

A WINTER EXPERIENCE LIKE NO OTHER

THE MOST wonderful time of the year got underway on Friday 18 November as The Auckland Project unveiled its stunning Christmas displays.

For the first time, the charity's Winter Experience is offering visitors the chance to explore and enjoy a series of festive spectacles across three of its attractions from November 18th to December 31st.

An exquisite Christmas Garland decorating the Throne Room at Auckland Castle; a monumental Neapolitan Nativity scene from the 18th century (together with 100 Christmas trees) in the as-yet-unseen Faith Museum; and a charming recreation of The Auckland Project's many attractions – in gingerbread! – will delight one and all.

Jon O'Donoghue, Commercial Director at The Auckland Project said: "This is the first time The Auckland Project has offered a full Christmas programme of events and experiences and we can't wait to welcome visitors to enjoy them."

Also on the Christmas menu are festive afternoon teas and dining experiences in the Castle's Old Library, for which



The Winter Experience will run until Saturday 31 December.

bookings are already filling up.

Jon continued: "Christmas is a time when faith, family and fun come together more than ever, and this has been at the centre of our ambitions

for the Winter Experience.

"We want to put The Auckland Project at the heart of Christmas in Bishop Auckland, creating new traditions people will look forward to and

enjoy with their loved ones year on year."

Thomas Wales, Company Director of events producer Bacchanalia, which co-produced Jubilee celebrations, said: "It is incredible that we've

managed to pull this off again for the second year.

"If we are able to get a sponsor on next year's event, there's no reason why this can't continue to grow and grow and attract national visitors."



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Dean Midas has been named North East Film Maker of the Year by magazine, *Darkus*.

NORTH EAST FILM MAKER OF THE YEAR

LOCAL FILM director,
Dean Midas is celebrat-
ing after being named
as the North East Film
Maker of the Year by
music, lifestyle and crea-
tive magazine *Darkus*.

Remarkably, to make
this achievement even
bigger, Dean shoots
all his films on mobile
phones.

The films have been
shown around the world
and won numerous
awards. An American

horror podcaster has
even made t-shirt mer-
chandise of his charac-
ters, Eve Valentine and
The Rag Dolly.

Dean's latest film, *All
Hallows Eve Rebirth*, has
already been viewed
24,000 times, an opening
record for one of his short
films.

To further highlight this
fairy tale story, Dean and
his team only expected
around 4,000 views for
the franchise, that cur-

rently stands at 234,000
views, plus the millions
of extra views via vari-
ous streaming platforms
around the world.

Dean said, "I am over-
whelmed and honoured
to be named the North
East Film Maker of the
Year.

"This award isn't just
for me, it is for my whole
team and for everyone
who supports my films."

Darkus Magazine Edi-
tor, Thushara Chandra-
siri said, "Over the past 2
years I have been abso-
lutely impressed to have
witnessed the growth

and evolution of Dean
and the Dolly V Eve Fran-
chise.

"Dean always puts
passion in his work and
pushes the creativity
within his mind to trans-
port us all into the world
of Rag Dolly and Eve Val-
entine.

"To know talent, drive
and ambition like this
exists within our part of
the county is amazing.

"I think we can all take
inspiration from a fantas-
tic guy from Willington
who continues to rede-
fine what it means to be
creative in today's world!"

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Cakes and Ladders meet at No.1 Market Place every Sunday afternoon.

JOIN THE FUN AT CAKES AND LADDERS

FOLLOWING A couple of successful taster sessions, a new, family-orientated board games club has begun a permanent residence in Bishop Auckland Market Place, writes Luke Dunmore.

Cakes And Ladders is held every Sunday from 12noon until 4pm at Mrs M's, at No.1 Market Place.

Chris Corrigan, of Age Of Nerd Ltd, which sells tabletop games online, started the Sunday afternoon club in the hopes of creating a safe and friendly atmosphere for anyone and everyone to enjoy playing the games they love and, hopefully, discover some new favourites.

Just as all are welcome, a large variety of games will be available to play: family favourites, games for younger children, fantasy, horror and superhero-themed board games will all be available.

There will also be a selection of single player games for anyone who would like to go but has nobody to accompany them and maybe doesn't yet feel comfortable playing with strangers.

"I want Cakes And Ladders to be a safe, enjoyable space," enthuses Chris. "All of these games are so much fun to play."

