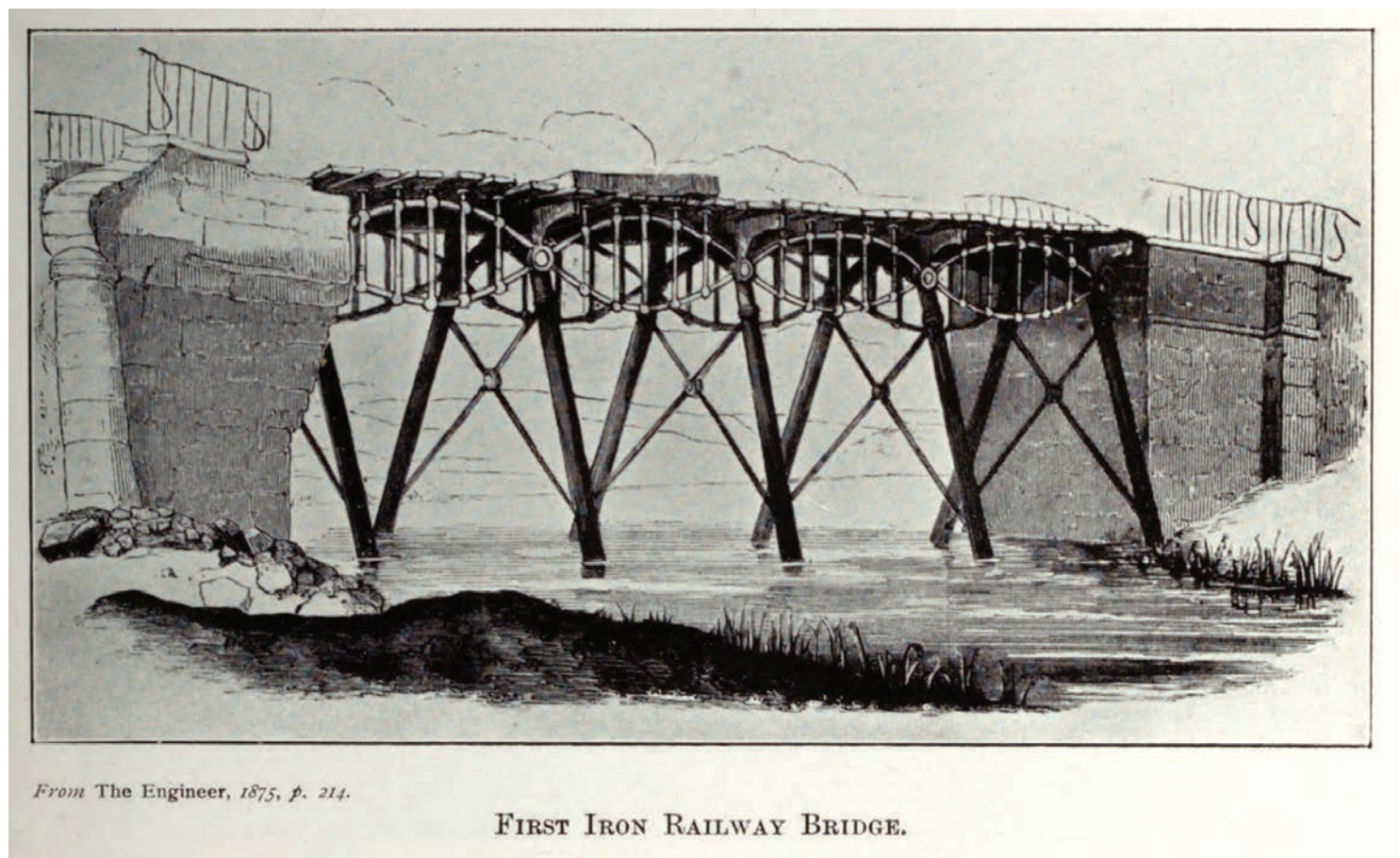


GRANT AWARDED TO REPAIR THE REMAINS OF WORLD'S FIRST IRON RAILWAY BRIDGE



A drawing of Gaunless Bridge, first published in the Engineer in 1875. Copyright: Public Domain.

HISTORIC ENGLAND has awarded Durham County Council £161,000 to repair and revitalise the remains of the world's first iron railway bridge.

