

FREEZE FOR COUNCIL TAX PRECEPT

A DECISION has been made by Bishop Auckland town councillors not to increase council tax this year.

The Council Tax precept was frozen at £52.10 per year for an average Band D property for the second consecutive year when members met for their first full council meeting of the year last month.

Chair of the Finance Committee, Cllr David Wilson, said: "The last two years have brought with them some of the most difficult times for our town, and moving into 2022 we are hoping that some of these challenges ease."

"We hope that this Council Tax freeze will help to reduce some stress and financial burden for our residents."

Covid-19 has brought many challenges, and has hindered much loved town council events and activities, however despite the ongoing pandemic, the festive programme was still able to go ahead.

The opening of the new office base for the council on Kingsway has been delayed, but works are almost complete.

Mayor of Bishop Auckland,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



SUNDAY 24TH APRIL CHEF APPEARANCES



JEAN-CHRISTOPHE NOVELLI
MICHELIN STAR AWARD WINNING
CHEF, AUTHOR + TV CHEF



CHIGS PARMAR
GBBO CONTESTANT



MIKE BARTLEY
MASTERCHEF CONTESTANT

FOOD FESTIVAL STARS ANNOUNCED

BISHOP AUCKLAND Food Festival has announced its first line up of celebrity chefs, as organisers prepare to welcome foodies back to Bishop Auckland this

spring on Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 April.

Michelin star chef Jean-Christophe Novelli will be joined by Chigs Parmar, who won over audiences and demon-

strated his passion for food on Channel 4's recent series of *Great British Bake Off*.

Also featuring will be local favourite Mike Bartley from Bishop Auckland,

who appeared on *Masterchef* 2021.

All three celebrity chefs will be enticing visitors with their mouth-watering food demonstrations on Sunday 24 April.



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Blind Life in Durham organises tailor-made activities for people with sight loss.

CHARITY SEEKS VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

BLIND LIFE in Durham arrange several activities for people with sight loss to make new friends, socialise, re-gain confidence and have camaraderie with others.

They organise a variety of tailor-made sports for disabled people, such as New Age Kurling, New Age Bowls and Boccia, as well as holding social meetings, book clubs and days out.

The venues they use are at different places within County Durham.

They require volunteers to enable them to continue to provide these activities.

Spokesperson for the charity, Jo Ede said: "If you lose your sight, getting around becomes so much more difficult.

"Assuming that buses can be accessed, managing to stop the correct one is an additional mountain to climb.

"However, for the activities to benefit people who may otherwise suffer loneliness and depression, they need to be able to reach the venues we use and this is where you come in.

"If you can help by transporting people, this would greatly help them and us. We will reimburse

you 40p per mile.

"You would also be welcome to join in any of the activities yourself and enjoy the benefits too.

For this position, what you would get out of it is making new friends, induction and blind awareness training, learning new skills, gain new insights and most importantly, have some fun along the way."

If you would like to help the charity, which was awarded the County Durham Volunteering Kitemark in 2018, to provide this valuable service, or just have an informal chat, call 01388 763501 or email: blindlifeindurham@gmail.com.

You can also find out more about the charity on their website at blindlifeindurham.org.uk.

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The Foresters Arms, Coundon, by J G Miller.

DEBUT GALLERY EXHIBITION FOR GAZ

LOCAL ARTIST, J G Miller, also known as 'Gaz' has been invited to exhibit and sell his original paintings, for the first time, at the Bob Abley Gallery in Spennymoor Town Hall.

Born in Coundon in 1969, Gaz grew up and lived among the village back streets where his time as a young lad was spent playing football or sitting on the step of the local post office close to his home, sketching the world as he saw it.

This incredibly talented musician and artist's work provides a stunning example of how he has captured the world, taking the viewer on a nostalgic journey, showing you how people lived, worked and played in those days.

Gaz has developed a significant following of admirers and collectors within the art world.