"I love all aspects of geek culture but sometimes it can have the appearance of being insular and cliquy."

"Here, I really want people to feel like they can be a part of it."

Chris also runs the Age Of Nerd website which sells a wide range of what he calls 'nerdy board-games', many of which will be available to play at Cake And Ladders.

"Obviously, I'd love it if someone who came along bought a copy of, say, *Thanos Rising* or

Ticket To Ride or any of the other wide range of board games I sell, as I have a business to run, but that's not what this about."

"I just want people to come and have fun."

"We don't currently have any *Magic: The Gathering* in stock but, last week, some people brought their own decks and asked if they were okay to play."

"I said 'of course', and they stayed for the whole session."

Chris and his associates will also be teaching young children and their parents how to play *Pokémon: The Card Game*.

As he explains; "A lot of kids collect these cards but have no idea what to actually do with them."

"They also might not know how rare, or even valuable, some of these cards are."

"We want to try and help both the kids and their parents learn more about what they have and get even more enjoyment out of them."

As the name implies, there will be cake - as well as tea, coffee and other refreshments - available to purchase from venue staff.

For more information visit the Cakes & Ladders - Bishop Auckland Board Games Club Facebook page.

This story has been funded by our newly launched Membership Scheme.

Woodhouse Close Church Community Centre Grand Christmas Raffle 2022

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DRAWN DEC 7TH 2022

The raffle will be drawn at the centre on Wednesday 7 December.

GRAND CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

WOODHOUSE CLOSE Church Community Centre offer activities and services for local people and the community based on need and interest.

The Church has recently started operating a Warm Lounge in the Centre, three days a week: Monday, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, from 9.30am to 2.30pm.

Within the last few weeks, a local businessman has offered to go in every Tuesday, 10am to

2pm, providing free men's haircuts.

The Centre are holding a Grand Christmas Raffle again this year.

The proceeds will help support the services run from the Centre.

Tickets are £1 or a book of 5 for £5.

All prizes have been generously donated from local people and businesses.

The raffle will be drawn at the Centre on Wednesday 7 December and winners will be contacted.

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THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF DURHAM
A689 SOUTH CHURCH ROAD,
BISHOP AUCKLAND
(TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF WAITING ORDER)
ORDER 2022

The Council on 28/11/22 made the above Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act, 1984 as amended, Section 14 (1) to prohibit all vehicular traffic from waiting on a 113 metre length of South Church Road (north eastern side) between the existing double yellow waiting restrictions opposite numbers 35-35a South Church Road and extending south easterly to the zig-zag lines opposite numbers 17-18 South Church Road, Bishop Auckland by reason of road safety measures. The maximum duration of the Order is 18 months. The proposed works are to commence on 11/12/22 to 1/8/23 and will be effective between 8am to 9am and 3pm to 4pm Mondays to Fridays. On occasions, alternative dates for closure may be necessary and these will be signed accordingly.

DATED: 3rd December 2022

Durham
County Council

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



Police are appealing for information.

CAN YOU HELP THE POLICE?

AN ATTEMPTED burglary took place at around 10pm on Sunday 27 November on Cockton Hill Road.

During the incident, a group of people wearing balaclavas approached the address.

Nothing was taken and it was reported that no one was injured.

Four men aged 29, 27, 20 and 20 were later arrested in connection with the incident and have been released on bail.

A police spokesperson said, "This was an isolated incident and there is no risk to the wider community."

"We believe there were several witnesses in the

area at the time of the incident and we are really keen to speak to them."

Since the incident, Durham Constabulary have launched an investigation and are looking for information into the burglary.

Officers would also like to speak to anyone with CCTV or dashcam footage of the Cockton Hill area.

Please contact Detective Sergeant Claire Callaghan, from South Durham CID on 101 quoting incident number 429 of November 27 if you believe you could help officers.

Alternatively contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.



Paul donated a large amount of Christmas presents to Woodhouse Close Community Centre.

SALES FROM PRINTS BUY PRESENTS

PAUL SIMPSON'S Prints for Presents initiative is now closed for the year.

During Prints for Presents, any money Paul makes from his artwork goes to those in need.

More prints sold, results

in more presents bought.

Woodhouse Close Community Centre Food Bank received an assortment of gifts, selection boxes and books from Paul.

All of these will be gifted to families and children

the Centre are working with.

