EDITORIAL
We would appreciate any views about the content of the newsletter. If there are any issues or items that you think we should be covering, please let us know. We will try to cover them. Deadline for next issue is 20th May 2019.

SPITTAL IMPROVEMENT TRUST
NOTICE OF AGM
To be held at 7.30pm on WEDNESDAY 24TH APRIL in the AIDAN ROOM of BURC (ST. PAULS) CHURCH
Please contact the Secretary by 10th April if you wish to join the committee.

NEWS FROM THE TRUST
Above is a reminder for our forthcoming AGM, anyone wishing to stand as a full committee member will need to let us know by Wednesday 10th April. The AGM is open to all to attend.

A repeat from the last issue of the newsletter, so apologies for that, but a reminder about our first Highlights offering on Friday April 5th with a performance by the Remi Harris Duo.

Remi will be swapping his worldwide touring for a series of intimate village hall gigs, or church in our case. Remi Harris will be joined by double bassist, Simon Smith for an eclectic mix of music. Remi’s music draws from Gypsy Swing, Jazz, Blues, Rock and World Music. His live set includes original compositions, improvisations, jazz standards and new arrangements of musical masters ranging from Django Reinhardt and Jimi Hendrix to Wes Montgomery and Charlie Parker. He plays a variety of acoustic and electric guitars and his show is interspersed with commentary about the history of the music and instruments he plays.

We have a further Highlights show on Saturday 4th May when we have a band from Canada paying us a visit, Diyet & the Love Soldiers. Diyet is alternative folk, roots, country, North Americana and traditional Aboriginal music with catchy melodies and stories deeply rooted in her indigenous world view and northern life. She is backed by The Love Soldiers by Robert van Lieshout, on guitar and foot percussion, and multi-instrumentalist Bob Hamilton. It will be an enjoyable evening of music with stories and insights into the cultures of their music. Full details of both concerts are on their respective posters and there are more details about each of the performances on our Facebook page. Tickets are now on sale at the Spittal Food Store, both performances can be booked online at www.beboxoffice.com, there are no booking fees to pay for using this service.

Mike Greener - Secretary

GARDENING GROUP
The street and the park are looking beautiful. Many of the bulbs are in flower and there are many more to come over the next few weeks. The Gardening Group have been out in force and are doing a great job in readiness for the Spring judging on April 29th. Two of the group have agreed to work at the Spa Well/Memorial Garden and have plans for more planting there. The workforce are now easy to spot as high vis vests have been issued to us by the County Council and from now on anyone working on the gardens is required to wear them.
We are holding our Spring Fair on Saturday April 13th in St Paul’s Church Hall. There will be the usual stalls, raffle, tombola with an Easter egg tombola as well. The teas and coffee stall will be selling scones, soup, quiche and, of course, a good selection of cakes. Any donations of raffle and tombola prizes would be very welcome. We look forward to seeing you all there for a chat and a cuppa.

We are also taking part in ‘Spring into Action - Recycling and Garden Fun’, which is taking place in the Berwick Library on 17th April. The full event takes place between 1pm and 4pm but we will only be there between 1pm to 3:30pm. The full programme is:

1pm to 4pm - **Pop in and design a poster** to promote kerbside recycling (part of the community recycling initiative).

1pm to 3:30pm - **Mini beasties**. Discover what beasties lurk in a compost heap!

1pm to 3:30pm - **Seed planting**. Have a go at growing your own vegetables with the Spittal Gardening Group.

1pm to 3:30pm - **Berwick Swan and Wildlife Trust** will be bringing some surprise visitors.

A Recycling Officer from Waste Education will be here to chat with and help you ‘Make a Pledge’ to recycle/reduce single use plastics.

Our recipe books are still available. There are some on sale at the caravan parks and Jackie at Spittal shop and Neil at Grieves have agreed to carry on selling them. Many thanks to Jackie and Neil. All profits go to the gardening funds. If you go to the Spittal shop, take a moment to admire the Easter window. Three Gardening Group ladies had permission from Jackie to decorate it and a fine job they have made of it too.

We would like to thank everyone who supports us. We are very grateful for any plants etc. that are donated, without you there would be no gardening! Thank you so much. We are now planning for the Summer bedding which will be ordered very soon. Spittal for Gold, again!

*Mau Watkins*
(Contact either Mau Watkins 07748 076527 or Sheila Heckels 01289 331994)

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**SPITTL LITTER PICKERS**

The winners of the recent ‘Marsh Volunteer Award for Marine Conservation’ were five volunteers from the Northumberland Coast Care project. Normally awarded to one outstanding volunteer, the judges felt that all five nominees were all worthy winners so the award, and its prize, was split between them, one of which was our very own Raine Doelberg, who is a volunteer Site Warden.
In just one year, the five volunteers have each donated hundreds of hours volunteering on the Northumberland Coast; cleaning beaches in all weathers, undertaking important wildlife surveys and raising awareness in their own communities. Although they come from very different backgrounds, the five are united by a passion for the Northumberland coastline. Raine Doelberg, who has been cleaning her local beach for years, said: “I’m sick of picking up other people’s litter but feel compelled to do so every day for the sake of wildlife; every piece I pick up I think, ‘That’s one piece less causing destruction.’”

