries

April 2005

For details of new Councillors and Ward Surgeries after May 5, call (01642) 526192 or see www.stockton.gov.uk

BISHOPSGARTH WARD (STOCKTON) 6:30pm – 7:00pm
12th Apr Fairfield Infants School
COUNCILLORS S. HALL TEL: 643757
W. WOODHEAD TEL: 584409

BLUE HALL WARD (STOCKTON) 6:00PM – 7:00PM
13th Apr The Forge Community Centre
27th Apr Frederick Natrass School
COUNCILLORS M. FRANKLAND TEL: 552667
MRS K. NELSON TEL: 555729

CHARLTONS WARD (BILLINGHAM) 6:30PM – 7:30PM
12th Apr Clarences Community Centre
COUNCILLORS MRS A. McCOY TEL: 533554
R. McCALL TEL: 554452

EGGLESCLIFFE WARD
1st Apr Trinity Methodist Church
(Joint surgery with Preston Ward)
6:30 – 7:30pm
19th Apr Egglescliffe Parish Hall, Butts Lane
6:00 – 7:00pm
COUNCILLORS J. FLETCHER TEL: 786456
Email: john.fletcher@stockton.gov.uk
MRS M. RIGG TEL: 782009
Email: maureen.rigg@stockton.gov.uk

ELM TREE WARD (STOCKTON)
19th Apr 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
13th Apr Fairfield Library
COUNCILLORS MRS F. HAWKINS TEL: 671422
MRS J. WADE TEL: 583549

GLEBE WARD (STOCKTON) 6:30PM – 7:00PM
5th Apr The Education Centre
COUNCILLORS MRS A. CAINS and R. CAINS
TEL: 555394

GRANGE WARD (BILLINGHAM) 5:00PM – 6:00PM
29th Apr New Life Resource Centre
COUNCILLORS A. CUNNINGHAM TEL: 551251
Email: alexander.cunningham@stockton.gov.uk
M. STOKER TEL: 648069
Email: mickstoker@aol.com or
mick@grangeward.co.uk

GRANGFIELD WARD (STOCKTON)
No April Surgery
COUNCILLORS T. BEAN TEL: 870110
MRS E. JOHNSON TEL: 673952

HARDWICK WARD (STOCKTON) 6:00PM – 7:00PM
1st Apr Hardwick Community Centre,
Wheatley Road
8th Apr As above
15th Apr As above
22nd Apr As above
29th Apr As above
COUNCILLORS MRS E. NESBITT TEL: 803658
W. NOBLE TEL: 602299

HARTBURN WARD (STOCKTON) 6:45PM – 7:30PM
4th Apr Elmwood Community Centre
COUNCILLORS K. LUPTON TEL: 589863

INGLEBY BARWICK WARD
No April Surgery
COUNCILLOR MRS J. BEAUMONT TEL: 785304
Email: jennifer.beaumont@stockton.gov.uk

MANDALE WARD (THORNABY) 12:00 NOON – 1:00PM
2nd Apr The Mandale PH
16th Apr Robert Atkinson Youth &
Community Centre
COUNCILLORS MRS A. TRAINER TEL: 647421
S. WALMSLEY TEL: 881886

MARSH HOUSE WARD (BILLINGHAM)
6:30PM – 7:30PM
11th Apr Low Grange Community Centre
COUNCILLOR MRS L. APEDAILE TEL: (01740)
645216
C. LECKONBY TEL: 872896

MILE HOUSE WARD (STOCKTON) 7:00PM – 8:00PM
19th Apr Redhill Centre, Redhill Road
COUNCILLORS D. COOKE TEL: 803648
K. LEONARD TEL: 894191

NEWTOWN WARD (STOCKTON) 6:00PM – 7:00PM
8th Apr Primrose Hill Community Centre
22nd Apr Newtown Community Centre
COUNCILLORS P. BAKER TEL: 655607
R. GIBSON TEL: 614482

NORTHFIELD WARD (BILLINGHAM)
6:00PM – 7:00PM
29th Apr St Mary Magdalene Church
COUNCILLORS MRS M. B. WOMPHREY
TEL: 555755
M. E. WOMPHREY TEL: 555755