Completed in 1823, Gaunless Bridge was

designed by 'father of the railways' George Stephenson and spanned the River Gaunless in West Auckland.

Forming part of a line serving the Witton Park Colliery, it originally car-

ried horse-drawn coal wagons, which were then replaced with steam locomotives in around 1833.

The bridge remained in use until 1901 when it was no longer able to

take the weight of the increasingly heavy coal wagons.

Whilst the bridge was dismantled – part of which is on permanent display at the National Railway Museum - the

stone abutments supporting the structure remained in place and are now part of the Stockton and Darlington Railway Scheduled Monument.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



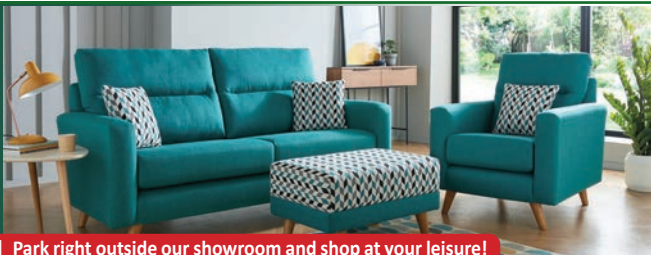
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Top left: Gaugless Bridge, before it was dismantled in 1901 (copyright: Public Domain); Top right: Part of Gaugless Railway Bridge now at the National Railway Museum in York (copyright: Science Museum Group); Bottom: Gaugless Bridge abutments (copyright: Historic England).

GAUNLESS BRIDGE TO BE REPAIRED

FROM PAGE 1

In recent years they have
fallen victim to anti-so-
cial behaviour, which has
affected their condition.

The grant from Historic
England will be used to
repair the abutments,
which will support a new
bridge deck that will form
part of the new 26-mile
Stockton and Darlington
Railway Walking and
Cycling route.

Alongside the repair
work, Historic England
will involve the local com-
munity, running sessions
about the history of the
bridge with local school
children and setting up
a volunteer group ded-

icated to the long-term
care of the site.

This project is part of
the Stockton and Dar-
lington Railway Heritage
Action Zone, a five-year
project focused on reju-
venating and restoring
the 26 mile stretch of his-
toric railway, and to help
realise its potential to
become a major heritage
attraction and visitor des-
tination in the build up to
its 2025 bicentenary.

Giles Proctor from His-
toric England said: "We
are really pleased to be
funding this restora-
tion project through the
Stockton and Darlington
Railway Heritage Action
Zone.

"Gaugless Bridge has
a significant role in the
history of the railway
and the repair of its abut-
ments mark the first step
in securing the bridge's
legacy as a part of the
new Walking and Cycling
Route."

Cllr Elizabeth Scott,
Durham County Coun-
cil's Cabinet member for
economy and part-

nerships, said: "As the
world's first iron railway
bridge, Gaugless Bridge
is a key part of our rail
heritage, both at a local
and national level.

"We're really pleased
therefore that this fund-
ing is allowing us to
restore and repair the
abutments, helping pre-
serve this important
site."

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Top: An aerial view of the proposed site. Left: An internal view. Right: Clayton Street pedestrian area.

HAVE YOUR SAY ON PLANS FOR IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE

MEMBERS OF the public are invited to have their say on plans for a new bus station and improved car parking facilities in Bishop Auckland.

After Durham County Council was awarded more than £11million from the Future High Streets Fund in 2020, plans are progressing to improve the town's sustainable transport and parking infrastructure.

The bid included plans to replace the existing bus station, offering better quality public transport to residents and visitors with the aim of attracting more people into the town centre.

As visitor numbers to Bishop Auckland are expected to significantly increase through a series of regeneration projects, more car parking provision is also required to meet the needs of those visiting the town.

Cllr Elizabeth Scott, Cabinet member for economy and partnerships, said: "To make sure our plans work for residents, shoppers and businesses, we would encourage as many people as possible to have their say on this consultation. Your feedback can help to bring about

positive changes in this community and we want everyone to be part of this exciting journey."

Plans for the bus station include eight bus stands, improved passenger information boards and seating areas, as well as three entrances and exits and a kiosk area.

