

Settle & District Community News

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No. 191 Feb/Mar 2026





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Editor's Welcome



It's probably too late by now to wish you all Happy New Year as we are now into February, but there, I've done it anyway, as this is after all our first issue of 2026!

The new year got off to a sad start for me personally. Jean Harvey, a resident of Limestone View who was one of the first customers for my technical support business which I started in Settle in 2022, and who quickly became a very good friend, died at the age of 93 on 3rd January.

Jean always lived life to the full extent of her abilities and will be very much missed by all who knew her. I was honoured to be asked to do a reading at Jean's funeral, which was just as she wanted, a celebration of her life. It was a reminder that at the start of every new year, and indeed every new day, to think positively about what you can achieve, rather than dwell negatively on things which may be out of reach or beyond your own influence.

As always, this issue of *Community News* is packed full of interesting stories from around our district, including interviews with Matteo D'Ali about his battle to return to his home and business in Settle after a holiday overseas, and Claire Roberts, the new executive headteacher of the primary schools in Settle and Kirkby Malham. Plus, we have tips on looking after our beautiful environment and lots of new events and activities to discover. I hope you enjoy it.

Finally, many thanks to Pip Carr for providing us with another striking cover image, and our brilliant team of volunteers who go out in all weathers to get the magazine delivered to your door!

John Drake

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Issue 191: Feb/Mar 2026

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Published on a non-profit making basis by The Settle and District Community News.

Printed by
Caric Press, Merthyr Tydfil,
CF48 3TD

Distributed free of charge bi-monthly to homes across Settle and District, including Selside, Horton-in-Ribblesdale, Rathmell, Stainforth, Langcliffe, Austwick, Eldroth, Giggleswick, Long Preston and Hellifield.

The Editor reserves the right to edit any material submitted for publication. Views expressed by contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or publishers.

Grit theft shocks parish council

Members of Giggleswick Parish Council, attending their January meeting, were surprised to learn that the full contents of one of the grit bins had been taken.

The bin had recently been positioned to service the passageway and slope that leads from Bankwell Road to the Memorial Bridge and Kings Mill in Settle. The council says this can be a challenging and treacherous route, especially for the elderly and disabled but it is their only route to the shops or other services in nearby Settle.

The evening before the incident volunteers, based on the weather forecast, had ensured that this area was gritted, only to return the next morning to find that the contents had been taken.

Given the volume of grit that had been taken the council believes that someone must have witnessed the incident and may even know who carried out the act.

The grit will be replaced but the council says it is not without cost.

The council is however keen to put the incident in the context of the many positive acts that characterise the village. It says: "Giggleswick is a small village that relies heavily on the good work of volunteers and the generosity and support given by its residents and those who support them. When incidents like this happen we have to look at the positives that keep our little village ticking along. This includes the generosity of local people who have in recent years provided new benches and new picnic benches in the public amenity space known as Harrison Playing Fields; the volunteer litter pickers who in all weathers wander the village ensuring it is a clean place to live and visit and the support they have been given by North



Yorkshire Council by providing new fit for purpose waste bins throughout the village; the volunteers who have helped to maintain the water course running through

the village known as Tems Beck; the volunteers who keep the grounds of our local church a pleasant place to visit; the WI and local community members who knitted hundreds of poppies that were draped over the market cross and were placed on trees in the playing fields; the volunteers who ensure the market cross has a magnificent floral display in the summer months and a wreath at Christmas; and the volunteers who have cleared a neglected area adjacent to the River Ribble. Underpinning this are the wider residents who look out for each other, making Giggleswick a happy little place to live in and to visit. As some people have commented 'we are in some ways still in the 1950's'.

To the grit bin thieves the council says – "you probably didn't think of the implications of your actions on our lovely little community – next time, please do!"

Folly work to start in March

Work is to start next month on a major project that will involve re-roofing Settle's only grade one listed building.

Scaffolding will go up in March around the 350-year-old Folly, which houses the Museum of North Craven Life. This will mark the start of work that not only includes replacing the roof, but also re-pointing exterior walls, insulating roof spaces, re-instating lime plaster and redecorating using traditional paints. Also planned are new and refurbished windows and the opening up of the building's dry moat, along with its handrails and walkways. There will also be changes to

the outside courtyard stairs and revised drainage works.

The project has been made possible thanks to a government grant of almost £800,000 awarded last spring, as part of a national programme for museums. Listed building and planning consent were given late last year following the involvement of Historic England.

The Folly's award-winning Coffee House will remain open throughout the year-long project. The museum is expected to re-open fully next spring.

New Mobile Library

North Yorkshire Council have replaced their mobile library with a smaller, more versatile vehicle that will be able to visit more communities across the county. New stops include Hellifield, Horton in Ribblesdale and Long Preston. The February schedule with dates, places and times for each stop is shown below: there will be visits every month to these stops.

The mobile library service offers thousands of books. You can either come onto the vehicle to choose your own books or books can be selected for you to collect when the library visits. Phone 01609 533878 or email mobilelibrary@northyorks.gov.uk to arrange this. If you are not yet a library member you can join onboard the mobile library. If you need to return borrowed books and miss the mobile library visit, you can return them on the next visit or to any of North Yorkshire library branches. You can also renew books and other items online and over the telephone. Charges apply to some items on the mobile library, for example CDs and DVDs; for details ask one of our staff when you visit.

HELLIFIELD: Back Lane car park, Thursday 19th February 11.45am-12.45pm
HORTON IN RIBBLESDALE: Craig

Hill Road car park, Monday 23rd February 1.15pm - 2.15pm

LONG PRESTON: Layby near the Maypole Inn, Wednesday 25th February 2.30pm - 3.30pm

Longer opening hours for Settle Station

It is not that long ago that people across this area rallied round in a campaign to keep Settle train station ticket office open.

The campaign, part of a much wider effort across the region, was successful and now, in a major about turn, the station is opening for more hours rather than less.

As from Sunday 11th January, Settle station will be staffed and the ticket office open at the following times:

Monday to Friday 06:00 to 21:00
Saturday 07:00 to 21:00
Sunday 09:45 to 20:00.

This will be a major relief for people with limited mobility as it means there will be access to and from the northbound platform at all times when passenger trains are due to travel in that direction.

Paul Brown, station supervisor at Settle: “Anyone wishing to access platform 2 (Carlisle bound platform) with assistance from staff rather than using the footbridge, please turn up 20 mins before train departure in order for staff to open the foot / barrow crossing. If a freight or passenger train is due on platform 1 (Leeds bound side), it is not safe to cross and people may have to wait for the next available departure which could be up to two hours later.”

On the issue of ticketing Paul adds: “If you need tickets, railcards or travel advice please do call and see us. Advice and tickets can be for travel anywhere in the country. And with longer opening hours we will have the time to help with more complicated requests”.



Inter-City via Settle?

A treat for train buffs, and a surprise perhaps for others living near the line, has been the sight for two weeks in January of Avanti West Coast Class 805 trains providing a shuttle service between Carlisle and Preston over 'our' railway, while the West Coast mainline was closed for reconstruction of the M6 motorway bridge near Penrith.

The 805s are bi-mode trains and can run on electric or diesel power making them suitable for running via Settle. They have a top speed of 125mph but had to saunter along in our area at 60.

How often the exercise will be repeated when other renewals on the West Coast line fall due remains to be seen, though we gather that it may happen again over the Easter period. However, many folk would like to see regular Yorkshire-Glasgow services running with this type of rolling stock (and calling at Settle); but that requires a lot of ducks, financial and practical to get into a row.