They thanked Paul and everyone who supported his initiative.

You can follow Paul on Facebook @BishopAuck landArtNostalgia

St. Chad's Nursery and Reception

Open Event

You are invited to join us on

Wednesday 14th December 2022 from 3:30pm until 5:00pm

at St. Chad's Catholic Primary School, Witton Park
for a variety of **Christmas activities** and **crafts**.

All are welcome.

At St. Chad's, our motto is '**Come as you are and walk with us**'.
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if you would like to attend.

St. Chad's Catholic
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Bishop Auckland College are finalists in the Association of Colleges Beacon Awards.

COLLEGE NAMED AS FINALIST

BISHOP AUCKLAND College is the only further education (FE) provider in the country to be named a finalist for the Association of Colleges (AoC) Beacon Award for Innovation in Careers and Enterprise, having met the standard for outstanding and innovative careers leadership and practice.

Last year the college launched its Student Progression Service, operating from a central hub at its main Woodhouse Lane campus.

From there a highly qualified team implements a four-stage plan for every student, including those with education, health and care plans and special educational needs and disabilities.

The personalised mentoring process starts with informal chats to identify suitable progression opportunities and is followed by sessions focusing on the development of key employability skills including preparation of CVs, assistance with completion of appli-

cation forms and interview practice.

Students are given help to source and arrange work placements with employers and progression coaches also work with employers to identify good 'matches' – providing advocacy for suitable candidates for upcoming vacancies.

The support does not end when a student completes their course; their progress is then monitored to ensure their new programme of study or job is matching their expectations and is sustainable, and further support is provided where needed.

The impact of the new team has been significant. Every student benefits from frequent careers and employability guidance sessions as part of their course, which are also available on demand. In addition, more than 250 members of the public also accessed the student progression service - with 75 per cent going on to enrol at the college.

Work placements were

completed by 98 per cent of full-time students and more than 91 per cent of qualifying students in 2021-22 went on to achieve their employment or education choice, known as a 'positive destination'. This was an increase of nearly five percentage points on the previous academic year.

The emphasis on high quality careers guidance is not a new initiative for Bishop Auckland College; it was one of the few FE providers in the region to join the initial pilot of the Gatsby Benchmarks scheme, which provided a clear framework for defining world class careers provision in education, back in 2015.

The 12 overall AoC Beacon Award Winners will be announced in Spring 2023.

Case studies featuring students who have secured their dream jobs with the support of the college's new Student Progression Service can be found at: bacoll.ac.uk/sptcasestudies



Children can visit Santa in the Newgate Centre this month.

SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN

THIS DECEMBER, the Bishop Auckland Town Team are once again bringing Santa back to Bishop Auckland.

Children will be invited into the Newgate Shopping Centre on Saturday 10 and Saturday 17 December between 10am and 3pm.

Entry to see Santa is free. There will be an opportunity to have your photo taken with him,

from just £1.

Free face painting will also be available.

Visitors will have the chance to win a luxury Christmas hamper, worth over £100 in the Christmas Raffle.

Tickets will be available to purchase from the Town Team volunteers at both events.

The draw will take place on Saturday 17 December at 3pm.

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THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF DURHAM
ADELAIDE STREET, BISHOP AUCKLAND
(TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE)
ORDER 2022

The Council proposes to make an Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act, 1984 as amended, Section 14 (1) to prohibit all vehicular traffic from proceeding on the full length of Adelaide Street between its junction with Princes Street roundabout and Newgate Street, Bishop Auckland to enable gas main renewal works to be undertaken. Alternative route from north western side of the closure from A689 Princes Street roundabout southerly and westerly on Bob Hardisty Drive and north on Newgate Street to the south eastern side of the closure. The maximum duration of the Order is 18 months. The proposed works are to commence on 9/1/23 and are anticipated to be completed in 12 days. On occasions, alternative dates for closure may be necessary and these will be signed accordingly.

DATED: 3rd December 2022

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

AYCLIFFE WALKING CLUB UPDATE

AYCLIFFE FELL Walking Club headed to the Northern Pennines area, between Bowes and Middleton-in-Teesdale for their November outing.

As intrepid members did a longer walk from Bowes, many went for a calmer option from Lartington, and circular walks from Middleton itself.