However, his original paintings have never previously been on public sale, with only prints hav-

ing ever been available.

Now the public can purchase some of his original iconic pieces, as well as newly released work, at the Spennymoor gallery, which includes the work of many other internationally renowned artists such as Norman Cornish and twins Chris and Steve Rocks.

The Bob Abley Art Gallery is open seven days a week, from 9am until 4pm with free entry and parking.



PCC, Joy Allen with the newly appointed safety champions.

YOUR PCC MONTHLY UPDATE

AFTER JUST six months in the role, I have now appointed three new safety champions to my team to strengthen the voice of victims of crime.

The new recruits, who comprise an independent Domestic Abuse Champion, an Anti-social Behaviour Champion and a Victims Champion, will work alongside myself to ensure planning, policy and commissioning decisions reflect the needs and views of victims of crime.

The new recruits, who took up their posts early January, will also ensure local victims of crime have the opportunity to engage on issues or concerns that impact them.

They will be responsible for ensuring the Commissioner has a greater depth of understanding on victims' experiences.

This will help me prioritise resources and interventions as part of my Police and Crime Plan.

I have listened very carefully to local people and the areas they would like to see improved which has driven the creation of these new roles.

Our new champions will independently scrutinise our current provision and performance and will ensure we work much more closely with the people our services benefit, making any change real and tangible.

Their appointment will also boost the way in which I hold the force to account as I will ensure that the victims' voices are heard at the highest level.

Everything I do as Commissioner has to make

the lives of local people – especially victims of crime and anti-social behaviour – better and safer. I can only do that by listening to and involving the people who need and benefit from that help.

The Victims' Commissioner for England & Wales, Dame Vera Baird, said: "As Victims' Commissioner, I have been encouraging all PCCs to appoint local Victims' Champions – dedicated professionals committed to deepening the understanding of victim needs and ensuring that the victim's voice is heard in all local policy making and decisions.

"It's great to see that this vision is set to become a reality in Durham. I look forward to engaging with these champions once in post and I hope this will be a model for PCCs across England and Wales to emulate."

The roles will provide an independent picture of the victims' experience in each of the three thematic areas and ensure the Commissioner's office complies with the Victims of Crime Practice.

Alongside ensuring that victims' issues are captured in the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan, the new recruits will deliver personal annual work plans and annual reports which set out key achievements and outcomes.

They will also be responsible for ensuring victims' voices are contributing to the commissioning of support services and encourage multi-agency action to address the issues raised by victims.



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HELP SET AAP PRIORITIES LOCAL AUTHOR LAUNCHES DEBUT NOVEL

BISHOP AUCKLAND and Shildon Area Action Partnership (AAP) wants you to have your say on the community priorities for your AAP area for 2022 / 2023 by getting involved in the public consultation.

AAPs, along with money from councillors' budgets, have allocated £12.4 million, and have helped bring £12.2 million of matched investment to deliver 2,833 local projects between April 2019 and March 2021.

In 2020-21, AAPs worked towards the common priority of community recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic.

The consultation is asking people to respond to whether you have seen change where you live, work, go to school or volunteer and for your thoughts on which priorities your Area Action Partnerships should tackle and invest in across the next financial year.

AAPs also have addi-

tional funding to invest in towns and villages. Your feedback will help us understand what, if anything, will make life in your town or village better

Following the consultation, AAPs will report the findings of the consultation and your feedback will help us decide which priority themes your AAP will concentrate its efforts on for the coming year.

Residents, businesses and communities can have their say until 5pm on 11 March.

To have your say, please visit durham.gov.uk/consultation.

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LOCAL AUTHOR, Graham Temby, a retired primary school teacher, has published his debut novel, *Conflict*, aimed at readers from upper primary to lower secondary levels and giving a fresh perspective on a pivotal moment in Britain's history.