Phil Hinde

Rail partnership up for awards

The Settle Carlisle Railway Development Company Community Rail Partnership has been shortlisted for five community rail awards, the national accolade that celebrates the inspiring work of community rail partnerships and station volunteer groups across Britain.

Last year the partnership was presented

with the photo award for capturing the essence of community rail with their trolley staff's 'calendar girls' image. This year they are shortlisted for:

- Influencing positive change and sustainability with their trolley service.
- Empowering diverse groups through their Try the Train project.
- Silver level award for the Crafty Ladies flowerpot display and station adopters gardens.
- Most Effective Communications Campaign for the Things to do on the Settle Carlisle line this weekend.
- Outstanding Volunteer Contribution, for which Janet Benzie has been nominated.

The Community Rail Awards, now in their 21st year, celebrate the contribution of local groups and volunteers who transform stations into welcoming, inclusive spaces and connect communities with rail travel.

This year's winners will be revealed at a prestigious ceremony in Derby on Thursday, 19th March.

Donation centre helps transform pool finances

The creation of a new donation point for Settle Area Swimming Pool's fund-raising shops has helped transform the pool's finances.

A recent meeting of the forty volunteers who run the shops and the new unit on the Sowarth Industrial Estate was told that over the first nine months of the current financial year the pool had gone from making an overall loss of around £40,000 in that period last year to a profit of more than £100,000 this year. Treasurer Ken Larkins said this was largely due to the big increase in the income from the fund-raising shops

and, especially, income from goods sold at the unit (located at Unit 4, Smith's Yard, Sowarth Industrial Estate BD24 9FQ, opposite Arla Dairies).

Volunteers were, however, reminded that the pool continued to make a loss on income from customers paying at the centre, for swimming, classes and the gym but this was a common feature of public pools across the country. In other places, such as Skipton and in Lancashire, pools rely on council subsidies. This is not the case in Settle. What made the difference here was the income from the three retail units, the two shops in the centre of town and especially the unit on the industrial estate. The larger space in the unit makes it possible to store and display items that could not go to the shops. Alongside the new source of income at the unit, sales at the shops have also gone up over the past year. Volunteers were told this was only possible thanks to the generosity of people who brought items to donate, to those who bought goods, and especially the hard work of volunteers who work at all three units.

In a further word of caution, volunteers were told that the pool must still pay off almost £270,000 of loans taken out to help finance the major redevelopment project that took place in the early 2020s. The fund-raising operation would need to continue to operate as it is doing for some time to ensure that this is done.

In a further move to improve facilities at the pool new solar batteries are being installed to ensure best use is made of the bank of solar panels on the building roof.

Beavers: Henry is hunting for new recruits!

Henry Pain, Beaver leader tells us that after re-launching with a new team in September, Settle Beavers is very much up and running, and has some space for

new members! Meetings happen every Thursday from 5.30pm to 6.30pm for children ages 6-8 at the Drill Hall in Settle. If you have any enquiries please direct them to settlebeavers@gmail.com.



Girlguiding thriving around Settle

Girlguiding units in the Settle area have had a fantastic and very active autumn, with Rainbows, Brownies and Guides all enjoying a wide range of fun and meaningful activities.

Settle Rainbows were busy getting into the festive spirit with seasonal crafts, including back-to-front Christmas cards and decorated bottles. One Rainbow also achieved her Gold Award before moving up to Brownies – a brilliant achievement after completing all six themes of the Girlguiding programme.

Settle Brownies have also had a very successful and rewarding time. The girls celebrated some fantastic achievements, with three Gold Awards, one Silver Award and two Bronze Awards being completed – a wonderful reflection of their commitment and enthusiasm. They took part in the Wildlife Winter Challenge, learning about animals that are currently endangered as well as exploring the birds we may spot locally during the winter months. This helped the girls develop a greater understanding of nature, conservation

and the environment around them. The Brownies also worked on Live Smart Stage 2, learning how to safely and sensibly use tools and kitchen equipment – important life skills that encourage independence and responsibility.

Clapham and Austwick Brownies and Guides have also packed a lot in. One Guide has achieved her Bronze award and well on the way to Silver. The unit explored local history by discovering witches' marks during a visit to The Folly in Settle, spent an interesting evening at the Hoffmann Lime Kiln, and enjoyed festive activities such as sewing mini stockings, decorating candles and making chocolate logs.

Settle Brownies joined Clapham Brownies and Guides for an exciting camp day, where they had the chance to explore key camping skills. Activities included putting up tents, making pizzas using camp ovens, and for the Guides, trying their hand at wood whittling. It was a fun, hands-on day that built confidence and teamwork.

All units visited Settle Railway Station and took part in activities to complete elements of the Railway Challenge learning about the local railway and safety on the line.

All proudly attended the Remembrance Parade. Clapham Guides and Brownies paraded two new unit flags for the first time, marking a special and memorable occasion for the units and the girls involved. The parade was a meaningful opportunity for the girls to show respect, take part in their community and represent Girlguiding with pride.

There are currently a few spaces available for girls:

Rainbows : ages 5-7

Brownies: ages 7-10

Guides: ages 10-14

Adult volunteers and helpers are always welcome and make a huge difference to

what the girls can achieve.

To register interest or find out more, visit www.girlguiding.org.uk.

Courthouse Kids to Stage Beauty and the Beast this Spring

The Courthouse Kids bring Disney's beloved tale Beauty and the Beast to Victoria Hall, Settle from 26th to 28th March 2026. Directed by Paula Griffiths with musical leadership from Steven Lawson, the production features a cast of young performers aged 8-16. Following impressive auditions in December, rehearsals are now in full swing having begun on 5th January. Courthouse Kids is the youth section of Settle Amateur Operatic Society, providing drama training and performance opportunities to young people in the Settle area.

Performances: Thursday 26th, Friday 27th & Saturday 28th March, Victoria Hall, Settle.

Ticket details to be announced via the Victoria Hall box office.

Settle Orchestra and Langcliffe Singers Reunite for Beethoven's Mass in C

Settle Orchestra is pleased to announce its Spring 2026 concert, bringing together orchestra and choir in a significant collaboration with the Langcliffe Singers for a performance of Beethoven's Mass in C. The programme also features Beethoven's dramatic Egmont Overture and Mendelssohn's chorale cantata *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden*.

This concert continues a long-standing musical partnership between Settle Orchestra and the Langcliffe Singers, whose previous collaborations — including a much-praised performance of Brahms' Requiem — have become highlights of the local classical music calendar.

Conducted by Andre Chan, Settle

Orchestra's 2025–26 season conductor and a postgraduate conductor at the Royal Northern College of Music, the performance explores Beethoven's expressive sacred writing, balancing intimacy with dramatic power.

Together, the two ensembles continue their commitment to bringing large-scale classical music to audiences across the Yorkshire Dales, combining professional leadership with strong community roots.

Saturday 21 March 2026 – 3.30pm, Settle Parish Church

Sunday 29 March 2026 – 3:30pm, Christ Church, Skipton

Eyes on the Skies Protecting Birds of Prey

The Friends of the Dales charity is continuing its campaign against the ongoing criminal persecution of birds of prey, which it describes as 'a barbaric practice that continues, despite these majestic species having been protected in law for over 70 years'. It is holding two free online talks on the subject in the next few weeks.