NORTON WARD 6:00PM – 7:00PM
1st Apr Norton Library
15th Apr Albany Resource Centre
COUNCILLORS R. COOK TEL: 890058
Email: Robert.Cook@stockton.gov.uk
S. NELSON TEL: 534417
Email: Steve.Nelson@stockton.gov.uk

PARKFIELD WARD (STOCKTON) 6:00PM – 7:00PM
7th Apr Parkfield Community Centre
14th Apr Cornerhouse Community
Resource Centre
21st Apr Parkfield Community Centre
28th Apr Stockton International Family
Centre, Richard Hind Site
COUNCILLORS C. COOMBS TEL: 645759
S. LUNN TEL: 866982

PORTRACK & TILERY WARD (STOCKTON)
5:00PM – 6:00PM
1st Apr Mill Lane Primary School
8th Apr Portrack Community Centre
15th Apr Victoria Community House
22nd Apr Frank Wiseman Hall
COUNCILLORS D. COLEMAN TEL: 673952
P. KIRTON TEL: 532076

PRESTON WARD 6:30PM – 7:30PM
1st Apr Trinity Methodist Church,
Egglescliffe
(Joint surgery with Egglescliffe
Ward)
15th Apr The Wilson Institute,
Long Newton
COUNCILLOR M. CHERRETT TEL: 783491

ROSEWORTH WARD (STOCKTON) 5:15PM – 6:15PM
11th Apr Kiara Hall Youth
& Community Centre
COUNCILLORS M. INGRAM TEL: 789372
MISS B. INMAN TEL: 582644

STAINSBY WARD (THORNABY) 5:00PM – 6:00PM
21st Apr South Thornaby
Community Centre
COUNCILLORS K. CRAGGS TEL: 896378
R. GODWIN TEL: 763326

ST. AIDANS WARD (BILLINGHAM) 6:30PM – 7:30PM
13th Apr Billingham Youth
& Community Centre
COUNCILLORS N. TEASDALE TEL: 803657
B. WOODHOUSE TEL: 561899

ST. CUTHBERT'S WARD (BILLINGHAM)
6:00PM – 7:00PM
14th Apr Billingham Branch Library,
Bedale Avenue
COUNCILLORS MRS J. O' DONNELL TEL: 559717
M. SMITH TEL: 866573

VICTORIA WARD (THORNABY)
2nd Apr Rochester Court Sheltered
Housing 11:00 – 12:00 Noon
16th Apr Riverbank Children's Centre
(Formerly Queens Street
Community Centre)
12:00 Noon – 1:00pm
COUNCILLORS MRS E. FLEMING TEL: 646463
MRS S. WALMSLEY TEL: 881886

VILLAGE WARD (THORNABY) 4:30PM – 5:30PM
11th Apr Thornaby Pavilion
COUNCILLORS MRS E. CRAGGS TEL: 896378
I. DALGARNO TEL: 882985

WHITTON WARD
12th Apr Grindon Parish Hall,
Thorpe Thewles 7:00 – 7:30pm
29th Apr St. Mary Magdalene Church
6:30 – 7:00pm
COUNCILLOR F. SALT TEL: (01740) 630771

WOLVISTON WARD (BILLINGHAM)
7:00PM – 8:00PM
5th Apr The Common Room,
Wolviston High Street
26th Apr High Grange Community Centre
COUNCILLOR S. PARRY TEL: 879478

YARM WARD 6:00PM – 6:45PM
12th Apr Yarm Library
COUNCILLORS B. JONES TEL: 576855
MRS M. SIMPSON TEL: 790691

To contact MPs and MEPs

MPs - Members of Parliament 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.

MEPs - Members of the European Parliament:
Stephen Hughes (Labour)
tel: 0191 384 9371
e mail Stephen-hughes@btconnect.com

Martin Callanan (Conservative)
tel: 0191 240 2600 e mail
mcallanan@europarl.eu.int

Fiona Hall (Liberal Democrat)
tel: 0191 383 0119
e mail Fiona@fionahallmep.org.uk

IMPORTANT: the boundaries of most wards throughout the Borough will change at the local elections on 5 May - See article on page 3.

Daisy Chain makes the link

The dream of an autistic child's mother is soon to be a reality with the completion of the Daisy Chain's latest facility.

The charity's founder, Lesley Hanson, realised the problems faced by the carers of children with autism. She dreamed of providing a special centre for autistic children, which would include a 10-bed respite facility, play barn, swimming pool, sensory areas, animal barn, agricultural and horticultural opportunities and nature trails.