Raine is a retired graphic designer and has been a beach cleaning champion long before the Coast Care project began. In fact, she has been picking litter all of her life. For the past 6 years, she has been cleaning the dunes and beach at Spittal almost every day and in all weathers, recruiting others to help. For two years, she ran our anti-litter competition with over 660 local school children taking part - the trophies were even made from litter!

Raine went on to say “It was really thrilling to win this award, I am aware though that you have to be nominated to win it, and thanks to Coast Care, I was. There are lots of other people in the village and visitors who collect litter on the beach, in the dunes and along the cliffs, so I would like to have their efforts recognised too. Some people are in the Spittal Litter Pickers Group, but others are caring individuals.”

Due to the BBC’s The Blue Planet and media coverage the knock-on effect of discarded litter is making people more aware of the dangers to humans, pets and wildlife. There are schemes popping up all over the country to encourage walkers to pick up a few pieces of litter as they walk, maybe you would like to do the same? Health and Safety guidelines can be found on http://www.keepbritaintidy.org/.

BERWICK U3A

Berwick U3A is an organisation for retired and semi-retired people living in the town, and surrounding areas. We aim to bring people together for learning, leisure, fitness and fun. We have over three hundred members and over fifty active groups, covering a huge range of interests. Each of the groups is run by a volunteer leader; any of our members can set up a group and become a group leader, as long as the chosen activity is suited to the vision of the U3A.

It is easy to join Berwick U3A. All you need to do is fill in the short application form and pay the annual fee of £13. You will then be free to join as many or as few groups as you wish. For practical reasons, some of our groups need to limit their numbers; for example, some meet in members’ homes, where space is limited. If you find that a group you are interested in is full, contact us as there may be other members who are interested in setting up a new group.

We hold an open meeting each month, usually on the first Monday. These meetings are free of charge to members. Open meetings provide an opportunity to socialise and to enjoy presentations from invited speakers. Non-members are welcome to attend one open meeting to sample what is on offer.

Some of our activities are free, while others make a small charge to cover the cost of room hire. Outings and theatre visits are costed to cover transport, entrance fees, ticket, etc. We always aim to keep charges as low as possible. For further details check the groups.

We publish free newsletters during the year to keep you informed of our activities and events. For the most up-to-date information, please go to their website at www.u3asites.org.uk/berwick and check the Notice Board, on the Welcome Page, U3A News and Events sections.

They have a talk coming up in St Paul’s Church, Main Street, Spittal, Tuesday 7th May at 10am, by Jack Arrowsmith, from the Grace Darling Museum, Bamburgh. This is an Open Meeting for their groups, but you can attend if you are interested in becoming an U3A member.

It seems that the U3A has much to offer on many levels so, if you feel like becoming a member and joining in, please get in touch with the Berwick U3A if you would like any further information or have any comments and suggestions. You can do this via their website.

A VIEW FROM THE PROM

As we have just been hearing about above in this newsletter, there are a lot of dedicated people out around the village, either in groups or on their own, who are intent on keeping this place we call home looking as best as it possibly can. Speaking on behalf of you all, they have our thanks, and they should all get a medal for their efforts.

Beachcomber
DID YOU KNOW?

We all see the huge variety of dogs amongst us these days, a lot of these are now cross breeds catering for the popularity of ‘designer dogs’. Well, apparently the River Tweed had its own designer dog known as the Tweed Water Spaniel, or Tweed Spaniel. The following picture is the most widely accepted image of the Tweed Spaniel, and a handsome looking thing it is to.

![Tweed Water Spaniel](image)

There is no use in rushing off to buy one of these beauties as they have been extinct since the 19th century. It is best known for being involved in the early development of the modern Curly Coated Retriever and the Golden Retriever breeds of dogs. They were described as generally brown, athletic dogs from the area along the River Tweed, around Berwick and the Scottish Borders. A type of water dog, the breed was not well known outside the local area. This breed may have been created by crossing local water dogs with imported St. John’s water dog, another breed which is also now extinct.

The Tweed Water Spaniel had a long tail and a curly, liver-coloured coat, and looked similar to the Irish Water Spaniel except it had a heavier muzzle and a pointed skull. The dog also had thick, slightly feathered, hound-like ears, droopy lips, and fore legs that were feathered, but hind legs that were not. Their size was that of a small retriever. Instances of offspring which were liver-coloured but tan below the knees were noted in Hugh Dalziel's 1897 work *British Dogs: Their Varieties, History, Characteristics, Breeding, Management, And Exhibition*, although the author speculated this may have been due to Bloodhound ancestry in one of the parents of the litters.

These dogs were known for their love of water and fishing along the coast lines. They were intelligent, loyal, and very friendly so it is a real shame that it became extinct as it would surely be a much sought-after breed of dog these days.

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