

Spring 2022

Edition 11

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# *Rennington and Rock Community News*



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## From the editors

Hello again and welcome to the Spring 2022 edition of the R&R Community News. In the last edition we welcomed some new contributors, and we are very pleased to include more new contributions for this edition too. We've even had to hold back several items until the next edition due to lack of space! We hope you enjoy reading their articles.

Finally, our thanks go to our advertisers. Without them we would not be able to continue to produce this newsletter. Please support them.

Jane and Robert Dixon, Editors

## Parish Council news

### Resilience and emergency planning

Normally emergencies affecting local communities are responded to by joint action from emergency services, county



council, and other responding agencies. In extreme conditions there is the possibility that they will be overwhelmed and not able to reach everyone immediately (as shown in the aftermath of recent winter storms). In such circumstances the initial response may have to come from local people.

The recent community survey on resilience and preparation for future emergencies indicated positive support from residents for a local plan that complements the plans of emergency services and other statutory organisations. Headline observations from the survey include residents seeking advice on improving their current preparedness for any future emergencies, acknowledgement of the many existing 'neighbourly' support relationships within the community, interest in having access to a 'safe centre' with heat, light and hot food and drinks facilities during any prolonged

event, and the need for protection of personal data in any subsequent planning actions.

Seeking to learn from recent storm experiences, and the community survey feedback, the Parish Council is developing a plan that will aim to help our community prepare for future emergencies and to guide local responses to any subsequent emergency incident whilst awaiting the assistance from emergency services. The plan is being developed in conjunction with the Northumberland County Council's Civil Contingencies Team.

### **Rennington North Farm street lighting**

It is noticeable to all that the lights have been switched on causing a new wave of complaint and concerns about light pollution and protection of the widely supported Rennington village 'dark skies' environment.

Street lighting featured in the developers plan for North Farm from the early stages in the planning application and approval process. The lighting plan was included in applications submitted during 2017. In a submission to the Planning Authority in January 2018, the Parish Council noted that 'this area currently enjoys dark skies and anything that affects this should be avoided. Low level lighting both in height, intensity and spread should be utilised'. This opinion was countered by the county highways authority advice that standard street lighting was in the interest of pedestrian safety. None of the other planning process statutory consultees raised objections to the street lighting plan. No objections were submitted by members of the public. The application was subsequently approved by the Planning Authority in August 2018.

Nevertheless, the Parish Council has continued to lobby both the Planning Authority and the developer in seeking review of the decision. Both parties have continued to argue that the planning process has been duly followed and that no material objections to lighting were received at any stage.

The new wave of complaints and concerns since the lights switch on have been directed to various heads of departments, including street lighting and planning, at NCC. A review of the situation is indicated, but no commitment beyond that. The Parish Council, in collaboration with our ward County Councillor, are continuing to press for retrospective actions to be taken in line with community-wide demands.

Robert Dixon, Chair, Rennington Parish Council

## Neighbourhood Development Plan - an update

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has, this month, announced that it is extending its funding for a further year for grants and technical support. This means that we can now start the process of engaging a planning consultant to help draft policies which will cover areas such as local amenities and community facilities, the environment, housing, transport, and the economy.

In addition to drafting planning policies we will also need to undertake some technical work with Locality (the agency that supports communities through this process) to carry out a development design code, housing needs survey and, if there is a need for additional housing, a survey to determine the best location(s) for the additional housing.

Thank you for your patience. Hopefully by the time the next R&R Community News is published we should have substantial progress to report.

Stephen Baggott, Chair, Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

## Public access defibrillators

### Why are defibrillators important

Did you know that there is a defibrillator in Rennington. It is in the green cabinet on the front wall of The Horse Shoes pub.

You may be aware, from coverage in the media, of high profile individuals who have collapsed due to sudden cardiac arrest, for example the professional footballers Christian Eriksen and Fabrice Muamba. Both were successfully resuscitated on the football pitch because of the presence of trained personnel and the immediate availability of a defibrillator.