First up is 'Saving Our Precious Sky Dancers' – with Indy Kiemel Greene and Adrian Rowe from Hen Harrier Action. This takes place on Wednesday 18 February, 5:30pm – 7:00pm. Indy – familiar from *Springwatch*, *8 Out of 10 Bats*, and the HHA Skydancer Day – will introduce the iconic, red-listed hen harrier: how to recognise it, its key behaviours, and why it's a vital indicator of upland ecosystem health. Adrian will then reveal how satellite tagging helps monitor raptors and exposes illegal persecution, and how the charity is funding both tags and specialised wildlife-crime detection dogs to strengthen protection efforts.

Later, on Wednesday March 18 5.30pm – 7pm there is 'Talking Raptor

Persecution' with Dr Ruth Tingay. Wildlife conservationist Dr Ruth Tingay, who has worked in the field of raptor research and conservation for more than 30 years, now focuses on campaigning against the illegal killing of birds of prey in the UK through the blog Raptor Persecution UK. She is also a co-director of the hard-hitting wildlife conservation organisation Wild Justice with Chris Packham.

You can book for both of these free talks at: www.friendsofthedes.org.uk/events

All talks can also be viewed later via: www.youtube.com/@friendsofthedes

Hospitality Marketing Seminar

Visit North Yorkshire are promoting a free marketing seminar for local businesses in the tourism and hospitality sector. It is aimed at accommodation and activity-providers, attractions, food and drink and retail businesses. The seminar takes place at the Old Sawmill Café in Clapham on Monday 9th February 1pm - 3.15pm and is run by Susan Briggs. It is described as 'an upbeat marketing workshop designed to kick-start your marketing for 2026' and organisers say it has been specially created for North Yorkshire's tourism and hospitality businesses.

To register and for more details visit: <https://tourismnetwork.co.uk/clapham>

Made Smarter

Manufacturing companies in this area looking to invest in new technology such as automation, robotics, AI, 3D printing and data-driven tools are being offered the chance to apply for government grant funding of up to 50 percent of project costs, up to £20,000.

Made Smarter, the government-backed digital adoption programme, has handed out £1.4 million in CapEx grants, across the Yorkshire and Humber region. The

current funding window in which £325,000 is available closes at the end of March. To learn more about Made Smarter support or register interest in the programme, visit: madesmarter.uk/adoption/in-my-region/yorkshire-the-humber.



Rotary raises thousands thanks to Santa

For three weeks in December an intrepid band of Settle Rotary Club members and helpers toured the town streets as well as those of Giggleswick and surrounding villages with Santa in his sleigh. The club was also there with Santa's Grotto at the town centre lights switch on, and paid Saturday visits to Booths and the Co-op. The aim was to raise money for local good causes, and the result was a fantastic £8,000 in donations. The club's heartfelt thanks go to those who contributed so generously and the marvellous support of our 'friends'.

The monies raised will be used throughout 2026 to support local charities, clubs and individuals and so enhance our community. If your organisation wants to apply for a grant from these funds, you should contact our secretary, David Blackburne (dhblackburne@btinternet.com), for further details.

The Rotary Club of Settle is a small group of men and women who are part of one of the largest and most trusted community service organisations in the world. Here in Settle we have been supporting our neighbourhood for nearly 100 years. We urgently need more members to help us continue our mission to give something back, locally, nationally and internationally. If you would like more information, check out our website - Google "Rotary Club of Settle" - or come along to a meeting - we are a very friendly group, and membership is extremely open, flexible and relaxed.

Here is advance notice of two further events we are organising:

Firstly, on February 20th, we are holding our ever popular annual 'Merry Go Round' meal, which involves participants visiting three local hosteries for three different courses, departing from Giggleswick School. The places each group of participants visits are allocated at random on arrival at the school.

Secondly, on Sunday May 31st the 'Settle Saunter' will take place, starting at the Victoria Hall. This again, raises monies (over £4,000 last year) which go to various charities including the local Cave Rescue Organisation and Settle Victoria Hall. The Saunter is an annual walking / running event along footpaths and bridleways taking entrants into some of the quieter and lesser-known parts of the Yorkshire Dales. It passes through some picturesque rural villages and hamlets, and over some of the lower fells around Settle. This is another event where we rely heavily on the help of the local community and offers of such would be gratefully received.

Information about both events, providing help, and the Rotary Club of Settle generally are available from David Blackburne.

Nick Burton



Settlemas Brings Festive Cheer

The team behind Vibrant Settle and the town's Flowerpot Festival are celebrating a successful debut for Settlemas, the new community-driven initiative designed to showcase Settle as a great festive destination.

Launched with the town's Christmas market and light switch-on event, Settlemas united local businesses under one festive umbrella, creating a comprehensive online hub where residents and visitors could discover everything the town had to offer throughout December from special events and competitions to exclusive offers and festive shopping opportunities. The platform served as a one-stop shop for Christmas in Settle.

Local traders enthusiastically embraced the initiative, with many creating bespoke events and promotions specifically for Settlemas.

"You always have a worry about promotions like this that no one will bother," admitted Lisa Miller, who managed the Settlemas website. "But I was really impressed by how many people jumped at the opportunity and how quickly they responded. It just goes to show how passionate the local business community is about promoting the town for everyone, not just themselves."

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Adding to the festive atmosphere, Settlemas featured a special edition of the beloved Flowerpot Trail. “The 12 Pots of Christmas”, which delighted visitors with whimsical displays that put a tongue-in-cheek spin on the traditional carol, including knitting owls, herons sporting flat caps, and an “udderly fabulous” cow outside Victoria Hall.

Steve Amphlett and Richard Handscombe, the creative minds behind the trail, expressed satisfaction with the results. They said: “It’s given us a good foundation on which to build for future years. We sold over 100 trail sheets and received many positive comments about the flowerpot displays.”

With the success of the inaugural Settlemas under their belts, the Vibrant Settle team is already planning a bigger, better Settlemas 2026, with the goal of cementing Settle’s reputation as the premier December destination in the Yorkshire Dales.

Journey to the Cross

With Easter less than two months away, planning and rehearsals are underway for this year’s Good Friday street drama, *Journey to the Cross*, which will be performed at locations around Settle on Friday 3rd April.

The street drama, organised by Churches Together in Settle & District, is now one of the big outdoor events in the Settle calendar. Telling the story of Christ’s trial and crucifixion, it was first performed in 2009 and has been staged each Good Friday thereafter, except for 2020 when Covid 19 prevented any public gatherings: the previous year’s video was put on the parish church’s website that year as an alternative to the actual event.

The drama starts at St John’s Methodist Church off Church Street at 10.30am,

then walking to Millennium Gardens for a further scene before going on to the Market Place for the trial. It concludes in the Parish Church grounds.

Anyone interested in taking part should get in touch with the producer, Sally Waterson: sally@thewatersons.org. The organisers would particularly appreciate help with arranging the props in the Market Place.

The event is free and people can join at any point from the Millennium Gardens starting point to the church, where refreshments, including hot cross buns, will be served, following the event, by the Giggleswick with Settle Mothers’ Union.

Church seeks railway memorabilia

Settle parish church’s family fun days this summer will have a railway theme in support of the Settle-Carlisle 150th anniversary celebrations. The church team are working closely with the Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line (FoSCL) on plans for the weekend of 11th and 12th July – so save the dates. More details will follow.

Meanwhile, if anyone has a portable model railway that could be exhibited in the church, or any railway souvenirs and memorabilia (new or good condition) mugs, badges, signs etc. suitable for a rail tombola, please contact Revd Julie Clarkson on 01729 825955 (vicar@castleberchurches.uk) or Phil Hinde on 074484 174333 (philhinde@btinternet.com).

