EDITORIAL

Just a reminder that if you have family, friends or you may know of someone who would like to receive a copy of The Point, then please let us know as we can add them to our emailing list. Also, if you are aware of anything that may be of benefit to our community, an event for example, then we may be able to put it in The Point or on our Facebook page. The deadline for the next issue follows. Please note that we do not accept commercial adverts for The Point.

Deadline for the next issue, which covers April and May, is Wednesday 18th March.

SPITTAL IMPROVEMENT TRUST
NOTICE OF AGM

To be held at 7.30pm on WEDNESDAY 22ND 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

At the Trust’s January meeting we took a hard look at our known fixed expenditure for this coming year against our estimated income for the year ahead. Our income has deteriorated over the past few years and we have come to the decision that this will be the last newsletter that will be delivered through your door. We have not taken this decision lightly; we are just unable to meet the cost of producing the paper version of the newsletter. In the past we have had some paying commercial sponsors, but not enough to cover the full cost of printing. From the very first edition of The Point we did not want to go down the route of having a newsletter filled with adverts and very little else.

Therefore, you will find subsequent editions of ‘The Point’ every two months on our website at www.spittalisgreat.co.uk and on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/spittalisgreat.co.uk. A small quantity will be available free in the local Spittal Shop. We do have a list of people who receive the newsletter by email. If you want to be added to this, please forward your email address to newsletter@spittalisgreat.co.uk. I hope you will understand why we are having to do this.

Mike Greener – Secretary SIT

GARDENING

GROUP NEWS

A belated Happy New Year to you all from us here on the Gardening Group.

Apart from those working on the Rose Garden in West Street, see the next item for news on this, the rest of the group are having a short break before the planning and hard work for 2020 begins. I’m sure you will all agree the Christmas trees have been beautiful again this year and the park was lovely. It was good to see that some baubles had been hung on the Christmas tree in the park. This year we will advertise this a bit sooner and hopefully make a bit more of an
event of this. The new signs are now erected around the park and we hope that this will encourage more visitors to the park, as many people in the past have thought it to be a private park.

We have been told that Berwick, which includes Spittal of course, is to be entered into the ‘Town Category’ of ‘Britain in Bloom’ this year. This is a big honour for the Town as a whole, but it will mean a lot of work and we must be on top of our game throughout the judging period. One of our Gardening Group members is having to attend a seminar in Birmingham soon. At this they will be given tips on what the judges are looking for. It seems more floral displays are ‘in’ this year. More news on this in the next edition.

Our ‘Spring Fair’ will be taking place at the end of next month, details are on the preceding poster. As always, we would be grateful for anything that you might have that would be suitable as prizes for the raffle and tombola. We are also discussing plans for a major raffle to boost Gardening Group funds. The raffle will start from the Spring Fair on Saturday 28th March with the draw taking place at the Tea in the Park on Sunday 12th July.

We will keep any surplus gifts from the Spring Fair for ‘Tea in the Park’. This might seem a long way off, especially as we are still experiencing cold days, but it is surprising how quickly it will creep up on us. Let’s hope the rain doesn’t come as well!

But for now, here’s to a blooming good year.
Mau Watkins (Chair) - 07748076527
Sheila Heckles (Secretary) – 01289 331994

LOOKING FORWARD TO SPRING AT, THE MIDDLE STREET ROSE GARDEN

The sparrows are chattering in the shrubbery and will soon be choosing their nest sites, ready for the Spring. We’ve been working from the south end of the strip, clearing the brambles that have knotted the shrubs together and pruning the different species to encourage flowering or more compact growth. Passers-by have told us they appreciate the new, more open look but the birds may be less enthusiastic, so we’ll be leaving a patch at the north end untouched until after the nesting season.

Our monthly work parties aren’t all about pruning and bramble clearing. We’ve planted wallflowers and tulips at the point where Middle Street and West Street join, four new Amelanchier’s in the shrubbery (for spring blossom and autumn colour) and two hundred crocus bulbs around the rose beds. We always make time to stop for tea, cake and conversation. We’re grateful to the Berwick United Reformed Church for letting us use the church hall for this.

We meet at the Rose Garden on the first Saturday of every month, the next session will be on 7th March, from 10am to 12pm.

Everyone is welcome, whatever your age, gardening knowledge or physical strength.

If you need any further information, please phone 07530 844362.

Judith

TWEED ESTUARY PROTECTION GROUP

The purposes of this group are to act as an umbrella group for individuals and organisations concerned with the impact of activities on the Tweed Estuary affecting:

• the safety of wildlife, both on and under the water.
• the degradation of its marine environment.
The immediate concerns when the group first met focused on the unregulated use of the river estuary by powered leisure craft. Following discussions with the Berwick Harbour Commission (BHC), at the end of 2019 the BHC implemented new regulations stating that the Berwick Harbour Authority are imposing a 6-knot speed limit in the Tweed Estuary, which must not be exceeded. It Designates Carr Rock slipway as the only permitted launch and recovery site.

- Launch and recovery is forbidden from any other location (unless agreed by the BHC)
- All motorised craft users must produce a copy of their insurance certificate if requested
- All users must keep at least 25 metres from any shoreline
- Users should never get closer than 50m to wildlife
- No petrol, chemical treatments or litter is to be dropped into the river or foreshore.

The TEPG welcomed these regulations which will create a safer environment for all users and wildlife, and thanks the Harbour Master and Harbour Commission for their work. However, since setting up, TEPG have realised that there are more potentially serious issues that are inclined to affect the River Tweed Estuary.