It is estimated that up to 30,000 people in the UK may suffer sudden, out of hospital, cardiac arrest each year. Their chances of survival are markedly increased by the presence of two things; defibrillators, and having people close by with basic training in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

A cardiac arrest happens when the heart stops pumping blood properly around the body. This causes a rapid loss of consciousness as the brain is deprived of oxygen, the individual collapses and stops breathing.

The reason that immediate resuscitation is so important is the timescale. Within about 3 minutes of cardiac arrest the brain starts to become injured. Without restoration of the circulation by about nine minutes post arrest, severe and permanent brain injury occurs. After 10 minutes with no circulation the chances of survival are very low.

Basic CPR by manual chest compression restores sufficient circulation to the brain that the timescale for the onset of brain damage is much longer. Being able to use a defibrillator can restore the heart rhythm in a proportion of patients. This may buy sufficient time for a paramedic crew to reach the patient and transfer them to hospital.

Having a significant proportion of the population of Rennington trained in basic CPR would make everybody in the community safer. Will you consider coming along and being trained? Any generally fit adult can do CPR but you do need training for it to work effectively. Once trained you also need to refresh your skills regularly.

Although training was provided to a number of people when the defibrillator was first installed, that was some years ago. We are now planning to run some

training and refresher courses in the Village Hall. Instruction will be given by Elliot Smith, ex Merchant Navy, who lives in the village.

Rennington Parish Council has recently taken on responsibility for the future care and maintenance of our community Public Access Defibrillator (cPAD) and new arrangements are now in place for it to be regularly checked and maintained. This involves volunteers from the village acting as 'Guardians'. They are Dr Tim Walls (Lead), Elliot Smith and Derek Dowling.

Elliot Smith



### **Defibrillator and CPR Awareness Course**

**Date:** Monday, 23 May **Time:** 18.30 – 20.30

and

**Date:** Thursday, 26 May **Time:** 10:00 – 12:00

Venue:

**Rennington Village Hall**

Learn how to recognise a cardiac arrest, perform CPR and use a  
Public Access Defibrillator.

This is a demonstration and hands-on practical session.

Comfortable clothes recommended.

Ages 12 and over, a reasonable level of mobility required.

If in any doubt please contact the tutor beforehand.

Spaces available to book via tutor

Email: [RenningtonCPR@outlook.com](mailto:RenningtonCPR@outlook.com) or Tel: 01665 572670

Tutor: Elliot Smith British Heart Foundation & Red Cross trained



## AN AMAZING CUP OF COFFEE IS CLOSER THAN YOU THINK!

The Guru Coffee Co. is based in Embleton and has around 18 different and delicious Arabica coffee's on offer!

Roasted to order from raw green coffee beans here in Northumberland. We source coffee from ethical and sustainable farmers, that promote good working conditions, invest in education and housing and that use techniques that have a low environmental impact.



The Guru Coffee Co. is proudly a part of Produced in Northumberland.....



**You can order your delicious coffee online at [www.thegurucoffeeco.co.uk](http://www.thegurucoffeeco.co.uk)**

We can prepare your coffee to your perfect brewing preferences, whether whole bean, coarse ground, medium ground or fine!

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## Know your coffee - strength and roast

‘Coffee roast is the same as coffee strength, isn’t it? A dark/full roast coffee is stronger?’ This is a question we get asked on a regular basis. The simple answer to it is ‘No’.

We’ve all been in coffee shops, supermarkets, etc and seen coffees marked light roast, medium roast and dark/full roast (dark and full are the same, just a different term) and probably wondered what the difference is. Most people assume that a dark/full roast coffee is a stronger coffee than a light roast and can be put off by that. So what is the difference between coffee strength and roast. Hopefully this article will explain the differences between the two and encourage you to try different coffees and experience the very different qualities between them.

### Strength

The strength of a coffee is not determined by the roast. You can have a strong light roast coffee and a weak full roast coffee. Strength is all down to your, or your barista’s, actions.

Strong coffee is created during the brewing process and is quite simply the ratio of coffee grinds to water. The roast of the coffee has nothing to do with the strength but everything to do with the person behind the coffee machine. The more grinds you add to your water, the stronger your coffee will be.

So, if you have been put off buying a dark/full roast coffee as you think it’s stronger, don’t be. Read on and see how the various roasts differ.

