

## SPOTLIGHT ON SOUTH DURHAM

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**Peter Thomas - Building Self-Belief CIO Christine Thomas - Building Self-Belief CIO with pupils Keiran pacey, Olivia Adamson, Ashleigh Croft, Rudi Wilkie**

## Project of remembrance for town's fallen soldiers goes on display

REMEMBRANCE is a big part of British culture and many communities have a memorial to those lost in the Great War. And to help keep alive the memory of those who did not return, youngsters in one town took part in a project which resulted in a film and exhibition. Children at Tow Law Millennium Primary School worked with Conssett charity Building Self-Belief CIO on a Great War Project funded by the

National Heritage Lottery. The children developed their skills in writing, poetry, art and photography as well as historical research. As part of the initiative, which aimed to connect Tow Law and surrounding villages in remembrance of the fallen, pupils researched the names of almost 100 men and boys who died in the war and are named on the war memorial which was dedicated in 1921.

They visited the memorial, Beamish Museum, the historical records office, worked with the Durham Light Infantry Museum and used a variety of sources to piece together what life was like for soldiers from Tow Law. Christine Thomas, trustee of Building Self-Belief, said: "We were delighted to receive this support thanks to National Lottery players. "The children and staff at Tow Law

Millennium Primary School have been fantastic throughout. We are so pleased that they have created such a thought-provoking film, exhibition and anthology of work. "The young people have really developed their confidence in their own abilities as they approach secondary school." Headteacher Lisa Jackson said: "We are so proud of all of the students who took part and have really seen

their skills and self-confidence flourish. We thank Building Self-Belief CIO and the National Lottery for their support in giving the children such an opportunity to build their skills and develop their cultural understanding of Tow Law during the Great War." An exhibition of their work is at Tow Law Community Centre throughout the summer before it moves to Beamish for display.

# New homes plan approved for land next to old council depot

A PROPOSAL to build seven new houses next to an old council depot has been given the go-ahead.

Durham County Council planning officers recently approved the application, by Michael Allison, to redevelop 0.4 hectares of land off Etherley Lane, Bishop Auckland.

The outline plan refers to a triangular section of land, part of which was once an inert landfill site, close to the Coal Burn stream and behind a low stone wall.

Whilst details such as house design and landscaping will be determined at a later stage, it is suggested that the detached and semi-detached houses will be built in a row to the south of the site. They will have back gardens and driveways at the front, and vehicle access is situated next to the exist-

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ing site entrance.

In a delegated report, case officer Amy Williamson describes the land as 'an area of ancient and semi natural woodland'.

Some neighbours contacted the authority to voice concerns about the proposal.

One couple suggested 'any removal of long-established trees such as those in the vicinity would be criminal', and claimed that the plans are 'intrusive'.

Another felt the land 'is one of the few remaining and important natural habitats for wildlife including foxes, badgers, owls and bats and such habitats should be preserved'.

But an ecological survey found that whilst there are ash, sycamore, cherry and willow trees 'the site is small with no significant wildlife signs present' and 'no other specially protected habitat or species on or in the immediate vicinity of the site was identified'.

Whilst there are no designated public rights of way within the site, there is evidence of regular footfall through the woodland so the developer will be asked to help pay for improvements to the surrounding path network. Pedestrian access through the site and to the wood would be maintained.

Case officer Amy Williamson said application for approval of reserved matters needs to be done within three years and building two years after that.



**Outline plans for houses off Etherley Lane have been approved**