A spokesperson said, "Our group combined two Middleton Circulars by heading south-west on the Pennine Way towards Harter Fell, with a steady climb up to some glorious views across Cross-thwaite Common and Lune Moor.

"We encountered several river crossings with make-shift bridges that largely served their purpose, as long as the hand wire was near head height.

"One was at waist height and for the less agile (myself) this proved very scary!

"We made it across safely without falling in and stopped for lunch near Holwick Scars.

"Suitably refreshed, we

dropped down for a full view of the extensive scars and crossed the River Tees by Low Force via the Wynch Bridge.

"We arrived at Bowlees to find about twenty of our club walkers sitting down enjoying teas, coffees and cakes.

"We decided to miss a trip to Gibson's Cave for fear of the light fading.

"Instead, we headed for the long climb up to Hardberry Hill, before heading down toward Hudeslope Beck and our arrival back at Middleton.

"We all got back down before dark and the local Fish and Chip shop did very well from us, as did The Forresters Hotel and Teesdale Hotel.

"The next walk is from Chop Gate to Helmsley on Saturday 10 December."

AFWC outings have routes available for all types of walkers, from beginner to experienced.

Walks cost £10 per outing.

Visit their website www.aycliffefellwalkingclub.com and book a seat on the coach for their next trip.

NEW WARM SPACE AT AYCC

A BISHOP Auckland community hub is opening up its doors to help local people stay warm this winter.

Situated in the heart of Woodhouse Close estate, Auckland Youth and Community Centre (AYCC) supports local residents with a packed programme of services, activities and more tailored support.

This winter, AYCC is extending its support with a new Warm Space every Friday, between 10am and 2pm.

Supported by friendly staff and volunteers, the facilities available include places to relax, access to a TV, magazines, newspapers, arts and crafts, dominoes and other traditional games.

Hot drinks and light

refreshments will be available and subject to demand, hot soup at lunchtime.

People will also be able to charge their phones or other devices.

Services will be provided free of charge although, if they prefer, participants can also 'pay what they like'.

The project has been supported by a grant from Durham County Council's Warm Spaces Fund, managed by County Durham Community Foundation.

Business development manager John Wiseman said: "Since 1964, AYCC has been a real hub of the Woodhouse Close community.

"We've supported local people of all backgrounds and ages, in all sorts of ways, with something for

everyone.

"As winter approaches, and the cost-of-living rises, we wanted to put something extra in place, to provide that little bit of extra support.

"We're listening to what people tell us they wish to see on their doorstep, and we're keen to work with them to develop new projects.

"We are incredibly grateful to Durham County Council and County Durham Community Foundation for providing the funds we need to make this Warm Space a reality in our local community."

Anyone wishing to find out more can visit their Facebook page @AYCCDurham, or contact Auckland Youth and Community Centre on 01388 604575.

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BISHOP AUCKLAND LADIES' NEXT HOME GAMES

Sunday 4th December vs Worcester

Sunday 18th December vs West Park Leeds

SUPPORTERS, YOUR LADIES TEAM NEEDS YOU!

West Mills Playing fields, Bridge Road, Bishop Auckland, DL14 7PA

Bishop Auckland Ladies recently won their latest game.

BA LADIES RUFC WIN 36-12

BISHOP AUCKLAND welcomed Barnsley to West Mills on Sunday 20 November, with the Bishop Ladies seeking to climb out of trouble towards the lower end of the table.

With Erin Kelly back at Fly Half, the Bishop's looked dangerous in possession and despite Barnsley's physicality, found a way to make several line-breaks.

The combination of Kelly, Cooley and Piddington showed real class with the ball in hand.

Eventually, the pressure of Bishop's attack paid off and winger, Jenny Thompson crossed the line for a try.

Barnsley fought back

quickly, with their excellent half-backs kicking their way down the field.

When they were awarded a penalty five metres out, they moved the ball to the centres and crossed the line to level the score 5-5.

Bishop took the upper hand just before half-time and after some outstanding work by the forwards, back-row Meg Woodward scored a try, converted by Rachelle Cooley to leave the half time score 12-5.

After the half, Bishop Auckland began to make much better of their chances, with Piddington and Cooley breaking the line, and Willet with trademark dominating carries from the scrum.

Continued pressure led to tries from Sally Austen, a second for Meg Woodward, Flo Piddington and Paris McMahon.