### Roast

Generally speaking in the U.K. you are likely to find 3 main roasts of coffee; light, medium and dark/full. There are some combinations in between such as a light/medium and a medium/dark roast and you may see some roasts

called 'Espresso Roast'. This is NOT a roast but is a brewing process where the coffee is brewed under high pressure. The main aspects of coffee that are affected during roasting are flavour, acidity, taste, caffeine content and oiliness.

Let's take a look then at how the roasting process affects the flavour of the bean and, ultimately, your final cup of coffee.

### Light Roast

As its name suggests it is a coffee bean that is lightly roasted, exposed to lower temperatures and less roasting time. A lighter roast coffee is more complex and will retain more natural moisture, a thinner body and more fruity, citric acidic notes. It also contains a higher level of caffeine due to the lighter roasting process. With a light roast you will get more of the bean flavour unbiased from extended roasting. Some people liken the taste of a lightly roasted bean to that of toasted grain. A lighter roasted bean will be paler in colour and appear less cracked.

Our Mystical Maya is a great example of a lighter roasted bean with notes of floral and citrus aromas and slightly nutty chocolate flavours. The acidity is bright and pleasant, and the body is butter like maple syrupy heaven!

### Medium Roast

Medium roast coffee is often the first entry choice for many to the specialty coffee world. Medium roasted beans take on more of the flavour from the roasting process in addition to retaining its original taste giving drinkers a delightful balance of the bean's origin flavours and a roasted flavour without it being acidic or bitter. Medium roasts frequently have a tinge of sweetness to them with some people identifying flavours such as vanilla, butterscotch and caramel. This is paired with a lingering hint of the flavour of origin with

nutty and chocolate tones. All this perfect balancing of flavours makes a medium roast coffee one of the most popular types of coffee. A medium roast bean will naturally be darker and a more brownish colour than a light roast, with more signs of cracking on the bean. Overall, a medium roast coffee allows you to protect much of the bean flavour while also offering a nice balance with the roast flavour. For many this isn't a compromise, but rather the best of both worlds.

Our Matagalpa Gold, Guiding Light, Teachers Temple and Gourmet Guru are all fantastic examples of a medium roast coffee.

### Dark/Full Roast

Dark/Full roast beans are easy to identify. They will have a bold deep aroma and flavour and are much darker in colour compared to light and medium roasts. The beans are oilier and have a distinctive sheen to them. This is due to the bean having been cracked twice during roasting, which exposes these natural oils, contributing to the more earthy taste and a heavily toasted smell. Sometimes a dark roast will have almost a burnt flavour. In any other context the term 'burnt' would normally be negative, but millions of coffee lovers seek this in their coffee because it adds a deep flavoursome quality to their coffee experience. As dark/full roasts have a more intense flavour than the lighter roasts, they are commonly used for espresso. Their use in brewing espresso produces a bold, almost velvety flavour, that most coffee lovers seek in their espresso shot. Also a lighter roast will simply not stand up in a steamed milk drink as the bold, dark roast does.

If you are looking at trying a dark/full roast coffee, head over to our website and look at the Old Wisdom, Kaldi's Kaffa, Api Biru, Morning Mantra and our new Queen Ketiara varieties.

All our coffees (with the exception of Mountain Elixir) are single origin coffees and are all 100% Arabica beans. Our Mountain Elixir is a blend of two 100% Arabica beans from Papua New Guinea and Brazil giving a fantastically smooth medium/dark roast coffee.

If you aren't sure which coffee to try, then we recommend our 70g taster packs so you can try a few origins before deciding on your favourite. We also offer FREE local delivery to addresses in the Rennington Parish Council area.

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Ian Woods



*The*  
**QUEEN'S  
PLATINUM JUBILEE**  
*Celebrations*

Rennington Village Hall Committee  
*and*  
Rock Cricket Club  
Invite Neighbours and Residents  
Old and New to join them on  
Sunday 5th June 2022 to  
Celebrate the Jubilee

**12 Noon in the Village Hall**

Everyone is invited to share food, friendship and fun in the form of a pooled lunch, bring your favourite sandwiches, pies, quiches, cakes etc. to share.