Sheep study aims to cut gas emissions

Tests carried out on sheep in the Yorkshire Dales could help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

A study led by Wensleydale farmer Adrian Thornton-Berry is exploring how methane emissions differ between native Swaledale sheep and half-bred Texel-cross sheep

when both graze on different forages in the upland landscape. The study is seen as being important as agriculture contributes 12 percent of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions with 50 percent from livestock. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas, therefore a key priority for the sector on which to focus mitigations.

The Dales study used 120 sheep - 60 of each breed - split into three groups of 40 and grazed on either improved (treated, seeded and/or fertilised), species rich (natural and untreated for 30 years) or regenerating moorland forage. Full results of the tests are expected later this year.

The aim is to find a way to support upland farmers and help them improve productivity and financial resilience at the same time. Researchers say that by using breeds that are adapted to the local landscape, and exploiting the most appropriate grazing resources, farmers can both reduce input costs and increase profitability, while making a positive environmental impact through minimising methane emissions and helping to improve biodiversity.

Try something new with U3A

Is there something that has always piqued your interest? Do you want to dust off an old skill or learn something entirely new? Would you like to get out more and make new friends? Settle District u3a is a treasure trove of possibilities to stimulate your little grey cells.

Current groups range from Art Appreciation to Walking. Some meet at a regular venue such as the Ukulele group at the Friends Meeting House or Settle Solos at The Folly, whilst other groups like Bird Watching and Old Buildings organise visits and trips to pursue their members' interests. Groups take place at a wide variety of venues across Settle District and beyond.

More information can be found on our website: <https://settle.u3asite.uk/>. Under 'Groups' you can search what's on offer alphabetically, by category, by day, and by venue, making it easy to find something exciting. To join, contact the Membership Secretary by emailing sdu3a.membership@gmail.com or, to find out more, ring our enquiries number 07761 063774.

There's a perception u3a is for retired folks and whilst this isn't wrong, it's too narrow for today's u3a. Originally known as The University of the Third Age, u3a now caters for anyone with some free time, looking to do something they are interested in. There is no upper or lower age limit.

We have a monthly meeting/get-together at St John's church hall on the second Thursday of each month at 10am. A small charge of £2 (£1 for members) gains you entry to listen to some excellent general interest speakers. Tea and coffee are available from the volunteer led refreshments booth for a tiny 50p charge which includes a free biscuit. Come in, sit at a free table or join other people and find out why they are u3a members.

Current annual membership is £20 or £39 for a couple. Each group asks for a small donation (usually £1 - unbelievable value!) towards room hire, and some groups may ask additionally for donations for resources provided.

Liz Wade & Jannie Jacks

Volunteer dog walkers wanted

A national charity that helps elderly and terminally ill pet owners keep their animals with them when they are unable to provide the necessary level of care, is seeking volunteer dog walkers in the Settle area.

The plea follows a call from help from a dog owner in the Kirkgate area who is no longer able to give their pet the exercise it needs.

The Cinnamon Trust, which is looking for volunteers, has the broader aim of relieving owners of worries about their pets welfare during and after their own lifetime.

Pets can be registered with the trust so they come into its guardianship should the owner pass away or have to go into residential care. They are then rehomed with one of its long-term foster volunteers and will live with them for life. The trust pays the vets fees and provides holiday cover and ongoing support.

Anyone interested in joining the local volunteers or wanting more information should contact: sallycollins@cinnamon.org.uk



Parkinson's Support Group

Skipton & District Parkinson's Support Group is one of many such local groups throughout the UK. We are run by a small team of volunteers and offer information, friendship and support to people with Parkinson's, their family and carers. Group members live across the Craven area and adjoining parts of East Lancashire and Bradford.

Parkinson's is a complex neurological condition. There are over 40 symptoms from a tremor or stiffness to problems with sleep and mental health. In the UK, 166,000 people are currently living with

the condition.

The local group run a monthly 'hub club' at Skipton Town Hall, where anyone affected by Parkinson's can meet in an informal environment for a cuppa, a biscuit and a chat. Sometimes a local professional drops in, and we also have a range of leaflets and information available. We usually meet on the third Thursday of the month, from 2pm to 3.30pm. If you plan to come along for the first time, please check our Facebook page, Craven Herald listings or email sue@yorkshrmn.co.uk to make sure we'll be there. £2 per session is charged to cover refreshments.

Being active is important in managing Parkinson's symptoms so the group hold a monthly exercise class, specifically designed for people with Parkinson's. These take place in the Drama Studio at Skipton Academy on the second Monday of most months, 6pm to 7.30pm. The session is run by Eat, Move, Be Happy and places can be booked on their website <https://eatmovebehappy.com/getmoving/parkinsonsexercise/> or by calling Anna Sherin on 07813 703585. £6 per session.

The group also hold an annual lecture, produce a regular newsletter and hold fund-raising and awareness events. We are looking for more volunteers to help with all these activities. If you are interested in helping or would just like more information our contacts are: Paul Gittins, Lead Volunteer: 07715 163880; Valerie Barker, Membership Secretary: membershipsksipton@outlook.com. The group facebook page is facebook.com/skiptonparkinsons

Advice, information and support for anyone affected by Parkinson's is also available via the Parkinson's UK website, www.parkinsons.org.uk, or the free, confidential helpline on 0808 800 0303.

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Quakers to host acclaimed photographic exhibition

In a coup for Settle, the Quaker Meeting House is pleased to be hosting a nationally acclaimed photographic exhibition for eight weeks from Sunday 15th February.

Following its previous runs at Salts Mill, Bradford's Cartwright Hall and, latterly, the Dean Clough Galleries in Halifax, the 'Kehillah' exhibition consists of a decade-long photographic record of Bradford's dwindling Jewish community and its last remaining synagogue in Manningham. The photographic artist behind the work is a Muslim woman, Nudrat Afza, who lives in the same inner-city neighbourhood.

'Kehillah' (Hebrew for congregation or community) is a manifestation of the special relationship between Bradford's Jewish and Muslim communities. Bradford council's most recent statistics show there are just 254 Jews left in the city, a tiny



number for an area that became home to so many German Jews in the 19th century that the warehouse district they created is still called Little Germany. The Muslim population, meanwhile, is recorded as 166,846.

Afza's project began in 2013, a year when the already well-established friendly relations between the faith groups gained in strength and depth. In that year the synagogue's dwindling congregation was facing closure because the 1881 Grade II listed building was in need of expensive and unaffordable repair.

Aware of this and of the local Jewish culture that had earlier thrived in the city, Afza embarked on documenting it. She was already friends with the late Rudi Leavor, a 'Kindertransport' refugee and the synagogue's then nonagenarian chairman, having helped him out with a favour (transferring a fridge from a synagogue a few miles away when it closed). With the support of members of the Jewish community, Afza was given access to photograph in both the now demolished Orthodox synagogue and in Manningham's by then badly leaking synagogue, producing an invaluable record of Jewish worship in one of the nation's oldest Reform congregations.

Seeing the crisis, Manningham's Muslim community rallied round and raised funds for the synagogue's repairs (a Lottery grant



would eventually follow).

As Afza has observed, a Muslim woman taking photographs of the Jewish community might jar with the common narrative that Jews and Muslims don't get along, but as she says, "in Bradford, people from different communities respect each other". Bradford's interfaith friendships remain steadfast. When I attended the synagogue recently (all faiths and none are welcome but please contact beforehand), the security on the door was a young Muslim volunteer.