Tweed Estuary Protection Group membership is open to any individual or organisation that supports its purposes. They meet monthly and the meetings are held at the Berwick United Reformed Church, Main Street, Spittal, TD15 1QY, which is next to The Red Lion. Meetings are at 2pm on the second Wednesday of each month, however this may be subject to change.

Anybody is very welcome to drop in – we would be delighted to see you. If you are unable to attend but have an issue you’d like to raise, or for dates of meetings, or for further information please do contact us by email at: tweedestuarypg@hotmail.com

RAILWAY PETITION
A petition has been set up by Georgina Hill our local NCC Councillor, and she has asked if you could add your name to this petition, which is ‘Later Trains to Berwick-upon-Tweed’, and it is focused on introducing a later train service to Berwick-upon-Tweed from both Scotland and the south.

Why is this important? Berwick-upon-Tweed is situated almost exactly halfway between Edinburgh and Newcastle. The absence of a later train service causes great inconvenience for Berwick residents, those living in the wider area, commuters and those making day trips to places such as Edinburgh, Newcastle and York, those travelling for business purposes, attending sports events, concerts, personal appointments, visiting family etc etc.

It also has a negative impact on tourism and the local economy. For example, Berwick would be a good option for people to stay who wish to take in the Edinburgh Festival if it was not for the timing of the last train back.

Berwick is a train journey of around 45 minutes to both Edinburgh and Newcastle and should be promoted much more as a “Commuter Town” (with the knock-on benefits) but this potential is not realised because of the timings of the last trains.

Berwick is also seeking to get major funding, through the Borderlands Growth Initiative, for a new theatre and conference centre and this needs to be accompanied and supported with later trains to maximise the benefits.

The advantages are significant and wide-ranging from what would seem a relatively simple and achievable measure. Later trains stopping at Berwick is something that the government should insist on when awarding franchises to the train operators.

This campaign means a lot to local people and the more support that it can get behind it, the better chance they have of succeeding. The petition has been up for a while but could do with a boost to get the numbers up. So, if haven’t already signed up you can read more and sign the petition at this shortened link here - http://alturl.com/pj92p

ST JOHN’S CHURCH
Musings from the Rev

Spittal looked beautiful over the run up to Christmas, and the New Year. The lights after dark turned Spittal into a stunning place, full of the promise of life and laughter.

At Northern View on the first Monday of every month, a lunch club with a different activity takes place from 11am - 2pm, and every Friday
there is an after-school club for children from 4pm, where there is a lot of laughter and fun. Ring Mary Higginson 07584 676525 for further details or if transport is required.

On Thursdays in St John’s Church there is a ‘Coffee & Chat’ from 9.00am to 10.30am during term time at which there is a creche for preschool children, and a cuppa for adults, whatever your age! The Church are looking forward to creating a Children’s Nature Garden ‘on their doorstep’ for local schools and children’s groups to explore nature and learn through fun activities. We have applied to Groundwork UK, who are partners with Tesco in the ‘Bags for Help Scheme’. It would be really great if folk could give us your tokens when you shop at Tesco, and please ask your friends to do the same.

On Saturday 28th March at 7pm, Bondington Voices Chamber Choir will be performing in the Church to raise money towards the repair of the East window. Tickets are £5, or family ticket £10, with refreshments at the interval. Tickets are available from Barbara Donaldson, Moira Renton, Joan Blackett, Tina Penney and from the Spittal Shop.

Diana Macnaughton - 07422 507286

BURC (ST PAUL’S CHURCH)

An exciting opportunity has arisen for a part-time Property Manager to work with us and take on responsibility for Berwick United Reformed Church. The premises comprise the church, the Aiden Room and a large hall with kitchen, based at Main Street, Spittal. The successful candidate will undertake and manage a number of key tasks to support the Church members, including the overseeing of lettings and maintenance. Full details about this position can be obtained from isabelle@IMHR.biz. If you are interested in applying, then please also contact isabelle@IMHR.biz for an application pack.

NEW BUSINESS’S

SPITTAL PHOTO RESTORATION

My name is Alex, I’m 25 and live in Spittal and I grew up in Berwick-upon-Tweed. I’ve been using image editing software for a number of years and restored my first photos of my grandparents for my mother’s birthday. I was then asked to restore photos for a family friend, which can be seen on my website, www.spittal-restoration.co.uk, who I’m sure a lot of people will recognise as they are the parents of Sandra Bell at The Blenheim. After positive feedback from everyone I’ve restored photos for, I thought I’d make my services available to everyone. I am employed full-time, so any work will be done in my free time. If interested, then you can contact me via the following details:

Phone: 07442179571
Email: Spittal@gmx.com

LUCKY MINE SEWING ALTERATIONS

My name is Ozlem Peters and if you need alterations I’m here to help. You can either call me on 07564 267287 or email me at ozlem@ice20.com. My address is Mariners Cottage, Cow Road, Spittal, TD15 2QR. Thank you.

And finally…. 

“What does your Daddy do?” the teacher asked the little boy.

“My Dad’s a Magician” replied the little boy.

“That must be exciting! What tricks can he do?” asked the teacher.

“He can saw people in half” the boy said proudly.

“That’s very clever. Do you have any brothers of sisters?” enquired the teacher.

“Yes,” replied the boy, “one half-brother and two half-sisters”.

SIT Contacts:

Chair: Mau Watkins – 01289 308813
mrswatkins2@hotmail.co.uk

Secretary: Mike Greener – 07752 403409
mike@spittalisgreat.co.uk

Website: www.spittalisgreat.co.uk