A glass of Fizz, Teas & Coffees provided by the committee.

**2 o'clock at Rock Cricket Ground**

Everyone is invited to the Rock Jubilee Cricket Match with a Bar and Barbecue. Barbecue packs can be purchased on the day.

# Rennington Village Hall



## What's On

### Pilates

Wednesdays 10.30-11.30am

### Zumba

Wednesdays 11.30am - 12.30pm

### Table tennis

Tuesdays 7-8pm

### Art club

Last Wednesdays monthly 1.30 pm.

### Carpet bowls

Wednesdays 7pm September - April

### Whisky tasting club

3<sup>rd</sup> MONDAYS 7.30pm

### Singing group

Thursdays 4pm - 5.30pm

### Book club


1<sup>st</sup> Thursdays 7pm

### Film Nights

Contact us for further information.

Come along and meet people. Have fun and try something new.

Contact: [renningtonvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:renningtonvillagehall@gmail.com)



NEARLY NEW SALE

In aid of Ukrainian refugees and All Saints church,  
Rennington

Saturday 14th May  
10-12noon

Rennington Village Hall  
(Outside if fine)

Donations gratefully received  
Tel: 01665 577048



## County Councillor report

### Council tax energy rebate

As part of the governments initiative to help households with rising energy costs, they have announced a one-off £150 energy rebate for eligible households in 2022.

You will be eligible to receive £150 energy rebate if:

- Your property is in Council Tax band A to D (or band E where there is a disabled band reduction)
- You are liable to pay Council Tax
- The property is your sole and main residence on 01 April 2022
- If you receive council tax support you are still eligible for the £150 payment

You will not be eligible if:

- Your property is a second home
- Your property is empty on 01 April 2022
- You are in Council Tax bands E to H (some band E properties are eligible where there is a disabled band reduction)

If you pay council tax by direct debit, this information will be used to pay £150 direct into your bank account. Payments will be made by May 2022.

Only one payment of £150 can be paid per property. Where the Council Tax is paid by direct debit the £150 will be paid to the account that is used to pay the Council Tax. Where the Council Tax is not paid by direct debit, customers will need to decide who will apply. Payment will be made to whoever applies for their property, as long as the applicant is one of the parties liable for paying Council Tax. If you are not eligible but need help, there is a discretionary fund that we may be able to use to enable those living in properties in band E-H to receive help.

## **Become the Heartbeat of your NHS**

If you're passionate about the NHS, then becoming a member of Northumbria Healthcare will give you the opportunity to share your thoughts and ideas about the way the trust deliver care to over half a million people across Northumberland and North Tyneside. Northumbria Healthcare has twice been rated outstanding by the CQC and is at the forefront of pioneering changes in the NHS, so it's a great time to join. Membership is open to anybody aged 12 and over and you can be involved as much or as little as you like. As a member you will be informed about trust work, vote for and be able to stand as a governor as well as benefit from NHS discounts in shops and online at [www.healthservicediscounts.com](http://www.healthservicediscounts.com) . It is free to become a member and you can opt out at any time. If you would like to join you can sign up online at <https://www.northumbria.nhs.uk/get-involved/join-our-our-foundation-trust/become-a-member/>

## **Thriving together, tackling inequalities in Northumberland**

Key stakeholders and senior leaders from the County Council, the NHS, voluntary and private sector including businesses came together for Northumberland's first system wide Inequalities Summit.

The Covid-19 pandemic has shown how much worse off some groups of individuals and communities are than others. Life expectancy at birth for men in Northumberland is 79.3yrs and for women is 82.9yrs, which is a 3.6yr difference. This gap widens depending on where you live in Northumberland. The Summit saw guest speakers sharing data and best practice and identifying those most disproportionately impacted by Covid.

Northumberland's Director of Public Health, Liz Morgan, said: "The conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age are the most important factors in determining good health. By bringing inequalities into sharp focus today we can work together, with a collective drive, to address some of these issues and provide a fairer future for our residents."