It would also see improved facilities for passengers, such as an accessible toilet, parent and child facilities and a Changing Places toilet.

In line with the council's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint, it is proposed that sustainable drainage planters and a water harvesting system will be installed alongside the use of photovoltaic panels to produce energy.

Meanwhile, the council is proposing a new surface level car park that will offer 120 spaces, including electric vehicle charging point bays and spaces for blue badge holders, wheelchair accessible vehicles and motorcycles.

As well as improved connectivity to the town centre and Newgate Centre, trees and planters will be placed throughout the car park to create

a more welcoming and sustainable environment.

The council is also exploring opportunities to make the existing Newgate Centre car park more user-friendly.

Residents and businesses can take part in the consultation no later than Sunday 12 March by visiting www.durham.gov.uk/consultation.

A series of drop-in events will also be held at Bishop Auckland Town Hall for people to find out more about the plans and have their say.

These are taking place from 10.30am until 3.30pm on Thursday 2, Friday 3, and Saturday 4 March.

Feedback from the consultation will be used by the council to inform its planning application for the bus station and car park.

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Hilda with her bouquet of flowers from Angel Trust.

GRANNY HILDA IS JANUARY'S ANGEL OF THE MONTH

EVERY MONTH, the Angel Trust awards an individual with a small gift tailored to them as recognition for the hard work they have done.

Members of the public can nominate their Angel of the Month using the application for on the charity's website.

Last month, the charity was delighted to visit Hilda Breward, otherwise known as Granny Hilda, and present her with flowers as our Angel of the Month.

A spokesperson said: "Granny Hilda, as she is known in the commu-

nity, visits Prince Bish-ops Community Primary School twice a week to read with the children.

"It's something she has been doing at various local schools for more than forty years and has become well loved and respected by several generations of children and parents. She is very deserving of this award.

"Hilda was nominated by so many people and she would like to say thank you to everyone.

"We hope she enjoys her beautiful flowers, which were arranged by Laura K Floral Design of Shildon."

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Local events organisations are teaming up to launch a new street food market this year.

NEW STREET FOOD MARKET FOR BISHOP

BISHOP AUCKLAND festival and events company, Bacchanalia, in partnership with local non-profit creative event design service, Bridge Creative, are set to host a new open-air market with food and entertainment from across the region.

Street food pop-ups will be dishing out flavour from Bishop Auckland's Market Place on the last Friday of every month between March and October this year.

The parties will continue into the night at Mrs M, at No.1 Market Place, where music and drinks will be served until late.

As the food market begins to wind down around 9pm, the entertainment will be just getting started at Mrs M with Kabaret Vollmond, Bishop's premiere entertainment night featuring drag, musical comedy, and variety, kicking off upstairs, followed by live jazz until late.

Thomas Wales founder of Bacchanalia said: "We recently learned that Durham Markets, who ran the previous Full Moon Markets in the town, were unable to host them this year due to lack of resources.

"Bacchanalia had developed a monthly Cabaret night in Mrs M which relaunched on 31 March.

"These nights were developed to coincide with the Full Moon Market to create an additional Friday night offering for the town and boost the nighttime economy a bit, so it was disheartening to learn that the markets would no longer be running.

"However, having spoken to Bridge Creative, we felt strongly about needing to save the monthly markets for the town.

"Between us, we have a healthy blueprint for a food market from organising the Christmas Town events as well as a strong relationship and reputation with regional traders.

"We've also got some exciting new ideas to bring to the food market.

"We were big fans of the Full Moon Market but want to address some ideas such as things to do for children and the entertainment offering.

"We're also bringing in No. 42's Makers Market as a proper partner on the Street Food Market whereas before they just used to coincide.

"They'll host a number of locally made craft, art and trinket stalls as an additional offering at the event.

"And of course, there's then some late-night entertainment with The Cabaret Club upstairs in Mrs M after every Market with a different performer at each gig.

"We're also introducing a box office at the Street Food Market where local organisers can sell tickets to their events and where the public can find out what's on in and around the town.

"And we're accepting sponsorship for each Street Food Market."

To register as a trader, visit [bastreetfoodmarket](https://www.bastreetfoodmarket.co.uk) Facebook page and click on the link.