In 2003, a local trust purchased Calf Fallow Farm for use by Daisy Chain and, since then, support from businesses, community groups and

individuals has helped it provide support for parents/carers and support groups.

As Daisy Chain developed, it was able to employ a development officer, admin support and a fundraiser. Tragically, however, Lesley died last year aged 35, after a routine operation.

But overwhelming support from the public, staff and volunteers has seen it continue to grow. An animal-petting barn was completed last year and a day centre and respite care facility opens this year.

To help or learn more about Daisy Chain, call (01642) 531248 or visit www.daisychainproject.co.uk



Daisy Bear spreads the word about Daisy Chain

Children Spark-le at Animex Festival

Youngsters from a Stockton school had the chance to see their own animated creations on the big screen as part of the Tween Toons event at the annual Animex International Festival of Animation.

With help from Stockton's new visual arts education centre, SPARK, the Year 5 and 6 pupils from Oak Tree Primary School created their own stop motion animations using the centre's Apple Mac suite.

The children were able to work with SPARK staff and local animator Chris Kent to devise their own stories, thanks to funding from Creative Partnerships. They made their own sets and characters from plasticine, foam and card and then added sound effects and titles to provide the finishing touches to the animations.

Some of the finished animations were accepted for entry to the Animex Festival in Middlesbrough, with pupils and staff from the school viewing their animations at the Tween Toons event at the University of Teesside.

SPARK runs animations workshops for schools and other organised groups and will soon be providing holiday animation workshops for the community. For details, call the centre on (01642) 612802.



Street parking control a step closer

A formal application to Transport Secretary, Alistair Darling, in January is paving the way for Stockton Council to take over management of roadside parking from the police.

If the Minister agrees to the application, local parking violations would no longer be criminal offences. Parking attendants employed by the Council would enforce restrictions, with income from fines channelled into local transport services.

The new system could be introduced later this year. Off-street penalty charges will be harmonised with on-street penalties, with an independent adjudicator settling cases of dispute.

In the meantime, nine of the Council's parking team – including four parking attendants – have gained a qualification in the skills and knowledge to best meet their customers' needs.

From a recently-opened Parking Shop in Gloucester House, Church Road, Stockton, they offer car park information, process blue badge applications and issue parking season tickets and Concessionary Travel Passes. The shop also accepts payments of fines for off-road parking offences and, once control of yellow-line offences changes, it will accept payments for these too.

Boats on show

Model boat enthusiasts are in for a treat as Stockton Central Library hosts an exhibition of model boats by Darlington and District Model Boat Club on Friday 8 April, as part of the Council's 'Year of the Tees' celebrations.

Unique models on show include a collection of working models of world speed record-breaking boats by Ernest Lazenby. Another on show, Jake Dale's miniature model of Parson's steam yacht Turbania, is actually powered by a tiny, real turbine.

What's On

April, May, June and July 2005

www.stockton.gov.uk/events

April

1 April - 26 April

'Hats OFF'

Exhibition by award-winning photographer Jason Bell – Billingham Art Gallery. Tel: (01642) 527911.

2 April – 25 June

'Year of the Tees' exhibition

Exhibition celebrating history of the River Tees - Green Dragon Museum - April to June. Tel: (01642) 527982.

8 April

Model Boat Exhibition

Exhibition by Darlington & District Model Boat Club at Stockton Central Library, 10am - 6pm. Free admission. Call Ian Archibald on (01642) 652608.

10 April

In Search of the Real Ratty

Help the Rangers survey Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park for the elusive water vole, 10am – 12.30pm. Booking essential. Tel: (01642) 415225.

17 April

Beck Valley Walk

A seven mile easy walk, linking Billingham Beck Valley Country Park with Portrack Marsh Nature Reserve, 10am – 3pm. Tel: (01642) 397609.

17 April

Railway Run

Guided bike ride along former railway line – Wynyard Woodland Park. 10am – 1pm. Cycle helmets recommended. Tel: (01642) 526735.

22 April

Unicycle Convention

Huge event for unicyclists in the UK. Check out www.unicycle.org.uk/buc12/ for details. Until 23 April.

Dave Milburn 'Mercurial Waters'

Green Dragon Museum - Local photographer Dave Milburn exhibits his atmospheric images. Tel: (01642) 527982.