'Kehillah', which has twice been reviewed by *The Guardian*, has been described as "capturing the everyday spirit of contemporary Jewish Britain with poignancy and elegance". Afza's fans include Simon Beaufoy, the Oscar-winning screenwriter behind *The Full Monty* and *Slumdog Millionaire*, who has insisted on giving Afza a top-of-the-range camera on 'permanent loan'.

"Everyone with a phone can take a photograph," says Beaufoy. "But not everybody is a photographer. In the colourful noise of a billion images, a few people stand out. Nudrat is one of them."

The preview will be at 12 noon on 15th February. All are invited to come along and meet the photographer as well as some of those she captured on film. Limestone Books will be stocking the book of the exhibition.

Sue Vickerman

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TRANSPORT NEWS

Photo: John Carey

As we welcome in 2026, one of the recent highlights has undoubtedly been the much-anticipated arrival of the Avanti diversion trains, a consequence of the West Coast Main Line closure during the rebuilding of Clifton Bridge across the M6 near Penrith. This is a Department for Transport led project and a major undertaking involving several agencies. The Hitachi 'Evere' trains, normally to be found on routes such as Euston to Holyhead, are capable of switching from electric to diesel mode, the diesel engines generating electricity to the traction motors. And a fine sight they are as they glide along the Settle and Carlisle, albeit at a rather pedestrian 60 mph.

It is worth noting that the Settle Carlisle route was last used for regular diversions in 2013, but it demonstrates the vital importance of retaining a third route to the north that could so easily have been lost. Widely thought to be a good thing for the line, it does come with caveats, one of which is the constraint that occasional diversionary paths might place upon aspirations for future development of long distance and local passenger services on the line. The West Coast Main Line

upgrade works are due to run for around ten years with closures expected for ten percent of that time during which we could potentially see diversions. That means that any diversion paths would be unused for 90 percent of the time. Unfortunately, the line has limited capacity with increased freight use.

However, despite a flawless trial run in August 2025, the Evere units have encountered a number of issues, it is suggested this is due to the prolonged running of the diesel power units combined with the harsh climate and gradients. Unfortunately, several of the units have failed, with services cancelled as a result. Indeed, on one day in particular, eight of the 15 services were lost. In addition, water pipes have frozen and it is believed that there have been crew allocation issues. However, things improved towards the end of the period. No doubt valuable lessons will have been learned which will inform the decisions on whether to carry the diversion strategy forward for the remainder of the upgrade. We already know that the next period of diversions will take place for 14 days commencing 4th April.

But back to our local train services, performance was beginning to recover following the seasonal leaf-fall. It has to be said that there have been markedly fewer infrastructure issues, most likely due to the increased vigilance of Network Rail during the main line diversions. However, as many frustrated travellers discovered, services were suspended on the 15/16th December due to a forecast of severe rainfall in the Cumbria area. This included the Bentham line despite it being out of the area. As a consequence, 'Do Not Travel' notices were issued, the implication of which is that the railway is not obliged to offer alternative rail replacement. In the event, it appeared that the decision to include the whole of the Cumbria area was perhaps misplaced as the weather was not as bad along the Settle and Carlisle corridor, although heavy rainfall and some flooding was experienced in the Lake District.

Unfortunately, we are seeing an increased tendency towards pre-emptive cancellations whereas these would have been unheard of in the past. Surely it would be better to keep going until the conditions proved impossible rather than simply stand down paid staff. Our railways are probably the one mode of transport that passengers expect to be able to rely upon in times of inclement weather. But it appears that the initial decision came from Network Rail and Northern had no option but to comply. However, there remains a question as to why the Bentham line should have been included, or why services could not have run between, say, between Ribblehead and Leeds. Indeed, this would have assisted commuters on the Monday in question, a valuable market which the railway desperately needs to win back.

Moving on to our bus services, there

are no significant changes to report. The Lonsdale 580/581 continues to provide the regular Monday-Saturday connection from Settle Market Place to Skipton and Kirkby Lonsdale. Also, the No 11 provides a service to Horton and Clitheroe on weekdays and Saturdays. In addition, there are several excellent journey opportunities away from the railway during the winter months. From Dent Station, the Western Dales Bus provides the all-year Saturday S1 connection to Dent village, Sedbergh and Kendal, whilst the Little White Bus provides a Monday to Saturday connection from Garsdale Station to Hawes, both of these services connecting with the 10.21 train from Settle. From Kirkby Stephen or Appleby, it is possible to use the 563 to reach Penrith, Monday to Saturday.

For regular journeys on the Leeds-Settle-Carlisle and Morecambe lines, it may be worthwhile purchasing a Dales Railcard which saves a third-off a standard ticket purchased on the day. Even better, there is a winter offer which provides a 50 percent discount and runs until 29th March 2026. Unfortunately, these cannot be used for advance purchase tickets and have a pre-08.15 travel restriction. However, priced at £15, the card represents excellent value for money and can be obtained from Settle or Skipton ticket offices or online from the Settle Carlisle Railway Development Company.

Please do get out and use our local bus and train services including the Morecambe line. Details of all local bus services can be found at www.dalesbus.org whilst for rail services visit www.northernrailway.co.uk.

John Carey

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Settle budget set

Settle householders in band D properties will face an increase of just £6.28 a year on that part of their council tax covering town council services.

However, the overall bills will be much higher as a result of North Yorkshire Council's decision to raise their, much larger, part of the council tax bills by the maximum permitted amount, meaning overall bills are likely to rise by more than £90 a year.

Settle Town Council has set a precept of £183,210 for 2026-27, an increase of £10,550 on the current year. In addition to income from the precept, the council also raises money from services like the Tuesday Market, the hiring of the marketplace, allotments and the cemetery. In setting the budget, councillors say they reviewed every cost and revenue line covering the activities for which they are responsible.

The town council increase is mainly due to upgrading programmes, including play areas, street lighting (with LED lights) and benches. The budget also includes £2,000 for grants to local organisations. The grant process and application form is being reviewed and will be published on the Council's website.

The council says it is committed to creating reserves and ring-fencing expenditure to provide financial security and offset future costs. It is also committed to strong financial management throughout the year and believes the modest increase is necessary to maintain the services it provides for the town and wider community. The full budget is published on the council website at www.settletowncouncil.gov.uk and is also available on request from the clerk.

North Yorkshire was finalising its council tax decisions as *Community News* went to press, but councillors have reported major



pressures on budgets and have said they have no alternative but to raise council tax bills by the maximum allowed.

Council Calls for Volunteers

Settle Town Council is inviting residents and local organisations to consider volunteering as part of a team that supports a wide range of activities across the community. Areas where volunteers can help provide council services include general gardening duties, maintenance, or assisting with the Christmas lights switch on. The council says these activities help preserve local features and ensure community spaces remain safe, tidy and welcoming for everyone. No prior experience is necessary, and all help is appreciated. Volunteering can be flexible and tailored to suit individual availability and interests.

One existing volunteer who offers an outstanding example is Cliff, who helps with a wide range of tasks. The council says his contribution highlights the positive impact volunteers can have within the community.

Anyone interested in volunteering or finding out more is encouraged to contact the council for further details by either ringing the office 01729 823617 or emailing: clerk@settletowncouncil.gov.uk

Welcome Bob



Last autumn the council appointed Robert 'Bob' Smith (pictured) to the post of handyman/gardener. Bob was previously the site manager at a secondary high school before retiring last year.