To discuss sponsorship and advertising, email thomas@bacchanalia.co.uk.

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Martin Jones presenting 'Next Steps' at Bishop Auckland Town Hall.

ALWAYS A GOOD TIME TO TALK

ON TIME to talk day at Bishop Auckland Town Hall earlier this month, Wellbeing for Life, Stamp It Out and Durham County Council brought together 75 people from 24 organisations in order to start a conversation about social issues affecting people's mental health in and around Bishop Auckland.

The event was set up to get the many organisations in the area, who are passionate about helping people improve their mental health, to find ways to work more connectively and support the community.

The event also featured workshops where organ-

isations explored their existing connections and looked at ways to strengthen these to better support local people.

Marnie Ramsey, the Wellbeing for Life Programme Manager said: "This is only the start of a full programme of activities planned to support the community.

"Thanks to everyone who attended for being part of the conversation."

The Wellbeing for Life team is also planning a free roadshow at the Four Clocks Centre on Tuesday 28 February, incorporating external stakeholders that are working to better mental health in Bishop Auckland.

THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF DURHAM OAKLEY GREEN, WEST AUCKLAND (TEMPORARY FOOTPATH CLOSURE) ORDER 2023

The Council on 17/2/2023 made the above Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act, 1984 as amended, Section 14 (1) to prohibit all pedestrian traffic from proceeding on the following lengths of footway at Oakley Green:-

a 62 metre length of footway to the rear of numbers 148 to 152,
a 58 metre length of footway to the rear of numbers 139 to 147,
a 28 metre length of footway to the rear of numbers 135 to 138,
a 69 metre length of footway to the rear of numbers 93 to 104,
a 21 metre length of footway to the side of number 104,
a 76 metre length of footway to the front of numbers 93 to 104,
a 35 metre length of footway to the front of numbers 153 to 156,
a 25 metre length of footway to the front of numbers 87 to 90,
a 22 metre length of footway to the side of number 87,
a 47 metre length of footway to the rear of numbers 105 to 110,
a 46 metre length of footway to the front of numbers 111 to 117,
a 16 metre length of footway to the side of number 118,
a 24 metre length of footway to the front of numbers 118 to 121 and
a 20 metre length of footway between the side of numbers 121 and 122 to enable gas main replacement works to be undertaken. Throughout the period of closure, a diversion will be available to pedestrian traffic an alternative route, where available, will be signed on site. The maximum duration of the Order is 6 months. The proposed works are to commence at 8am on 6 March 2023 and are anticipated to be completed in 4 weeks. On occasions, alternative dates for closure may be necessary and these will be signed accordingly.

DATED: 25th February 2023



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



Reading Matters at Bishop Barrington Academy

At Bishop Barrington Academy, we have a relentless focus on driving improvements in literacy to raise attainment at every level because we understand that literacy skills allow students to access all curriculum areas and succeed in life after secondary school.

Literacy skills are the fundamental skills which allow students to access the curriculum, and it is therefore the responsibility of all teachers in all curriculum areas to ensure that the teaching of literacy is confidently integrated into the curriculum.

Additional literacy interventions, which are rooted in theory, are being implemented to remove any barriers to learners and address any areas for development that students might have in reading, writing or communication skills to allow students to make rapid progress from their starting points.

One of our reading interventions, which has recently been launched with students in Years 7 and 8, is Accelerated Reader. Accelerated Reader is a research-based program which encourages students to become independent readers and to read for pleasure, with the aim of fostering independent readers and allowing students to master their reading skills through regular practice.

The reading programme initially assesses students' starting points before generating a unique reading level for each student. Once students have been given their level, they can read any book at their level which allows students to pick a book linked to their interests, but also at a level which is appropriate for them, allowing them to confidently and successfully read and understand the book. Once students have finished reading the book, they will then complete an online quiz which will allow the student, their teacher or their parents and carers to see how well students have understood the text they have read.

Laura Porter, Assistant Headteacher responsible for Literacy at Bishop Barrington Academy, said: "We are really excited for Accelerated Reader to be fully embedded in the academy because we are keen to celebrate every success achieved by our students, whether it is for achieving 100% on a quiz they have completed, or being awarded Reader of the Week or simply reading and understanding books independently. We understand that feeling successful and celebrating our students' success with reading is the first step in building and fostering a reading culture throughout the academy".