"We've all heard of 1066 and the Battle of Hastings, but have you ever imagined what it would have been like to fight in it?" asks Graham.

"*Conflict* is a historical novel which gives an account of the Norman Conquest from someone who was on the losing side," he explains.

The narrator of the story, John, is now an elderly man, looking back on his time as a young Saxon boy sent to fight against the invading Normans.

His recollections create an interesting, exciting and at times heart-breaking tale of the Battle of Hastings, told from the point of view of a child



Conflict is available now on Amazon or to order from your local bookshop.

thrust into a conflict he didn't ask for or even understand.

Expecting adventure, John initially heads to Stamford Bridge with his father to fight against the invading army of the Norwegian king, Harald Hardrada.

This battle against Scandinavian invaders is thought to have heralded the end of the Viking Age but was soon overshadowed by the Battle of Hastings just a few

weeks later.

Hot on the heels of their victory against the Vikings, John and his father join the armies marching south in a bid to see off yet more invaders, this time from France.

However, this journey ends in tragedy for the pair, forcing John to leave behind his childhood and become the head of his household.

The book is available on Amazon, priced at £8.50 for the paperback version, £1.99 on Kindle and can also be ordered from your local bookshop.

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St Peter's Church is where Stan Laurel was baptised in 1891. Photo: Christine Percival.

CALL TO HELP WITH CHURCH CLEAN UP

THE BLUEBELL Project at St Peter's Church on Princes Street is appealing to the local community to help clean the church hall and church, which has been left in a state of vandalism and neglect for several years.

The Grade II listed building is the baptismal place of Stan Laurel, whose father, Arthur J Jefferson

was the manager of the Eden Theatre in 1891.

Composer, Edward Elgar, who was good friends with the organist at St Peter's, dedicated a piece called *The Music Makers* to the church.

A spokesperson for the Bluebell Project said: "If anyone has some spare time and would like to be involved, please come

along to St Peter's Church on either Wednesday 16 or Saturday 19 February from 10am until 5pm.

"Please wear suitable clothing, shoes and gloves. Refreshments will be available."

For further information about the project, email thebluebellprojectcic@gmail.com or visit their facebook page.

ST CUTHBERT'S HALF TERM EVENTS

ST CUTHBERT'S Church at Low Etherley is holding two free February half term events.

The first, on Tuesday 22 February is a visit to Hamsterley Forest.

Taking place from 9.15am until 3pm, the visit will use a number of nature trails in the forest and the "Gruffalo" sculpture trail to provide adventure play activities for everyone who attends. A free packed lunch will be provided.

There is a large play area for children in the forest. There will be Messy Church activities based upon the sustainability of the planet.

This adventure day is open to all families and children of the parishes of Etherley and Toft Hill, Witton le Wear, Ham-

sterley, Witton Park and Escomb.

Be aware there is a refundable car parking charge of £6 per day.

The second event, on Thursday 24 February, will be a family activity day at Bright Woods Forest School near Barnard Castle.

Transport will be by coach from the church, departing at 9.15am and arriving back at 3.15pm.

Activities will include den building, mud kitchen, water channeling, craft activities concluding with campfire.

Tea, coffee and lunch will be provided and all activities are free.

To book, contact Barrie Kirton on 07798 764549, Elizabeth Jude on 07929 718894 or Sheila Mulgrew on 07977 850949.

COUNCIL TAX PRECEPT FREEZE

FROM PAGE 1

land Cllr Katie Eliot said: "Over the last two years people have faced very challenging times, so we are pleased that we are in the fortunate position of not having to increase the financial burden on residents by freezing Council Tax for this year, but acknowledge that this might not be the case next year.

"In the meantime we

are looking forward to life getting back to some normality, and getting council activities and events back in the town."

The meeting recorded that Bishop Auckland Town Council's precept for the forthcoming financial year will be £222,685, or the equivalent of £52.10 for a band D property.

The Council Tax for Bishop Auckland Town Council is collected by Durham County Council.