The Summit is the first of a series of conversations on inequalities and equity in Northumberland bringing together a range of people from different organisations responsible for helping reduce these variations. Leader of Northumberland County Council, Glen Sanderson, said “The link between health, social and economic factors is clear. By bringing key stakeholders together, we can reflect on everyone’s contribution to develop a Northumberland wide approach. We are committed to tackling inequalities and the summit was an important element of that commitment. Our aim is to establish key goals for an Inequalities Plan that can be delivered at scale over the coming years to level off and start to reduce the gap in healthy life expectancy.”

Robin Hudson, Medical Director of NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group, said: “By coming together today, it has given us the opportunity to explore how we can best work together. There are already lots of great things happening across the county, but there is always more we can do to improve the health of our residents and patients. We recognise too, the impact the pandemic has had on our communities. It is important we understand and react to these new challenges and collaboration will be key in this”.

### **Firefighters from Northumberland reach Poland**



Four firefighters from Northumberland Fire and Rescue have handed over two fire engines to help Ukrainian emergency services. The team was part of a larger convoy made up of 22 vehicles carrying over 5000 items of life saving kit to support

firefighters in the Ukraine. The convoy left Kent on 19th March and drove through France, Belgium and the Netherlands before arriving in Germany

where they rested for the evening. The team then drove through Germany before crossing into Poland where the Polish Fire Service hosted them. Area Manager, Rob Clow said: “The commitment of the four members of our staff to drive so far to help our Ukrainian colleagues is absolutely magnificent. To be part of such a project is something they should be very proud of and something they will be able to reflect back on for many years to come. The true testimony to the Service is that over 30 members of staff volunteered to drive the appliances.”

Wendy Pattison, County Councillor  
[wendy.pattison@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:wendy.pattison@northumberland.gov.uk)

## Bird watching notes, early summer 2022

It is a time of transition in the avian world. Some of the overwintering migrants, such as the pale bellied brent geese at Holy Island, have already departed to the continent at the start of their northerly migration to breeding grounds in Svalbard. Whooper swans and pink footed geese are disappearing towards Iceland and it will not be long before the migratory ducks, such as the teal and wigeon, and the waders will depart northwards. In their place the summer breeders arrive from their wintering grounds in southern Europe and North Africa.

One group are the warblers. Little birds, no bigger than a blue tit, with relatively dull plumage but beautiful song. The first to arrive are usually the chiff chaffs, which we heard for the first time this year around the third week in March. They can be heard in deciduous woodland with their characteristic two



barred song ‘chiff/chaff’, repeated over and over again. They are hard to see because they flit around inside trees and bushes, flicking their tails. They have a slightly dumpy appearance and their plumage is a muted greenish brown



overall, lighter below than above with a pale yellow stripe through the eye. They are most easily seen before the trees get into full leaf.

They are commonly confused with the willow warbler, which has a similar appearance but with a more prominent yellow eye stripe. The

willow warbler's legs are pink, while the chiff chaff has dark legs. The main distinguishing feature however is the song. The willow warbler's song is quite different, a descending cadence of beautiful notes with slightly mournful qualities.

Other commonly seen warblers are the blackcaps. They are greyish in colour, particularly around the throat and collar. The males have a distinctive black cap while females have a more brownish one.

Like most of the warblers they eat insects and berries. Some are resident throughout the



year but there is an influx of breeding birds in April and May. They have a very attractive fluting song and are commonly found in woodland as well as in parks and gardens.



Whitethroats are another warbler species that appear here in early summer to breed. They are a little bigger than other warblers, about the size of a great tit. The wings are brownish, they are a buff colour underneath and have quite a long tail but the characteristic features are the

grey head and the eponymous white throat.

If you go to a wetland area with reed beds or scrubby grass you are likely to come across either sedge, or reed warblers. Reed warblers typically live lower down in reed beds and have a raucous song which may go on for quite prolonged periods. Sedge warblers live more in rough grassland and are often seen clinging to the stems of larger grasses. Their song is more scratchy and their most characteristic feature is the prominent white stripe above the eye.



The spring migration has started, many of the warblers are here already, although some have been held up in their journey northwards by the recent strong, cold, northerly winds. They will shortly be joined by the swallows and martins, then finally the swifts. By then hopefully summer will be here!

Good health to all.