Effective reading strategies can have a significant impact on a student's progress, as well as opening more opportunities for their future when they leave Bishop Barrington Academy, at the end of Year 11. As a result, a relentless approach to improving literacy skills will always be a key priority for the staff and students at the Bishop Barrington Academy.

[bishopbarrington.org.uk](https://www.bishopbarrington.org.uk)

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Tel: 01388 603 307; E-mail: admin@bishopbarrington.net





HM Coastguard joined Durham Constabulary at Meadowfield to provide further insight.

STUDENTS EXPERIENCE EMERGENCY SERVICES MOCK NIGHTSHIFT

STUDENTS AT Bishop Auckland College were put through their paces by officers during a mock nightshift at the force's training centre in Meadowfield last week.

During the shift from 10pm to 7am, the 'recruits' had a go at call handling, searching buildings, communicating with people in crisis and completing the police fitness test.

The experience gave them an insight into the different roles they could have with a career as a police officer.

HM Coastguard - one of many organisations that work with the force - were also kind enough to demonstrate their skills.

Participants also got to experience the process a suspect will go through during an investigation.

Inspector Jamie Gray, who organised the shift, praised the students for their enthusiasm to experience what modern-day policing is really like.

He said: "All the stu-

dents really enjoyed it and I commend them for giving it their all, especially when you get into the early hours and the tiredness starts to kick in.

"Policing is not an easy career but it's very rewarding when you know you're helping the most vulnerable and taking criminals off the streets.

"It was great to give these young people an insight into the work we do and potentially inspire them to choose a career protecting their communities too."

The force is now accepting applications from those who have a degree, or will have graduated from university by July 2023, for the Degree

Holder Entry Programme (DHEP).

Those interested in becoming a detective can also apply directly for the Detective Graduate Degree Holder Entry Programme (DC DHEP) while the Pre-Join route is also open for those who have independently completed the Professional Policing Degree.

The deadline for applications is 5pm on March 6 at the 'Apply now' section of durham.police.uk/

If you have any specific questions about the job or recruitment process, you can email police.recruiting@durham.police.uk and positive.action@durham.police.uk if you require help and support as a diverse applicant.

PUBLIC MEETING CALLED

A PUBLIC meeting is set to be held at West Auckland Memorial Hall, Darlington Road, West Auckland on Friday 10 March at 1pm.

The purpose of the meeting is to recruit new members for the trustees and committee to enable the hall to continue to function.



Mayor Michael Siddle, Mike Bartley and JD and the Woodsmen.

MAYOR'S VALENTINE BALL

BISHOP AUCKLAND Town Mayor, Cllr Michael Siddle, welcomed dignitaries, friends and members of the public to the Town Hall in Bishop Auckland on Friday.

Mayor Siddle hosted a Valentine's Ball as part of his fund-raising activities during his year of office.

This year sees the Mayor raising funds for local organisation Daisy Arts.

The evening saw guests being served a three-course meal by Masterchef contestant, Mike Bartley from DJam Kitchen, followed by entertainment from local band JD and the Woodsmen.

Mayor Siddle said: "The ball was a fantastic evening, I give my thanks to all who attended. It was a wonderful opportunity to showcase the town hall and local talent by using Mike for the catering and JD and Woodsmen for the

entertainment.

"I also wish to thank the businesses of the town who provided raffle prizes for the evening. Fantastic prizes and gift vouchers were made from The Spar, Bishop Auckland Football Club, Eden Gift Shop, the Town Hall, Manor House, Cllr Sam Zair, The Auckland Project and Stack.

"The blind raffle raised over £300 and the winner received an overnight stay with breakfast and access to The Auckland Project attractions, donated by The Park Head Hotel."

Daisy Arts created the exquisite valentine themed centrepieces for the tables, showing off the creative work they facilitate with local people.

The evening raised over £1000 towards the Mayors fundraising which will go towards supporting artistic and creative projects with young people in our area.

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SMALL GRANTS TO MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

GRANTS OF up to £1000 are available now for not-for-profit organisations across County Durham.

Believe housing's community investment programme has opened two new funding opportunities to support groups in the areas it operates in.

