

# CommunityTalk

IN RENNINGTON, ROCK & STAMFORD SPRING 2023

## Welcome

Welcome to the new Parish Council Newsletter. We hope you find this Spring issue informative, topical, inclusive and relevant. If you wish to contribute and/or have an idea or article in mind for the summer, autumn or winter editions, we'd love to hear from you. And all feedback is welcome!

*Editor Peter Purdom*

## Resilience & Emergency Plan



The updated Resilience and Emergency Plan details how the 27 volunteers will operate in an emergency.

The plan with its implementation process has been approved by the County Council and it's now available on the Parish Council website. The emergency response card we sent you tells you what will happen in an emergency.

Our volunteers will be easily recognisable in their hi-vis vests, they will carry ID and each have a headtorch - all funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

Our grateful thanks to the volunteers for their commitment to checking people are safe - and helping out in the Village Hall in an emergency.



Information on the Council - [www.northumberlandparishes.uk/rennington](http://www.northumberlandparishes.uk/rennington)

## Pétanque for All

Success! The Community Chest small grants scheme has just made an award of £2,500 to construct a 15m x 7m terrain for 2 rinks. Other sources of funding now seem likely but we may still need to raise about £750 locally. Our aim is to be up and running in July.

Join our "come and have a go fun night" on Friday 14th April 6.30pm till 8pm in front of Rock Hall. French themed refreshments available; and we'll be able to chat about our plans. Keen to help or want further information? Please contact me at [norman.hughes52@btinternet.com](mailto:norman.hughes52@btinternet.com)



## King Charles' Coronation

Let's celebrate and toast King Charles!

### Two events not to be missed!

Come and join us at one or both of our coronation parties:

**Sunday 7 May** - Afternoon Picnic Party (timing to be confirmed) in Rennington Village Hall

**Monday 8 May** at 2 - 4pm Coronation Street Party outside Rock Church.

# Bird Watch

We will soon be welcoming migrating birds back - warblers (including chiff-chaff and willow warbler), swallows, sand and house martins and swifts - many often returning to previously used nests. Male birds acquire a territory - singing to attract females and warning other males to steer clear of their 'patch'. Males display courtship behaviour, show plumage or adopt body postures - great for photos!

Mate attracted; nest building follows! Birds do nest in trees but many, such as wrens, nest in bushes. Lapwings are ground nesting and will vigorously defend their nests and chicks against predators like crows and jackdaws. Common garden birds, such as great tits, blue tits and tree sparrows use nest boxes where available. Swallows build nests attached to walls or beams and house martins construct theirs under the eaves. Sand martins burrow horizontally into sandbanks in river banks or at the seashore, while swifts nest high up, often on stone outcrops or on tall buildings.

Egg laying is timed so that food preferred for the brood is available when they hatch. Tits, for example, hatch when certain caterpillars develop on our garden plants. Both parents may not brood the eggs; often it's the male bringing food to the female sitting on the eggs. Once hatched - bringing food to the nest becomes a non-stop activity for both until the chicks fledge.

*Tim Walls*



## Down on the Farm

Percy Farms manages 1200 acres around Rennington - growing wheat, barley, oilseed rape and beans for a variety of uses. As well as crops, the farm does a lot with conservation - driven by His Grace, The Duke of Northumberland's passion for conservation and English partridge. All fields have grass margins and environmental strips around the outside of the field with the crop grown in the middle.

During our quieter season we've been busy planting new hedgerows. Around Rennington we have planted 5 kilometres of hedgerow in the last 2 years and have long term plans for more. These hedgerows provide long term shelter and habitats for wildlife and also add to the farm's ability to sequester carbon from the atmosphere.

*Stephen Siddorn Farm Manager*

## Lighting the way at Rock Church

Saint Philip and James Church in Rock Village has finally been rewired following a lengthy grant application process. It is now a more attractively lit space, suitable to resume both regular worship and Rock Community events and talks.

*Fred Bosanquet*



## Volunteers please - for the Big Help Out!

"Big Help Out" Day is Monday 8 May - part of the Coronation Weekend - and the Parish Council is organising a 'clean up' of our parish. To make this a reality we need people across the parish to volunteer for activities such as litter-picking, bench cleaning, road sign cleaning and strimming footpath edges. Equipment such as hi-vis vests, gloves, rubbish sacks and litter-pickers will be provided.