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Notice of Designation of an area for Selective Licensing

This notice is published in accordance with Section 80 to 84 of the Housing Act 2004 and Regulation 9 of the Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation and Other Houses (Miscellaneous Provisions)(England) Regulations 2006

The County Council of Durham Designations of Areas for Selective Licensing 2021

The County Council of Durham in exercise of their powers under section 80 of the Housing Act 2004 ("the Act") HEREBY GIVES NOTICE that it designates for selective licensing the areas described in paragraph 4.

CITATION, COMMENCEMENT AND DURATION

1. This designation may be cited as the County Council of Durham Designations of Areas for Selective Licensing 2021.
2. The designations were approved by the Cabinet for The County Council of Durham on 16 September 2020 and requires confirmation by the Secretary of State, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
3. The Secretary of State confirmed on 30th November 2021 that the designations shall come into force on 1st April 2022 and shall cease to have effect five years after such date, namely 31st March 2027, or earlier if the Council revokes the scheme under Section 84 of the Act.

DESIGNATION AND AREA

4. The designations shall apply to the following Lower Super Output Areas of the County Council of Durham and as shown shaded on the map attached to this notice at Annex A.

Designation One

Chester Central 2	Dawdon South 2	Shildon West	Consett South	Haswell
Cockton Hill East	Consett West	Horden South	Cockton Hill North	Havannah South
West Comforth	Newfield	Leadgate North	Stanley Crook	Roddymoor
Leadgate Central	Tow Law Rural	Henknowle North	Kelloe	Hunwick
Waterhouses	Tow Law Central	Blackhall Rocks North	South Hetton East	

Designation Two

Catchgate North	Ferryhill Dean Bank South	Murton Central	Sunnybrow	Passfield North
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Designation Three

Moorside West	Eden Hill North	Woodham Village South West	Annfield Plain	Acre Rigg North
West North	Stanley Hall North	Acre Rigg South	West Central	Stanley Hall West
Eden Hill South	West South	Craghead North	Eden Hill Central	Middridge South
Pelton North	Dene House Central	Thickley	Pelton Fell	Dene House East
Shildon East	Chester West 2	Blackhall Colliery North	Woodhouse Close South	Murton Moor & South Hetton
Blackhall Rocks South	Low Spennymoor	Dalton le Dale	Passfield East	Middlestone Moor
Dawdon South 1	Shotton East	Willington Central	Seaham Harbour South	Shotton Colliery Central
Crook East	Easington Colliery South	Wingate West	Esh Winning	Horden North
Wheatley Hill South	Ushaw Moor East	Horden West	Trimdon South	Bearpark
Howlatch East				

Designation Four

New Kyo	Blackhall Colliery South	Ferryhill South & Station	South Moor North	Wheatley Hill North
Ferryhill Dean Bank North	South Moor Central	Station Town	Spennymoor Central	South Moor South
Deaf Hill	Coundon South	Grange Villa	Sunnydale	Coundon Grange
Easington Colliery North	New Shildon	Eldon	Easington Colliery Central	Henknowle South
Toronto	Horden Central	West Auckland East	Crook Central 2	Horden East
Dawdon North 2				

APPLICATION OF THE DESIGNATION

5. This designation applies to any house which is let or occupied under a tenancy or licence within the area described in paragraph 4 unless
 - (a) The house is a house in multiple occupation and is required to be licensed under Part 2 of the Act;
 - (b) The tenancy or licence of the house has been granted by a registered social landlord;
 - (c) The house is subject to an Interim or Final Management Order under Part 4 of the Act;
 - (d) The house is subject to a temporary exemption under section 86 of the Act; or
 - (e) The house is occupied under a tenancy or licence which is exempt under the Act or the occupation is of a building or part of a building so exempt as defined in The Selective Licensing of Houses (Specified Exemptions)(England) Order 2006 SI 2006/370.