Millennium Gardens has been given a fresh look thanks to the hard work of Bob, and volunteer Cliff who have carried out a major clear-up of the area.

Over recent weeks, weeds, debris and overgrown undergrowth have been

carefully removed, restoring the gardens to a clean, tidy and well-maintained condition. The transformation has significantly improved the appearance of the site and made it more welcoming for residents and visitors.

The clearance work has also prepared Millennium Gardens for the next phase of improvements. Once weather conditions improve, new plants and bushes will be

introduced to further enhance the space.

The council is pleased with the progress Bob has made and it remains committed to maintaining and improving local green spaces for the enjoyment of the community.

Bob's responsibilities are wide ranging, including the general maintenance and upkeep of council open spaces and play areas, repairs to benches and some grass cutting.

Tourist taxes and places to sit

Phil Hinde, our man on the press bench, reports on Settle Town Council's deliberations on a possible tourist tax and memorial benches.

The chairman welcomed members to the first full Council meeting of 2026 by wishing them a Happy New Year.

Routine reports were received; one item of interest was that the volunteer who has looked after The Pinfold is retiring for health reasons. He has been duly thanked; the town council handyman will 'keep an eye on things' for the time being. (The Pinfold is the rather fine picnic area created in the old stray animal pound at the south end of Upper Settle, and which is in the care of the council.)

The two topics that created the most debate among councillors, and that directly affect townsfolk were the following.

The first was how and whether the council should respond to the current government consultation on proposals to give local authorities powers to impose an 'overnight visitor levy' (i.e. a tourist tax). This would raise money to improve and maintain visitor services and amenities. It was noted that the chamber of trade is expected to respond, but they do not represent all of the local accommodation providers that might become involved. It was also observed that individuals can

give views via the dedicated website. The council resolved to consider responding on aspects that were of common interest, such as whether money raised in our area would be spent to local benefit. The council then also agreed to raise awareness of the consultation and that local townsfolk could send in their own responses. But there is urgency as the process closes on 18th February.

The second subject was whether the council should follow the example of other authorities and develop a policy for the management of memorial benches around the town. This would cover responsibility for maintenance, raising fees to pay for replacement (wooden benches in particular do not last for ever!) and ensuring that there are not too many benches in one place. It was agreed that the matter should be explored in sub-committee and a proposal made to full council.

There was also a discussion of one thing that is important for the good governance of the council - how to match councillors' expertise with service on the various sub-committees. (e.g. it is good to have some gardening knowledge among those overseeing the allotments!). It was agreed that a form of 'skills audit' should take place prior to the updating of committee membership in the spring.



Photo: Shutterstock

The Tourist Tax is coming – or is it?

To tax or not to tax? And if to tax how to do so in ways that maximises gain, whilst minimising the pain? These are the questions that you, dear readers, are being asked to address. They are also ones that have exposed deep divisions between some of the region's leading politicians.

As Phil Hinde reports on page 23 of this issue, Settle Town Council are giving much thought as to how they might respond to the government consultation on plans to introduce overnight visitor levies – or a tourist tax. They will be drawing up their submission early in February and other local organisations are understood to have responded already, but the council is keen to ensure that everyone, particularly those involved in the hospitality industry, are aware of the consultation that closes on 18th February.

The concept of a tourist tax will be familiar to most people who have travelled widely outside England. The idea is that you pay a small additional amount: either when you book in for accommodation or check out. The fee is collected by the accommodation provider and paid to the local authority, who use it to meet the extra costs of being a tourist centre, such as additional refuse collection, or more ambitiously to provide facilities that are used both by tourists and residents, say for transport or leisure.

New York has had such a tax since early in the last century. They are also major source of income in European cities such

as Florence and Paris and, within the UK, Scotland and Wales both have their own overnight visitor levies. England is, as the government says, the outlier.

Now that is expected to change.

Chancellor Rachel Reeves announced, in the autumn budget, plans to give regional mayors the power to introduce such a levy. The current consultation looks at the detail.

The idea is strongly supported by David Skaith, the mayor for York and North Yorkshire, who would be responsible for the collection and spending the levy in this area. He believes it could be a 'game changer'. He said: "A small charge on overnight stays could revolutionise how we deliver transport, support businesses, invest in infrastructure and the visitor economy." York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority and York St John University has calculated that a £2 per-room, per night levy could generate around £52m a year.

But the plan is strongly opposed by Skipton and Ripon MP, Sir Julian Smith, supported by North Yorkshire councillor Simon Myers. Sir Julian has promised to fight against the levy 'every step of the way'. He argues that it would impose an additional burden on already hard-pressed hospitality providers and would be a hammer blow to the industry.

Under the proposals in the consultation, it would be up to the regional mayors to decide whether to introduce the levy or scrap it once introduced. So, this could yet be an election issue.

Subjects covered by the consultation include, whether the levy should be at a flat rate for everyone or whether it should be a percentage of the bill so those who stay in a four-star hotel would pay more than those camping in a field. It also asks about exemptions, recognising that anyone staying long-term should be exempt – but what counts as long-term – a month? Six months?

Of great interest locally will be how the levy might be spent by the mayor. Could

it be used to pay for public conveniences, support local cultural and leisure facilities, and better public transport in this area, or as a Yorkshire-wide levy would most go to the big tourist centres like York and Scarborough?

The discussion has just started but this is one that is likely to be a big issue for some time to come.

Oh, and one group not considered – the day visitors who come to the area but stay elsewhere.

You can find the full consultation document with its 30 questions at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/overnight-visitor-levy-in-england>

Mike Smith

Settle Stories goes global while cutting carbon

A Settle-based arts charity has been recognised in a major national report for showing how rural culture can reach the world while reducing its environmental impact.

Settle Stories, best known locally for the Yorkshire Festival of Story, features in the newly published Culture, Climate and Environmental Responsibility report from Julie's Bicycle and Arts Council England, which examines how arts organisations across the country are responding to the climate crisis.

The report highlights how Settle Stories has transformed its work through a digital-first approach, allowing it to dramatically expand its reach while cutting travel, costs and carbon emissions.

Rather than relying on large-scale travel and printed materials, the organisation redesigned its flagship Yorkshire Festival of Story to be predominantly digital and hybrid. As a result, the 2024 festival reached audiences in 48 countries across six continents, including Egypt, Argentina and China - impact that would have been impossible from a single venue in the Yorkshire Dales.

Crucially, the approach also increased local access. Events were free and online,



removing barriers linked to travel, cost and physical access. Twenty per cent of attendees identified as deaf or disabled, and 12 per cent as neurodivergent, showing how digital delivery can widen participation as well as reduce emissions.

Sita Brand, CEO and Artistic Director of Settle Stories, said: "What we've discovered is that storytelling doesn't lose its power when it travels through screens - it amplifies it. We're not just reducing our carbon footprint by going digital, we're expanding our heartprint."

The report notes that the festival also reached 239 schools, including primary pupils across Yorkshire, helping embed storytelling and cultural engagement at an early age.

Settle Stories worked with Lancaster University Management School to assess its environmental impact and develop an Environmental Management Plan, ensuring sustainability is built into future decision-making rather than treated as an add-on.

The national report draws on data from 558 publicly funded arts organisations and identifies Settle Stories as an example of how small, rural organisations can lead innovation - balancing environmental responsibility with access, inclusion and community impact.