24 April

Vintage Bus Teesside Running Day 2005

Free journeys on buses from the 1960s and 70s in Stockton High Street. Tel: (01642) 782796.

24 April

Spring Stroll

Two-and-a-quarter mile walk on the Aislaby Circular footpath, 10am – 12 noon. Contact the Preston Park Rangers on (01642) 788907.

29 April

Shadowy Tales

Wynyard Woodland Park - A walk through Thorpe Woods where the Rangers will tell a spooky story, 6.30 pm – 8.30 pm. Bring a torch - Booking essential. Tel: (01740) 630011.

30 April – 28 May

Edward Weston

A national touring exhibition – Green Dragon Museum. Tel: (01642) 527982.

May

1 May

Yarm-Picton-Worsall Loop Walk

Seven mile circular walk, 10.30 am – 1.30 pm
Meet in the car park at Yarm rail station. Tel: (01642) 788907.

2 May

Myton Meander

Starting at the Myton House pub at Ingleby Barwick, a leisurely ride to the Tees Barrage and back, 10am-1pm.

2 May

Early Birds at Billingham Beck

An early morning look into the springtime bird life of Billingham Beck Valley, 6:30am – 8:30am. Tel: (01642) 397609.

4 May- 4 June:

Joint Art Society Show

Local art societies display their recent work – Billingham Art Gallery. Admission free. Tel: (01642) 527911.

6 – 8 May

Teesside Spring Garden & Wood Festival

For more information please contact Doug Moore on (01406) 424288 or 07977 134364.

8 May

Puppet Master

Can you make up a story? Help build a puppet theatre, design and build puppets, then tell a story. 10.30 am – 12.30 pm. Cowpen Bewley Park. Tel: (01642) 415225.

14 & 15 May

Getaway 2005

For more information please contact the Events Team. Tel: (01642) 527344/45/46.

15 May

Dawn Chorus

A walk through Thorpe Wood and listen to early birdsong at Wynyard Woodland Park, 4.30 am – 6.30 am. Tel: (01740) 630011.

21 May

Mr. Handel's Mad Scenes

Avison Ensemble – opera depicting 'the disturbed mind', at Preston Hall, 7.30pm. Tickets £8 from Stockton Tourist Information Centre. Tel: (01642) 528130.

21 May

Tees Regatta [Dugdale Street Watersports Centre]

Contact Kate O'Sullivan – Tel: (01325) 332870.

22 May

Bygone Norton

Join Robin Daniels of Tees Archaeology for a journey of exploration and discovery in Norton Village, 2pm – 3.30pm. Tel: (01429) 523464.

28 & 29 May

"Fins & Chrome" American Car Show

Preston Park. Contact Sandra Clarkson on (01642) 583270.

29 May

TriAngle Run

Guided cycle ride, through three Anglo Saxon settlements and surprising countryside. Starting at Tees Barrage, 10am – 1pm.

31 May

Pond-dipping and Mini-beasting

Find out what lurks beneath the surface of the Park's ponds, in between blades of grass, under stones and in the trees, 1pm-3pm at Billingham Beck. Tel: (01642) 391609.

June

1 June

An Afternoon with the Stars

Tour of the starry sky inside Wynyard Woodland Park's Planetarium before joining the Rangers in the railway carriage for a celestial crafty activity, 1.30 pm – 4pm. Booking essential. Children £1.50; Adults £3.00; Family Ticket £5.00.

2 June

Create a Creature

Creative sculpture workshop, 10am – 2pm at Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park. Booking essential. Tel: (01642) 415225

2 June & 5 June

Celebrate National Volunteers Week

National Volunteers Week (1 – 7 June). Come and help a habitat management task at Billingham Beck, 10am-3pm. Tel: (01642) 397609.

5 June

Planting Plugs in Preston Park

World Environment Day by planting native wildflowers in the meadow next to Quarry Woods Nature Reserve, 10.30am – 12.30 pm. Tel (01642) 788907.

12 June

Diabetes UK Fun Day

Preston Park. Contact - Duncan.Robertson@diabetes.org.uk for full details.

19 June

Minibeast Mayhem

An exploration of a miniature minibeast world, 10.30 am – 12.30 pm at Cowpen Bewley Woodland Park. Tel: (01642) 415225 for further details.