Tim Walls (With thanks to Peter Fawcett for some of the photographs)

## Howick Coastguard Rescue Team

As Easter passes and the warmer longer days are upon us, we see an increase in day visitors and holidaymakers to our beautiful county. Obviously, our fantastic beaches and coastal towns and villages are a major draw to visitors, which in turn puts an increased pressure on our emergency services with the increase of the number of people in the area. We took an opportunity to speak to Ian Woods,



Station Officer at Howick Coastguard Rescue Team, just as the team are gearing up for their busy summer period.

### **Can you tell us a bit about Howick Coastguard Rescue Team**

Yes, certainly. Howick Coastguard Rescue Team are located just on the east side of Craster Tower. We are 1 of 7 Coastguard teams in Northumberland that cover over 80 miles of our coastline from Berwick to Seaton Sluice, and 1 of the 350 Coastguard Rescue Teams around the U.K. We are part of Her Majesty's Coastguard Rescue Service, which in turn is part of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, and 1 of the 4 emergency services you can request when you dial 999 (Fire, Police, Ambulance, Coastguard).

We are on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. We have a team of 13 volunteers which consists of a Station Officer, a Deputy Station Officer and 11 Coastguard Rescue Officers. All our volunteers live around the area and must be able to respond immediately on being paged by our Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre at Bridlington (Humber Coastguard). 3 of our volunteers currently live in the Rennington Parish Council area (1 in Rennington, 1 in Embleton Mill and 1 in Rock).

### **You say you are all volunteers, does this mean you have full time jobs alongside your Coastguard work**

Yes, our volunteers come from all walks of life. I'm a retired firefighter who now runs my own business and helps my wife with her business, but we also have a retired police officer, a youth health worker, retired RAF and Royal Navy personnel, 3 serving North East Ambulance Service staff (including two qualified paramedics), a serving Army officer, a nurse, an operations manager and a builder. Quite a varied mix of occupations but all of them bring essential skills to our team.

### **What is the training like to become a Coastguard Rescue Officer**

The training is delivered in 3 stages covering different skills. All of these must be passed before a new member is allowed to respond to an incident. The

training is designed to teach the necessary basic skills to the new entrant. The first session lasts a week and covers foundation skills (such as map reading, navigation, communications, weather and tides, helicopter operations, use of Coastguard Rescue equipment, safety, etc.). The second session is then a 2 day water rescue course, which is conducted in the river, sea and marina, using a variety of rescue techniques. The final section is the Coastguard Emergency Responder Casualty Care course which is a trauma care course specifically designed for the type of incidents Coastguard Rescue Officers around the U.K. are likely to encounter. Once these training course have been successfully passed the recruit can join their team and their skills are further developed with their new team on station and, under supervision, at incidents.

The training doesn't stop there though! Over the next 12 months the new recruit will be constantly assessed and are also required to attend a Lost and Missing Persons Search course, which teaches them the skills to be part of a search team, and a Time Expired Pyrotechnics course, which teaches the skills to deal with marine pyrotechnics that may be found abandoned, and also unexploded ordnance which is quite regularly found along the Northumberland coast as remnants of WW2.

After around 12 months the new recruit is assessed by a Senior Coastal Operations Officer to confirm they have met the required standard. If they pass this, they are then classed as a qualified Coastguard Rescue Officer.

### **How often do you get called out**

The summer months, from Easter until the end of September are by far our busiest months. This is simply down to the fact that more people head to the coast, and we have a large increase in the number of visitors and holidaymakers to the area. More people simply equates to an increased risk of accidents. During the summer holidays it's not unusual to be called out to 2 or 3 incidents a day.

Last year we attended 68 incidents with 25 of these falling between 9<sup>th</sup> July and 25<sup>th</sup> September. This was a 40% increase in calls on 2020 figures. Most incidents happen between 0700 and 1900 when the coast is at its busiest, but we also do get called out during the night. Our families love it when the pager goes off at 3 in the morning!