How to make 2026 plastic free

A group of local residents are urging everyone in the area to help them reduce the amount of single-use plastic that we consume this year.

They set an example by creating a plastic free Christmas tree that was on show in the Quaker Meeting Rooms garden over the festive period. The tree was decorated with items which were entirely plastic free, being made of natural wool, wood, orange peel, cinnamon sticks, fir cones and coconut shells.

Our photograph shows Rosie Sanderson, Barry White and Melanie Fryer who have led on the Plastic Free Settle and Giggleswick initiative, with the tree.

Here Rosie Sanderson sets out ways in which we can all cut our usage of single-use plastic.

Cling film: Instead of using plastic cling film to cover food just put a plate or upside-down bowl over it! Alternatively use reusable beeswax impregnated cloths, available online or from local wholefood shops. Ideally use lidded plastic tubs for packed lunches etc. rather than cling film, as these are re-usable. Aluminium foil is another useful cover that can be recycled via your blue bin.

Coffee cups and drinks bottles: a thousand tonnes of carbon emissions would be saved if a million single use cups of coffee or bottles of soft drinks were, instead consumed using re-usable containers rather than single use plastic ones. When possible, you could take a refillable drinks container with you when you go on outings or to school or work, rather than purchasing bottled drinks or coffee in cups with plastic lids. If you come across a retailer selling coffee in containers with cardboard lids please congratulate them on their contribution to a more sustainable environment.



Flower arranging foam: the foam (Oasis) commonly used to support flowers does not degrade and is made of a form of plastic. It breaks down into tiny pieces known as microplastics and pollutes the earth and water systems. Instead consider using the old-fashioned wire or glass supports (commonly available in charity shops) or use groups of smaller vases with flowers in each.

Fruit and Veg: a lot of fruit and vegetables are sold in plastic wrappings, especially in supermarkets. You can reduce consumption of single-use plastic by buying fruit and veg loose, and then either putting it in one of the paper bags provided by the shop, or in a reusable mesh veg bag, sold in many supermarkets. Market stalls and smaller greengrocers tend to sell less ready-wrapped items and more loose produce, an argument for supporting small businesses.

Glitter, the one member of the party that NEVER leaves! Glitter is made from plastic of such a small size it's especially

lethal in our oceans. This microplastic can eventually end up in our food chain as plankton and shellfish might eat it. But don't worry, you can still sparkle guilt-free! There are many ranges of eco-friendly, biodegradable glitter out there.

Helium balloons and other single-use plastic party decorations: With a little bit of creativity, you can easily plan a party that's free from helium balloons and other harmful single-use plastics. Popular decorations that can be reused time and time again, include bunting, paper chains, tassels, tissue pom poms, lanterns, latex balloons (the ones you blow up), and more. Please be especially careful with helium filled balloons, they can easily escape and are harmful to wildlife and farm animals. Plastic balloons are the highest-risk plastic item for seabirds (eaten by or entanglement).

Ditch the kitchen sponge: Millions of kitchen sponges are discarded every year. The majority of these are made from plastic and aren't biodegradable. Thankfully, environmentally friendly alternatives exist. Sustainable sponges, made from organic and natural fibres, are great because they don't release microplastics into the ocean or harm marine wildlife when thrown away. Alternatively you could use a brush with a wooden handle, or a cotton dish cloth and a metal scourer. There are also e-sponges available, which although they do contain plastic can be washed in the washing machine and last for a very long time.

Laundry liquids: washing liquid and conditioner often come in big plastic bottles. You can reduce plastic usage by using alternatives, e.g. soap sheets – available in cardboard boxes, or a laundry egg, which is filled with mineral pieces, and can be refilled. Local outlets also provide refill stations for laundry liquid, fabric conditioner and washing up liquid.

Have your milk delivered: Although the early morning sound of a milk float is not as common as it once was, you can still get milk delivered in glass bottles – which are then collected and reused.

Parcels: Sticky tape used for wrapping parcels is an example of single use plastic. How about going back to the old ways and using string or ribbon to secure parcels, especially if they are to be hand delivered rather than being entrusted to the post? Paper based parcel tape is available at many local shops.

Pets: Increasingly pet food is sold in plastic pouches. Serving your pet with food sold in tins or cardboard boxes reduces the amount of single-use plastic you consume, and possibly the smell in your kitchen bin!

Ditch disposable razors, and use bamboo toothbrushes: Invest in a durable safety razor with replaceable blades. While the initial cost may be higher, you'll save money in the long term and will reduce your plastic usage. Toothbrushes with handles made of bamboo are just as good as plastic ones.

Shampoo and conditioner: Shampoo and conditioner bottles are yet another example of single-use plastic. Although they can be recycled, that is not an efficient way to deal with the problem. Instead, how about trying shampoo and conditioner bars? These are available at most hairdressers and local stores and can be bought online.

Shopping bags: Even though shops can no longer give away free plastic carrier bags, consumers still buy far too many "bags for life" which actually use more plastic. Try to keep a foldable and reusable bag handy in your car and in the bag you regularly take out with you to reduce your need to purchase yet another plastic bag. Take cotton or other re-usable bags with you when supermarket shopping.



What's happening at ACE in 2026

This year Action on Climate Emergency Settle and Area will continue to work with the local community to make a difference for the climate and nature. We will focus on demonstrating that taking action for the climate and nature is a benefit not a cost.

Our local impact - we know from what we have achieved so far that we can bring about change. Whether that's working in partnership with Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust to plant more trees; creating Settle Energy Local Club; or promoting actions at regional level - through our membership of the North Yorkshire Climate Coalition - with the Mayor for York and North Yorkshire and North Yorkshire councillors and officers.

Reaching out nationally and internationally - at our December green cafe, David Howlett, who is an ACE member and a senior adviser on resilience to the United Nations High Level Climate Action Champions and the co-lead of their race to resilience campaign, talked about local actions really mattering and how they are part of the global agenda. David also stressed the need to lobby our government to be more ambitious.

ACE's spring activities

Saturday 14th February (10.30am-12.30pm) Green Cafe at St John's Methodist Church Hall. Join us for a chat about topical issues over fairtrade tea, coffee and biscuits throughout the morning. If you have climate and nature actions that you are involved in or have tips to share come along and tell us. We will also be hearing about Friends of the Earth's campaigns for 2026 and choosing which ones to get involved in as one of their local groups.

Saturday 14th March (10.30am-12.30pm) Green Cafe at St John's Methodist Church Hall. Join us for a chat about topical issues over fairtrade tea, coffee and biscuits. Followed, at 11am, by a talk by Ariane Heap, North Yorkshire Council's Waste Prevention officer. This cafe will coincide with Greenpeace's next 'Big Plastic Count', which gives us the chance to reframe the stories around plastic, in particular the impact plastic has across its life-cycle on the climate, nature and our health. To hear more about how to get involved you can also sign-up directly: <https://thebigplasticcount.com/>

Recycling at green cafes for blister packs – please note that recycling is **only** available during cafes. Please come to the cafe and use the recycling box rather than leaving blister packs in the foyer of the Methodist Church at other times.

Find out about ACE and our events - via our website: acesettleandarea.org; our newsletter - sign-up by emailing us on: acesettleandarea@gmail.com or via Facebook, as ACE Settle. Sarah Wiltshire. ACE Settle Co-ordinator

Working towards Net Zero

Settle Town Council is working towards becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and is also encouraging residents to reduce their own carbon footprints.