EFFECT OF THE DESIGNATION

6. Subject to sub paragraphs 5(a) to (e) every house in the area specified in paragraph 4 that is occupied under a tenancy or licence shall be required to be licensed under section 85 of the Act.
7. The County Council of Durham will comply with the notification requirements contained in section 83 of the Act and shall maintain a register of all houses registered under this designation, as required under section 232 of the Act.

CONSEQUENCES OF FAILING TO LICENCE A PROPERTY THAT IS REQUIRED TO BE LICENSED

8. Upon the Designation coming into force any person who operates a licensable property without a licence or allows a licensed property to be occupied by more households or persons other than as authorised by the licence, is, pursuant to the provisions of Section 95(1) of the Act, liable to prosecution (and upon summary conviction to an unlimited fine), or a financial penalty not exceeding £30,000.
9. A person who breaches a condition of a licence shall either be liable to prosecution (and upon summary conviction to an unlimited fine), or a financial penalty not exceeding £30,000.
10. Operating an unlicensed property may also lead to the Council, or a tenant, making an application to the First-tier Tribunal to obtain a Rent Repayment Order in respect of up to 12 months' rent or housing benefit monies paid.
11. The Council is also empowered to take control of unlicensed premises by making an Interim Management Order.
12. Furthermore, in relation to shorthold tenancies, no Section 21 notice may be served under the Housing Act 1988 in respect of an unlicensed property.

Applying for a licence should be made online at: <http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/2882/Selective-licensing-of-privately-rented-properties>

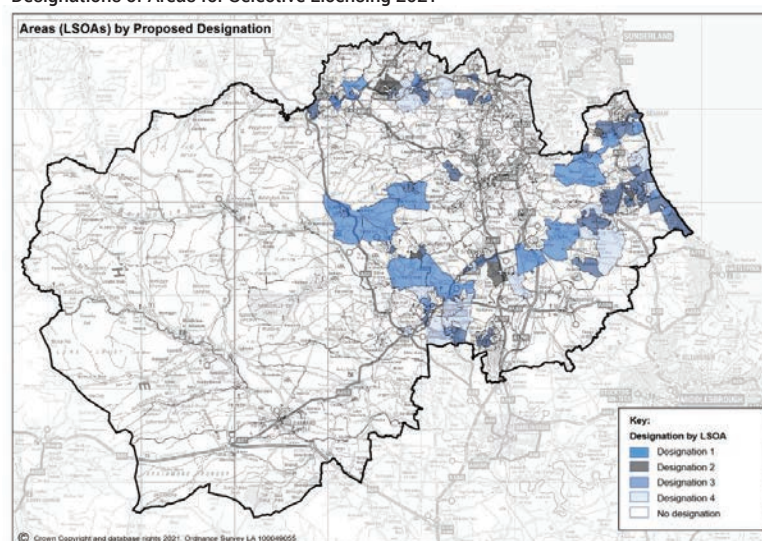
Maps of the designated areas are also available to view at the above website. Any landlord, managing agent or tenant within the Designated Areas of the County requiring further information or advice should contact the Council's Selective Licensing Team on 03000 260000 or by email to selectivelicensing@durham.gov.uk

The Designation may be inspected during normal office hours at County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UQ and can be also obtained from the Council's website.

Date: 3rd December 2021

Helen Lynch, Head of Legal & Democratic Services, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UL

Annex A: Map showing the County Council of Durham Designations of Areas for Selective Licensing 2021





Kath and John Yeomans after their chilly charity dip in the North Sea.

JOHN AND KATH COMPLETE CHARITY DIP

BISHOP AUCKLAND Rotarian, John Yeomans and his wife Kath have completed yet another dip in the cold North Sea at Cullercoats recently.

The hardy couple performed their chilly task to raise money through sponsorship by fellow

Rotarians, family and friends.