The £500 Small Community Grant and £1000 Community Grant are ready for applications to help deliver activities or projects that will make a real difference to people's lives and well-being.

Funding applications are welcomed for projects that meet one of believe housing's key themes:

- Improving mental and physical health;
- Employability and training;
- Increasing household income;
- Developing a greener, fairer future by reducing, reusing and recycling;
- Tackling inequalities as a result of the cost of living crisis.

The £500 Community Grant can support several other activities, including those encouraging social integration, setting up community classes, activities and events and contributing to venue hire up to a maximum of £125.

Funding from the £1000

Community Grant can help get a project off the ground by funding revenue costs and up to 60% of a project's capital costs.

This money can cover start up costs for a not-for-profit group, marketing and promotional costs up to the value of £200, art and craft events that improve mental well-being or reduce isolation and more.

To find out more information, and to apply for the £500 Small Community Grant and £1000 Community Grant, go to believehousing.co.uk/your-community/community-funding.



The weekend course takes place in April.

BEEKEEPING COURSE

AYCLIFFE BEEKEEPERS' Association, a not-for-profit organisation, covering South West Durham and beyond, is running a beekeeping course for beginners at Neville Parade Community Centre in Newton Aycliffe on the weekend of 22 and 23 April between 10am and 4pm.

"It covers the history of beekeeping, how a hive is put together, the beekeeping year, how to spot and control pests and diseases, what to do when bees swarm, how to stop them swarming, and how to access further education and liter-

ature," explained committee member, Clare Midgley.

"It is open to all ages and costs £60 per person which includes friend membership of our association.

"We will provide tea and coffee, but please bring your own lunch."

To book your place, or for more information, contact the training officer, Chris Barker at training.aycliffebka@gmail.com or telephone 07421 471581.

You can also find the group on Facebook @ Aycliffe Beekeepers Association.

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Representative example	Duration of Device Plan	Upfront cost	Monthly device payment	Credit amount	Total amount payable for device	Interest rate (fixed)	Representative APR	Cash price (to buy outright)	Airtime Plan, today to Mar 2023	Airtime Plan, Apr 2023 to Mar 2024	Airtime Plan, Apr 2024 to Mar 2025
Samsung Galaxy S23 Ultra 256GB	36 months	£30	£24.42	£878.76	£908.76	0%	0%	£908.76	£26.99	£26.99 + RPI announced in Feb 2023 = Price A	Price A + RPI announced in Feb 2024

Samsung Galaxy S23 Ultra 256GB: Buy the Samsung Galaxy S23 Ultra 256GB and pay £33.87* for the first 3 months on a 30GB tariff; then £60.86* a month with an O2 custom plan. Ends 22 March 2023. £9.45 per month saving achieved by trading in your old device and receiving up to £340.24 in trade in value, spread across a 36 month device plan. Quoted monthly saving may be adjusted if the trade-in device received by us differs from the submitted device description. Trade-in value based on payable amount on all traded in Samsung Galaxy devices between January 2021 and December 2021. £33.87 monthly device plan cost for non trade in customers. O2 Recycle, get up to £340.24: Purchase the Samsung Galaxy S23 Ultra directly from O2 between 01.02.23 and 22.03.23 and trade in your old device with O2 Recycle to claim up to £340.24. £340.24 consists of £150 enhanced recycle value and £190.24 trade in value. £190.24 trade in value based on payable amount on all traded in Samsung Galaxy device models between Dec 2020 and Nov 2021. See o2.co.uk/terms. O2 Recycle: Your device must pass our checklist. The value of your trade in will depend on the model and condition. Terms apply see <https://www.o2.co.uk/termsandconditions/mobile/o2recycle>. 5G available in selected areas. 5G device, sim and tariff required to access 5G. See o2.co.uk/coveragechecker for coverage. O2 Refresh custom plans: Direct purchases only. Pay the cash price for your device or spread the cost over 3 to 36 months (excludes dongles). The device cost will be the same whatever you choose. There may be an upfront cost. You can pay off your Device Plan at any time and choose to keep your Airtime Plan, upgrade it, or leave. If you are in the first 24 months of your Device Plan and you cancel your Airtime Plan you will have to pay the remainder of your Device Plan in full. After 24 months you can keep your Airtime Plan, upgrade it, or end it without affecting your Device Plan. Finance subject to status and credit checks. 18+. Direct Debit. Credit provided by Telefónica UK Ltd, SL1 4DX. Telefónica UK is authorised and regulated by the FCA for consumer credit and insurance. Terms apply, see o2.co.uk/terms.