17 June

Ridewell 2005 –

Police Road Safety Event at Preston Park. Contact Sgt. Nick Walker on (01642) 301552.

20 June

Midsummer Eve

A gentle bike ride starting at Billingham Beck Valley Country Park. 7pm - 9pm. Tel: (01642) 526735.

25 & 26 June

Fire Engine & Vintage Car Rally

Preston Hall - 400 plus preserved vehicles of all descriptions, ranging from C17th fire fighting pumps to the latest airfield tender. Call the Events Team– (01642) 527344/5/6.

26 June

Strawberry Fields Forever

Fruit-finding mission, cookery session, 1pm – 3pm. Cost: £1.50. Please phone a week in advance to check that the strawberries are ready for picking - Wynyard Woodland Park. Tel: (01740) 630011 for further details.

July

3 July

Pedalling Picnic

A family ride to Cowpen Bewley Country Park, starting at Billingham Beck Valley Country Park, 10am-1pm. Bring a picnic!

3 July

Co. Durham Royal British Legion Annual Rally and VE/VJ Day celebrations

Stockton High Street. 10.40am from Yarm Lane. For details write to Mr R. Bannister, 14 Marion Ave. Egelscliffe, TS16 0LJ.

Diary Date

This year's **Stockton International Riverside Festival** takes place from August 3 – 7 and, as well as the stunning performances for world-class companies, there are opportunities for you to be at the very heart of it.

The Community Carnival and Parade is always one of the real highlights of the Festival and this year you can take a starring role. Join a group in the Parade and enjoy participating in a fun, creative and exciting atmosphere. For more details about the Festival and Community Carnival and Parade log onto www.sirf.co.uk The world is invited to the Festival – so why don't you come too?

Stockton Adult Education Service

A mouthwatering menu of 5 –week taster courses
at venues across Stockton

Starting week beginning 18 April 2005, £15.50 or £4 concessions

Indian head massage
Summer cookery
Aromatherapy
Reflexology
Tai Chi for beginners
Gardening
Pottery
Stained glass
Jewellery design
Ballroom dancing
Fashion design
Digital media
ICT – various

10 week courses starting week beginning 18 April 2005, £31.00 or £4 concessions

Braille for the Sighted
Spanish for Holidays
Tracing Your Family Tree
Local History
Astronomy
Counselling
Computing First Steps
Welcome to Computers
Digital Art
Scanner Art

Also available One day Specials (price on request) - including

Foundation Food Hygiene
Farmhouse Bake
Pottery
Interior design
Stained glass

PLUS NEW VENUE - New Town
Community Centre
Look out for Summer Cookery,
Scrapbooking, Canvas painting
and Fashion design

For further information on courses, dates,
times and venues telephone 527904 or 528121



ARE YOU ON A LOW INCOME?

In or out of Work you may get help to pay your rent or Council Tax

**STOCKTON
BENEFIT
SERVICE**
here to help

Call our helpline (01642) 393829 or Minicom 393806
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 Renaissance Partnership Board Meetings

Tuesday at 5.00pm, 12th April, 10th May, 14th June, 12th July
Contact: Dawn Welsh 01642 526498

Area Partnerships

Central Area Partnership (Central Stockton, Norton, Hartburn, Stillington, Whitton, Carlton, Redmarshall, Thorpe Thewles) - Thursday: 28th April at 10.00am, 26th May at 2.00pm, 30th June at 5.00pm, 26th July at 10.00am
Contact: Lesley Dale 01642 527568

Eastern Area Partnership (Thornaby, Ingaby Barwick, Malby, Hilton) - Tuesday at 9.30am, 26th April, 28th June
Contact: Scott Stewart on 01642 358823

Western Area Partnership (Yam, Eaglescliffe, Long Newton, Kirklevington) - Monday at 8pm, 23rd May, 25th July
Contact: Scott Stewart on 01642 358823

The Billingham Partnership - Monday at 5.45pm, 11th April, 9th May, 13th June, 11th July
Contact: James Hadman 01642 360150

Please ring the numbers above for venue details if you would like to attend.