The funds raised will be divided between three Rotary Club charities: The Great North Air Ambulance Service, Macmillan Nurses and Prostate Cancer Research Fund.

John and Kath would

like to thank all their "dip supporters" over the years.

John said that he intends to continue dipping for the next three years when he will be 80 after which he will become a watcher and no longer a dipper!



Durham Constabulary is thanking those who applied.

HUNDREDS APPLY FOR PC POSTS

DURHAM CONSTABULARY has announced that their PC recruitment campaign is now closed.

"We received hundreds of applicants and our HR team will be working around the clock to identify the best candidates," said a spokesperson.

"If you've applied, you should receive an email within two to four weeks to let you know if you are being progressed to

next stage or if you were unsuccessful this time round.

"We wish you all the luck in the next steps."

Meanwhile, call handler recruitment at the force is still open.

Applications are being accepted up to 9am on 21 February.

You can find all the information about how to apply by visiting durham.police.uk.

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Bishops players celebrate while Penrith agonise as the Two Blues win at the Voneus Stadium.

TWO BLUES IN VITAL WIN OVER PENRITH

BISHOP AUCKLAND FC recorded two potentially season-defining results in the past fortnight against the two sides directly above them in the Northern League Division One relegation battle.

The Two Blues came within a whisker of recording maximum points, but a 95th minute penalty rescued Redcar on 29 January after the visiting Bishops had taken a second minute lead through Marcus Giles.

But that was followed last weekend by a vital 2-1 home win over Penrith, leaving Bishops just one point behind the Cumbrians.

Goals from Dale Milburn and Marcus Giles gave the Two Blues a first half lead.

The visitors equalised on the hour but Bishops held on for the proverbial

six-pointer, cheered on by the day's mascots from Escomb Juniors U10s.

Bishops remain third from bottom but are now just that one point from safety.

Next up this Saturday is a visit to Sunderland RCA, who are on a run of three wins from their last four, followed by the Auckland derby when West Auckland are the visitors for a Durham Challenge Cup quarter final on Tuesday, 15 February at 7.45pm.

Meantime, in a weekend of wintry weather at St Mary's, the U7 Aces drew 1-1 with Shotton Colts. A blizzard hit the boys midway through the second half of a very good performance. The Aces goal was scored by Thomas.

The U7 Kings beat Boro Rangers Royals, also in poor conditions.

Goals came from Jack,

who notched five, a Rouben double, and Dre.

The U8 Bishops played Marton Whites with goals coming from Dexter, Oliver and a double from star player, Joseph - one of which was a cracking free kick.

The U10 Aces and Kings locked horns in a league derby with the evenly matched sides recording a 1-1 draw. Mason scored for the Aces and Ethan for the Kings.

The Under 12 Kings recorded a 5-1 home win against Guisbrough, including a hat-trick from Joe and Jack and Tom with the other goals.

The U13 aces won 4-0 away at Greatham. Leon was the hat-trick hero with Charlie notching the other goal.

The U15s lost out 5-2 to Billingham Town in a tough encounter.

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C188 NEWTON CAP SKIRLAW BRIDGE, BISHOP AUCKLAND (TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE) ORDER 2022

The Council on 7/2/22 made the above Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act, 1984 as amended, Section 14 (1) to prohibit all vehicular traffic from proceeding on 93 metres of Newton Cap Skirlaw Bridge that extends between the access road to Waterside Cottages north of the bridge and footpath no 89 south of the bridge, Bishop Auckland to enable bridge inspection works to be undertaken. Alternative route will be available to traffic via A689 and Newton Cap Viaduct. The maximum duration of the Order is 18 months. The proposed works are to commence on 15/2/22 from 9.30am and are anticipated to be completed in 6 hours. On occasions, alternative dates for closure may be necessary and these will be signed accordingly.

DATED: 12th February 2022



Helen Lynch
Head of Legal & Democratic Services
County Hall, Durham DH1 5UL

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