### **How do you get called out**

We have a great alerting and tasking system that is used by HM Coastguard. The process works like this:

- The 999 call goes through to our Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) who take all the details of the incident (location, what's happened, types of injuries, how many people, contact details, etc.)
- The MRCC then decide how many teams are needed and which teams are the closest
- Every member of the team on call then receives a 'page' through their mobile phone giving us all the details of the incident
- We then respond by sending a code back through our phone to tell the MRCC that we are attending so they know instantly which team members are on their way to the station to collect the Coastguard Rescue vehicle and which team members are going direct to the incident.

This whole process takes, on average, 2 to 3 minutes to complete from the time the 999 line rings in the MRCC. A rapid response!

### **What type of incidents do you attend**

At Howick the largest proportion of our calls are to medical/trauma incidents. This can be people, for example, slipping or falling on rocks or off dunes, resulting in fractures and back injuries. A common injury is a fractured leg or hip due to dogs running into people on the beach! Also people may have medical conditions and are taken ill on the coast. We can deal with these too. We carry a comprehensive trauma care kit and are soon to receive a new state of the art defibrillator. Our team training consists of a lot of trauma scenarios

to ensure our skills are kept at a high level to deal with this type of incident but it's also very beneficial having 2 qualified paramedics on our team.

We couldn't list every type of incident we attend (including the weird and wonderful!) but some examples would be tidal cut offs, unexploded ordnance and marine pyrotechnics, water rescue, mud rescue, cliff rescue, washed up marine mammals, missing persons searches, pollution incidents and setting up emergency helicopter landing sites for our Coastguard Rescue helicopters. The list is pretty much endless but, generally, any type of incident on the coast you can expect HM Coastguard to respond to it.

HM Coastguard are responsible for handling and co-ordinating all maritime search and rescue operations along the U.K. coast and out at sea. To help us with this we can call on our own Coastguard Rescue helicopters (they are unmistakable in their red and white livery) and we can also task RNLI lifeboats to assist with incidents out at sea or to help us with casualty evacuation from the shore. A common misconception is that the Coastguard operate the lifeboats, we don't. These are operated by the very skilled crews from the RNLI and not by the Coastguard and are a valuable asset we can call on. We also work closely with the Police, Fire Service and Ambulance Service.

### **What's the best and worst bit of being a Coastguard Rescue Officer**

The best bit is difficult as there are so many! On our team we have a great bond with each other, very much a second family, and as well as working together we also socialise together. The sense of camaraderie and teamwork is fantastic.

A good outcome from an incident is also a great feeling. Knowing that when somebody has been in difficulty or injured and we've been able to make a positive difference to them is what we all joined the service to do.

The worst bit is easy, any incident that doesn't have a good outcome, which feels even worse if it involves children. Unfortunately, it is all part of the job we do but that never makes it any easier. The team bond mentioned above is

a great help in this situation as we all look out for one another and are there to support one another. We also have a great support network within HM Coastguard.

### **How do your families deal with the work you do**

Quite simply we couldn't do it without the support of our family. There has been many a family event, Christmas dinner, plans for the day, etc. interrupted by the sound of the pager. Our families all understand that when that pager goes then it is somebody in need of help and totally understand that we have to drop everything and respond. The hard bit for them is they never know how long we will be out for. It could be an hour on some of the quicker jobs, it could be days on some of the long missing person searches we do. Our families are also very much part of the team and join us on social events on a regular basis.

### **What advice would you give anyone visiting the beautiful Northumberland coastline this year**

There's lots of advice we can give. There are so many dangers, both obvious and hidden, along the coast and, even though we give regular safety talks and advice, accidents can and still do happen. Some of the key bits of advice would be:

- Be prepared for any weather along the coast. The weather can change rapidly from a beautiful sunny day to a wet and cold day with strong winds. When the sea fret comes in the temperatures also drop rapidly. Check the forecast before you leave
- Ensure you have adequate clothing for the weather and suitable footwear. A common injury is slipping on rocks. Flip flops are not suitable for walking on wet rock!
- Keep away from cliff edges. A lot of cliff edges can become unstable without many obvious clues and can give way suddenly