Rachelle Cooley added a further two conversions before a consolation try for Barnsley completed the scoring.

A bonus point win took Bishop within 5 points of 4th place, but this was by no means easy.

Barnsley were tough, talented and hit hard.

While there is no doubt that Bishop Auckland were worthy winners, it showed the talent on display at Championship One level is very high.

The final score was: Bishop Auckland RUFC Ladies 36 v Barnsley Women's RFC 12.



Young Champion, Brooks Sowerby.

BROOKS IS WORLD CHAMPION

YOUNG, TALENTED, multiple champion Muay Thai Boxer, Brooks Sowerby has brought the WBC title belt home to Bishop Auckland.

Brooks fought on the Super Show in Barnsley earlier this month.

Brooks trains out of their small family-run gym, coached by his dad Stephen Sowerby.

He is joined by his brother Sonny and his sisters, 'Crazy' Konniegrace and Braxie-lyra, all of whom are also multiple champions in Muay Thai and K1.

If anyone would like to sponsor or help them on their journey the family can be contacted by email at ironmonk37@gmail.com



Woodhouse Close Church

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Are you or someone you know struggling with budgeting your finances, claiming benefits, filling in forms or documents, getting in touch with other services or experiencing tenancy issues with your current or previous tenancy? Support is available during these financially uncertain times.

Home Group run weekly drop-ins at Woodhouse Close Church in Bishop Auckland every Monday between 10am and 12 noon and also between 1pm and 3pm at The Angel Trust, Belvedere House, Kingsway, Bishop Auckland.

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Sport

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Jonas Railton with coach and dad, Anthony.

JONAS REACHES NATIONAL FINALS

JONAS RAILTON from Bishop Auckland has reached the finals of the National Association of Boys and Girls Club (NABGC) Boxing Championships.

Jonas, who boxes out of Seconds Out Boxing Academy in Ferryhill, won his semi-final bout in Liverpool last Sunday by split decision against a Oliver Strand of Team Shoebox from the East Midlands region.

He now progresses to the finals, to be held in Bridlington in two weeks' time.

Jonas's coach and father, Anthony said: "This is a huge achievement for Jonas.

"He dedicates and sacrifices a lot to achieve his goals in boxing and his hard work is paying off."

Paul Eddy, founder of Seconds Out said: "Jonas is inspirational to all members.

"His hard work doesn't go unnoticed and everyone in the club wishes him the very best in the final. The minibus will be full and we're heading down to support him. Well done Jonas."

Jonas has a record of 25 bouts with just three losses and already has a string of notable achievements to his name.

He was England Boxing National Cadet winner in 2019.

This year he won the Hull Box Cup in July, reached the quarter finals of the England Boxing Championships and gained a place on the England Boxing Talent pathway programme after being identified as having potential following an open day in Birmingham.



Bishop Auckland Ladies won 6-1 against West Allotment Celtic.
Photo: Joseph Gorman

LATEST UPDATE FROM ST MARY'S AND BISHOP FC

LAST WEEKEND was memorable for the St Mary's teams as the U7 Aces played Guisborough in a great game.

The U7 Bishops also won with eight goals away.

The U8 Kings came out on top against Darlington, with goals from Woodward (2), Hall (1), Falls (1), Martin (1) and an own goal. Man of the Match was Falls.

The U8 Aces sadly lost out to Riverside Juniors.

Theo Cottrell scored the lone goal.

The Under 10 Aces scorers against the Kings were Bobby Hallimond (4), Oliver Chambers (1), Tyler Crawford (1) and Josh Wren.

The U11 Aces lost their Challenge Cup match with TIBS Whites 6-1.

The Aces goal came

from Riley Howard in the first half.

The U13 Aces beat Newton Aycliffe Juniors 5-2.

Goals were scored from Alex Simpson (2), Oliver Barker (1), Blake Taylor (1) and Roman Thomson (1).

The U14 Aces beat Sedgfield 4-0. Goalscorers were Tyler Howe, Luca McMahon, Freddie Roe, Leon Monaghan. Leon was also Man of the Match.

A spokesperson said, "Great performance from our lads with five wins in a row now, which is brilliant after four losses in a row at the start of the season."

The BAFC Reserves had a great 6-1 win over Hylton. Man of the Match was Kieran Alderson.

The BA Ladies also had a 6-1 win over West Allotment Celtic.



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