Are you prepared to get involved? If you would like to help, please email [andysisson1@sky.com](mailto:andysisson1@sky.com) or [philgreenpc22@btinternet.com](mailto:philgreenpc22@btinternet.com) giving your name and contact number. Please also tell us what jobs need doing on public land near where you live. We will then work out a plan and let you know how you could help. Nobody wants to disturb birds when nesting - so some litter-picking will be done in March.

**We need to hear from you by Sunday 9th April. Thank you.**

# Let's Dig a Well...

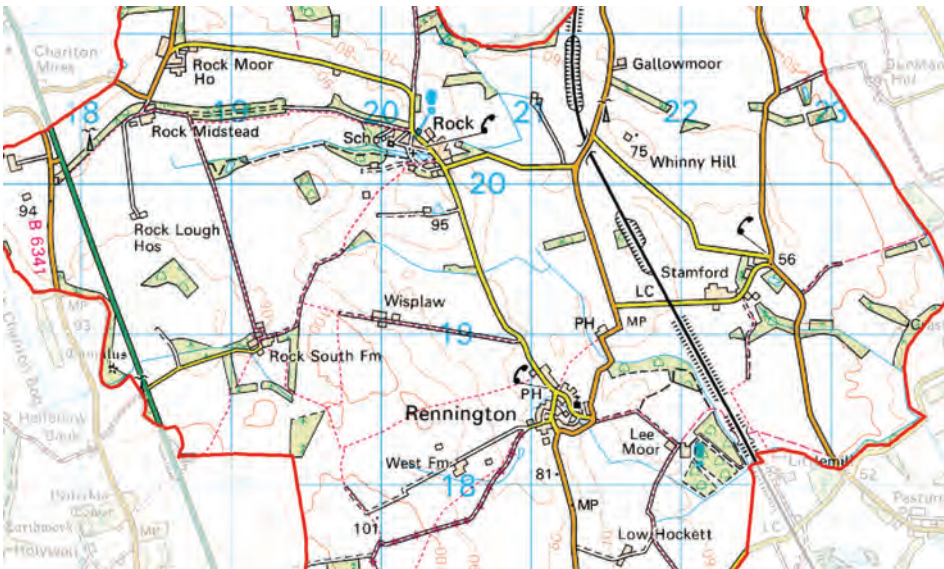
In the Australian outback ranchers need to ensure cattle don't stray. Fences would be impractical and cost too much. Instead they dig wells - cattle won't wander from life-giving water.

It's a powerful image for the Church to take to heart. Despite how we may be perceived or perhaps historically behaved, the Church is not about keeping the 'flock' protected within its walls. Instead we should be the Church out there, with everyone else, around the well that nurtures community life.

What's in that well? What makes healthy communities? Big questions for everyone in Rennington and Rock. We need to lower barriers keeping us apart and come together. We need to talk together openly and honestly, to trust one another, to learn how to disagree well and to share what we have.

I'd love to have a conversation in which we can all be involved. How might we start? Any thoughts?  
Rev Alison, Priest in Charge of All Saints Rennington and Ss Philip & James, Rock

[revalisonhardy@gmail.com](mailto:revalisonhardy@gmail.com)



# Village Hall Safe Centre and Energy Efficiency Project

As part of the Parish Council's Resilience and Emergency Plan, the Committee is currently considering the installation of solar panels on the southerly facing roof, supported by a back-up storage battery. This would enable the Hall to be used as a Safe Centre and Warm Hub in the event of a serious emergency situation, particularly one involving an electrical power outage. The Committee has successfully secured a generous grant of almost £20K from Northern Powergrid Charitable Foundation to cover the cost. We are currently working with specialist contractors and Northumberland Estates to carry out essential preparatory work so we can take this project forward.

*Laurence Dent*

# Neighbourhood Development Plan



The executive summary of the Housing Needs Assessment is certainly worth reading. It outlines our housing challenges over the next 15 years - the high cost of our property, our ageing population and the need for 'Affordable Homes' in the parish.

We will be organising a public consultation meeting in May to discuss the options open to us and we'll be circulating details soon. In particular we want to hear your views about allocating more land for housing. The many questions include - should we set some land aside for 'Affordable Housing'? Or perhaps just housing that's more affordable? Should we influence the housing mix in future developments? And what about settlement boundaries?