These partnerships work together for the social and economic regeneration of the Borough and their local areas. The meetings are open to the public so if you would like to attend, ring one of the numbers above to confirm the venue.



stockton renaissance
The Borough's Regeneration Partnership



TASTY MEALS TO YOUR DOOR

Home Farm Foods

Working in local communities for over 11 years, Home Farm Foods is a reliable, caring and friendly service with over 200 delicious frozen meals and other products. We aim to provide the very best products and services available across the whole of the North East.

- FREE WEEKLY DELIVERY
- NO MINIMUM ORDER
- EXCLUSIVE RECIPES



Superb range of ready meals
PLUS

Top Quality Meat Fish and poultry Products
Pies Puddings Vegetables Snacks Desserts
Diabetic & Gluten Free Range

For a Free Colour Catalogue
CALL FREE ON

0800 052 7744



Women Royal Voluntary Service

MEALS WITH CARE



SERVICE
SECOND TO
NONE

Frozen meals delivery service

Let us be the answer to your meal time problems

WRVS helps people maintain dignity and independence in their homes and communities particularly in later life.

Introducing meal deals

- 5 meals for £10 (only £2 per main course)
- 10 meals for £20 (only £2 per main course)
- 15 meals for £30 (only £2 per main course)

Normal Price per main course - £2.20

Tasty Soups from 75p

BENEFITS TO YOU

- * Low cost
- * 1 stop delivery
- * convenient



You know you can trust WRVS - why not give us a call today -

PHONE 01642 222643

SureStart Stockton-on-Tees

Services for children 0 - 16 and their families

Our range of services include:-

Childcare Information Service, Information On Childcare Providers, 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 Survival Skills, Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Strategy, Quality Assurance Scheme.

For further information please contact
Stockton Childcare Information Service
Tel: 01642 527225

E-mail CIS@stockton.gov.uk
SureStart@stockton.gov.uk



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL

1st Floor, Bayheath House, Prince Regent Street, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 10F
Tel: 01642 527222

Stockton Business Centre

The centre for business



Artist impression of new enhanced Stockton Business Centre. Offering 101 units.

Unit sizes from 10 - 80 sq metres

- 24 hours access and security
- Free parking
- Easy In - Easy Out terms
- Free business advice and counselling
- Meeting and conference rooms
- Broadband internet to all units
- VOIP digital telephony



**For further information contact:
Centre Manager 01642 527933
www.stocktonbusinesscentre.org**

Fun and fitness activities at your local



Including...

ON ICE

- Learn to skate classes
- Ice Hockey
- Public skate sessions
- Corporate bookings

Activ8 HEALTH & FITNESS

- Four Activ8 Health & Fitness studios
- Invigor8 Sauna suite
- A wide variety of fitness classes

SWIMMING

- Swimming lessons
- Public swimming
- Flume & wave machine

INDOOR FACILITIES

- Football, hockey, basketball, gymnastics, trampolining, aerobics, netball wrestling, squash, badminton, martial arts and leagues

PARTIES

- Ice skating, swimming, football, disco and themed inflatable soft play

WATERSPORTS

- Sailing, Kayaking, bellboating or powerboating

CORPORATE

- Team Building events
- Corporate Hospitality
- Conference and meeting facilities

FLEXIBLE PAYMENT OPTIONS

- Pay as you go
- Monthly or Annual
- Direct Debit

For an active life!

www.teesactive.co.uk

www.stockton.gov.uk

For more information on any of the above contact any of your Active Life Centres



Billingham Forum	01642 55 13 81
Splash	01642 52 72 72
Stockton Sports Centre	01642 52 82 82
Thornaby Pavilion	01642 76 09 71
Thornaby Pool	01642 61 67 27
Castlegate Quay Watersports Centre	01642 52 86 89

These facilities are supported by Stockton - on - Tees Borough Council and are managed by Tees Active Ltd.



MEALS PREPARED & DELIVERED WITH CARE

At Wiltshire Farm Foods we put as much care into the delivery of our meals as we do their preparation.

As the country's leading supplier of frozen ready meals direct to the home, we offer a menu of 175 meals and desserts with main meals from as little as £1.60. Delivery and chat, is FREE.

Call 01642 643999 or FREEPHONE 0800 773773 for a free colour brochure.

www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com



2005
BROCHURE
AVAILABLE

Reasons to Recycle

Recycling saves natural resources

Recycling reduces the amount of energy we use

Recycling creates local jobs

Recycling keeps down the cost of Council Tax



www.stockton.gov.uk
Tel. (01642) 391919