Sport

Local leagues, competitions and events...



Andrew, right, with head coach Tim Curtis and fellow coach Michelle Guite.

CYCLING COACH JOINS SPECIAL OLYMPICS GB TEAM AT BERLIN WORLD GAMES

LOCAL CYCLING coach, Andrew Samanjoul has been named in the Special Olympics Great Britain coaching team that will travel to Berlin in June to support its athletes at the Special Olympics World Games.

Andrew, who lives in West Auckland and supports the Special Olympics Yorkshire & Humberside region, has been appointed as Assistant Coach of the cycling team.

At Berlin 2023 he has volunteered his own time to support the eight competing cyclists with intellectual disabilities to represent Team Special Olympics GB.

Opening at the iconic Olympiastadion on 17 June, the Special Olympics World Games is the world's biggest inclusive sporting event of 2023 with 7,000 athletes with intellectual disabilities from around the world set to compete across 26 sports.

At the end of last year, Team Special Olympics GB named a squad of more than 80 athletes from across the country who will take part in its 17 nominated sports, with more than 40 coaches, support and medical volunteers and staff supporting the group.

Colin Dyer, Chief Executive of Special Olympics GB, said: "We are incredibly grateful to all of the coaches and volunteers who are giving up their time to help our athletes achieve their dreams of competing at a Special Olympics World Games."

"The investment from our coaches goes way beyond the competition in Berlin.

"They are arranging and delivering training weekends, whilst also fostering excellent relationships with the athletes and their families.

"The success of Special Olympics GB is built on a network of incredible and essential volunteers

who deliver sporting opportunities that can transform the lives of children and adults with an intellectual disability.

"We thank everyone across the country who has given their time in supporting our athletes."

The Team GB contingent is also being supported at Berlin by Jingle Jam, the world's biggest charity gaming event, which has recently donated £251,416.65 to help fund operational costs.

Special Olympics GB is the UK's largest provider of year-round sports training and competition for children and adults of all abilities with intellectual disabilities.

More than 6,500 athletes are currently registered and are participating at one of the 95 accredited programmes within Scotland, England and Wales, which are delivered by a devoted team of around 3,500 volunteers.



Some members of the Durham Roller Derby squad.

GET YOUR SKATES ON FOR FIVE NATIONS ROLLER DERBY

THE SPORT of Roller Derby is coming to South West Durham with the launch of this year's Five Nations Roller Derby Championships at Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre on Saturday 1st April.

One of the competing teams will be Durham Roller Derby, a women's flat track roller derby team based in Ushaw Moor.

Roller derby is a full contact sport played on roller skates.

A game is made up of two 30 minute halves, which are broken down into 'jams' lasting up to two minutes.

For each jam, each team fields five skaters - four 'blockers' and one 'jammer'.

Players skate around an oval track and the jammer scores a point each time they pass a blocker from the opposing team.

Blockers use their bodies to prevent the jammer from passing and scoring points.

This year, Durham Roller Derby will be competing in the Five Nations Championships against other teams from around the UK for the first time

since pre-Covid.

"We are hosting the first games of our tier on Saturday 1st April at Newton Aycliffe Leisure Centre, with doors opening at 11am," said Toni Davies.

"This will be a double header featuring Durham Roller Derby vs Halifax Bruising Banditas followed by Hulls Angels Roller Derby vs Newcastle Roller Derby.

"This is a hugely important event for us within the sport. Five Nations is the largest roller derby tournament in Europe, featuring over 50 leagues from across the UK.

"The team is open to all female identifying and non-binary skaters over the age of 18, and we run a new skater intake two to three times a year.

"We're always looking for volunteers and officials of any gender so if you're interested in the sport but aren't sure if you're ready to get on eight wheels, then drop us a message at durhamrollerderby@gmail.com."

To find out more, visit the club's website at durhamrollerderby.com or their social media pages.

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