Finally, we now know that the original timescale for this project was overly optimistic. At our meeting in May we will also be outlining our new timelines and the range of policy areas that need to be considered before the first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan can be produced.

# Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Training

Please help make everybody safer by becoming trained in basic CPR! Training is vital for CPR to be effective; and you need to refresh your skills regularly - ideally annually.

Two courses are being organised in Rennington Village Hall on 12th April 2023. The first - starting at 18.00 is for those not previously trained and will last 1-1½ hours; the second is a half hour refresher course starting at 19.30. Please come along - either to be trained or to update your skills.

To book a place or for more details contact Elliot Smith - either email [RenningtonCPR@outlook.com](mailto:RenningtonCPR@outlook.com) or call 01665 572670

# Garden Talk



Peat based composts for gardeners will be banned from December 2024. So what, if any, are the differences between a peat-based and a peat-free medium?

- Peat-free composts can be made of several ingredients including coir, bark, woodfibre and green compost.
- They do not require more water than peat based composts.
- Be aware that the surface of peat-free composts may look dry when in fact there is adequate moisture underneath. Check the moisture content by using the weight of the pot as a guide or the 'finger test' – pushing a finger below the surface.
- Peat-free composts don't need more feeding; all composts require supplementary feeding after the first 4 to 6 weeks.
- The best advice with peat-free composts is to use a well-researched, tried, and tested brand.
- Look out for the Responsible Sourcing Scheme symbol on bags for information about ingredients.
- Fresh compost is always best. If in doubt contact the manufacturer for more information.

Vicki Wright

# Brief Encounters of the Royal Kind!

Have you or a member of your family been near, met, or been presented to a member of the Royal Family? We'd love to borrow your written accounts, photographs or memorabilia for our Exhibition - Brief Encounters of the Royal Kind in All Saints Church.

Our Exhibition will be open - **Friday 5 May 2 - 4pm - Sunday 7 May** - following the 10am service - **Monday 8 May 2 - 4pm**

To arrange safe delivery or collection and return of your items - telephone 01665 577048 before Monday 1 May, labelling each item with your name, address and telephone number. The exhibition will be supervised and the Church locked outside exhibition times to safeguard items on loan.

Your contributions will be much appreciated! Thank you.  
Rennington and Rock Parochial Church Council

## Bird Boxes

To increase the nesting of small songbirds such as tits and wrens, Alex (our local gamekeeper) has built 100 bird boxes and kindly donated 40 of them for public areas across the parish. Volunteers have already installed them!



## Parish Council Tax

The Parish Council have set their budget for 2023/24 and do not need to increase their share of Council Tax to meet spending requirements. Good news in these challenging times!

## Whats On

- 18 March** 5pm kick off 6-Nations Rugby Ireland v England on the BIG Screen RVH
- 23 March** 7pm Pie & Pea Supper, Quiz & Raffle in support of RVH in the Horseshoes
- 13 April** 7pm - Parish Council RVH
- 12 April** 6pm - 7.30 pm CPR Training RVH
- 12 April** 7.30pm - 8pm CPR Refresher Training RVH
- 14 April** 6.30 - 8pm Petanque fun night - in front of Rock Hall
- 19 April** 2 - 3pm - Scams Awareness, Age UK Northumberland RVH
- 20 April** 6.30 pm RVH Annual General Meeting RVH
- 25 April** 6.30pm - Anna Gmeyer Lalage Bosanquet on her grandmother Rock Church
- 27 April** 7pm - Annual Parish Meeting RVH
- 7 May** Coronation Afternoon Picnic Party (timing to be confirmed) RVH
- 8 May** Opening of 'Helen Sutherland Exhibition' in Rock Church
- 8 May** 2 pm - Street Party for King's Coronation outside Rock Church
- 11 May** 7pm - Parish Council & AGM RVH
- 18 May** 6.30pm - Norman Hughes's Olympic Journey Rock Church
- 8 June** 7pm - Parish Council RVH
- 11 June** 6.30pm - Table top sale Rock Church
- 29 June** 6.30pm - Brian Eke on Eric Atkins Rock Church

### Next issue:

June 23; please submit content by 22 May  
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