- Keep dogs on leads on coastal paths and near cliffs. A common incident for teams all around the U.K. is dogs falling off paths and cliffs and sustaining very serious and sometimes fatal injuries
- Check tide times. It seems an obvious thing to do but so many people have no idea what the tide times are when they are on the coast. Contrary to popular belief, the tides don't flood east to west and ebb west to east, they flood north to south and ebb south to north. This creates very strong currents that can pull you some distance away from the shore
- Never try and outrun the tide, you won't do it! We get several calls every year to the causeway at Holy Island and to people who have ventured out onto rocks and sandbars only to find that the tide has come in behind them and cut them off from the land
- Seek local advice on safe areas to swim and carry out water sports. We have several areas that are unsafe for both, with strong undercurrents and rip tides
- Never take inflatables into the sea. These are designed for swimming pools, not the North Sea! Add to that an offshore wind and the pull of the tides and you can be carried a long way offshore before you realise it
- Be aware of cold-water shock. The North Sea rarely gets any warmer than 14°C and can get as low as 6°C. Cold water shock (caused by entering cold water quickly or unexpectedly) causes the body to pull blood to the core of the body to protect the vital organs, meaning less blood flow to the arms and legs, reducing, or eliminating, your ability to swim to safety.

#### **Have you any final words you would like to add**

Yes, we cannot emphasise enough that if you think that somebody may be in difficulty or injured on the coast, you find a strange object or you have concerns about anything along the coastline **ALWAYS call the Coastguard on 999**. We would much rather turn up and find all is OK than be called too late and not be able to help.

We also do regular talks on the work of the Coastguard and coastal safety and if anybody would like to arrange a visit, we would be more than happy to do so. We can hold these at our station or at your venue. To organise a visit or talk I can be contacted on 07880 850419, or you can message us through our Facebook page which is Howick Coastguard Rescue Team.



*Thank you for your time Ian. We hope everyone enjoys a safe summer on the Northumberland coast. Please pass on our thanks to your team for the service and commitment they give to make Northumberland a safer place.*

The Editors



## Scarecrows are BACK!

**After an absence  
of two years**

Rennington Village Hall Committee  
are delighted to announce the return  
of the Scarecrow Festival  
August Bank Holiday Weekend.

27th, 28th & 29th August 2022

Villagers are invited to make  
a Scarecrow to display in their  
gardens for visitors to enjoy  
over the 3 days.

Attractions:  
Scarecrow Trail Quiz,  
Tombola, Lucky Dip, Sausage Sizzle,  
Teas, Coffees, Sandwiches  
and Cakes in the Village Hall.

## Blown

*'My mind is blowing' (Ukrainian refugee, BBC Radio 4, March 5<sup>th</sup> 2022)*

A blown mind searches in the rubble  
of a wrecked life. In the chilly hours  
and minutes of uncertainty, she finds  
a single word. In wakeful hours  
it chases through burnt houses,  
strange bunting hanging  
from shattered windows.

A body, uncollected, lies wrapped warmly  
at the roadside.

Before, we couldn't catch the wind.  
The old trees, upended, litter the hills,  
their roots shredded like spaghetti,  
dangling across ancient lanes  
where branches clutch empty air.

But there, an old man bends at the shoreline.  
At an oblique angle he holds his camera.  
I stop, curious. He tells me he's  
*'trying to catch a wave as it breaks.'*

There are no answers in the wind,  
and on the shore the wave falls.  
The camera and the single word  
catch something unspeakable.

*After 'Blowin' in the Wind' (Bob Dylan 1962) and 'In the chilly hours and minutes'  
(Donovan (1965)*

## Useful Links

[www.northumberlandparishes.uk/rennington](http://www.northumberlandparishes.uk/rennington)

[www.fineandcountry.com](http://www.fineandcountry.com)

[www.thegurucoffee.co.uk](http://www.thegurucoffee.co.uk)

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*February ended with the Russian invasion of Ukraine (it's only an exercise he said), leaving millions homeless, seeking refuge alongside revenge. In the months preceding, in our own country, four violent storms in quick succession, have left the landscape transformed, compared by some to the scenes of the Great War captured by artists. On a beautiful day at Beadnell, Northumberland, the determined sea has calmed itself. We seek reassurance in the gentle breaking of white waves. I marvel too at the mind's capacity, amid suffering, to locate a world of meaning in a single word.*

Sue Elliot

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