A recent audit showed that the council emitted 15 tonnes of carbon over a 12-month period. The single biggest source was street lighting. The council's climate change and biodiversity working party are now reviewing ways in which they can cut the town's carbon emissions with a new survey due in April.

The working party is also working with representatives of the North Yorkshire Council Climate Team as well as local environmental organisations, ACE (Action on Climate Emergency - Settle and Area), St John's Methodist Church Eco Group and Settle Energy Local Club (SELC).

Ways in which local residents can help reduce their own carbon footprint include the following:

Boiler upgrade scheme

Heat pumps are three times more energy efficient than traditional boilers and because they run on electricity, there's potential to make savings too by using 'smart tariffs' with cheaper off-peak rates. To be eligible, you must own the property you're applying for (even if it's a business, a second home, or a property you rent out). The property must also have a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC). Details at: <https://cleanenergy.campaign.gov.uk/>

Grants for Energy Audits

The Business Sustainability Programme – part of the Shared Prosperity Fund for York and North Yorkshire – has allocated more

than £1.5 million in grants to businesses and farms across the region to implement decarbonisation and renewable energy projects. The next stage of the programme offers free business energy audits. The audits can identify decarbonisation opportunities, such as energy reduction and renewable energy, and will be free of charge. This would put businesses in a good position for future investment opportunities. Businesses and social enterprises throughout York and North Yorkshire are eligible. You can contact the York and North Yorkshire Net Zero Business Advisor to register your interest by emailing jack.colding@ynyrowthhub.com.

Financial assistance available for energy debt relief

The British Gas Energy Trust has reopened its Individual and Families Fund, offering grants of up to £1,700 to help households clear energy debt. The fund requires debt between £50 and £1,700 (pre-payment) or £250 and £1,700 (credit accounts). Applicants must have an eligible supplier and an annual income under £18,723 or meet vulnerability criteria such as a disability, Carer's Allowance, or three or more children and must have received money or energy advice within the past six months. Applications are accepted at any time. There is more information at: <https://britishgasenergytrust.org.uk/grants-available/>

Barry White (Cllr) Chair STC's Climate change and biodiversity working party.

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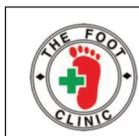
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Top of the Class!

Claire Roberts started her role as executive headteacher of the primary schools in Settle and Kirkby Malham in September 2025.

We are grateful to Claire for finding time in her busy schedule for a chat with *Community News*.

Which schools have you worked in?

I started my teaching career working at Leyburn Primary School in Wensleydale where I worked for seven years. I really enjoyed my time there and developed as a teacher during those years.

I then worked at Bentham Community Primary School where I was employed as the assistant headteacher. The school was about to go through a lot of change as it moved into the new school building 18 weeks after I started. On my first day I was presented with a pair of steel toe capped boots and a hard hat and that signalled the start of many visits to the building site that became the new school building. I became headteacher in April 2017 and stayed at Bentham Community Primary School until July 2025.

What motivated you to go into teaching?

It was all I ever wanted to do, I don't remember ever considering any other career. I think I was fortunate to have been taught by some caring, inspirational and passionate teachers and I wanted to be that teacher to other children.

What do you like about being a headteacher?

I really enjoy leading a team of people, I enjoy communicating with different groups of people and I enjoy knowing that every



day we are influencing and impacting on the lives of so many children. It is a real privilege to be a teacher and although I never planned to become a headteacher at the age of 31, it is a role I love doing. I enjoy being able to go into every class in the school, I enjoy the decision making, always considering what is best for all the children and I enjoy the wonderful opportunities that being a headteacher brings.

I have been fortunate to sail across the North Sea and through the Solent on a sailing boat – an opportunity that would not have come my way if I had not gone into teaching, I have seen the joy of a child getting 100 percent on a maths SATS test, I have had the pleasure of taking children mountain biking to places they would not ordinarily have gone to and I have watched



Claire Roberts with the Head Boy and Head Girl of Settle Primary who have been helping choose the winners of a competition to design a new certificate.

children take great pride in learning to read at the age of four.

My new role as executive headteacher of two schools is a varied and busy one but it is a wonderful role that I have across two very different, but also very similar schools.

What are your priorities as a headteacher?

To ensure that every child is happy, safe and thriving – and that may look different for every child. At Settle CE Primary School we are currently having a real push on improving maths and reading across the school. Over the last few years, the school has seen a drop in outcomes for these core areas and the whole staff team are focussed and driven to reverse that. There is a fantastic team of experienced staff at Settle and we have some exciting things happening to ensure that our children get the very best education before they leave us and step out into the big wide world.

What do you most enjoy about the school day?

I enjoy seeing children arrive at school each day. It is really special to be able to welcome children on a morning and it is a

great opportunity to notice children. You can see when a child is excited about eg the Victorian day their teacher has planned for them, or you can see when a child might need checking in with that morning. It's also lovely to hear children tell you snippets into their life outside of school – the try they scored in rugby, the dance exam they passed or the party they went to at the weekend.

What message would you give to all the children at your schools?

Grasp every opportunity with both hands. Childhood flies by in the blink of an eye and I always encourage children to have a go, try something new and just try your best. That is all we can ever ask. And always be kind to each other.

What message would you give to all the staff at your schools?

Enjoy it! Teaching is hard work and rewarding work. We must make sure that we take a bit of time to reflect on and enjoy what we do and make sure that our children enjoy coming to our schools.

What message would you give to all the parents of children at your schools?

We are a partnership! Schools and parents need to always work together to ensure that children thrive. It really is a partnership and teachers come to school every day to do the very best that they can for our children. Teachers also understand that parenting can also be hard. We are here to support each other.

What changes do you think children might see in schools over the coming five or ten years?

The use of AI in education is something that I think will really change education. It is something that we are all learning to



Claire Roberts reading with some Year 1 children

embrace as teachers, but I think it will be really interesting to see how AI shapes education in the future.

I also hope that the curriculum changes. At the moment there is simply too much to fit in and I feel like we need to slow the pace down. Less really is more and if we were able to create more bespoke curricula for our children, that included a strong focus on their wellbeing, we would solve some of the problems that we face in schools, society and life.

What is special about our Yorkshire Dales schools?

There is a real sense of community in our schools and that extends beyond the community of parents and children at the schools. I always feel that our schools are well supported by grandparents, volunteers who help with so many aspects of school life, members of the local community who play pivotal roles and local businesses

always ready to support. It's wonderful for our children to be able to grow up within our communities and it is important that our schools continue to play their part within them as well.

Within North Craven we are particularly fortunate as we have a group of headteachers working together to really ensure that our children receive the very best education. I chair the North Craven headteachers group and we meet regularly to collaborate and share expertise. This includes Mr Whitaker from Settle College, which is so important as we support our children to transition to secondary education. This further highlights the special community of schools that we have in our little corner of the Yorkshire Dales.

How do you balance the core learning (reading, writing, maths) in school with other subjects including the creative and sporting ones...and personal development?

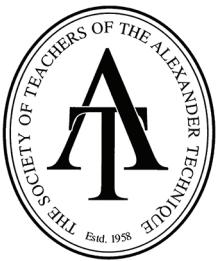
This is very tricky! Particularly when the curriculum expectations are so high. Whenever we are planning our schemes of work, our timetables, our curriculum and our wider school enrichment opportunities, I always ask the question “Is this going to benefit our children?” and if the answer is yes then we ensure that initiative, opportunity or event is given the importance that it needs. I think because of the additional funding the schools receive for PE and sport there is a natural tendency for schools to focus on sporting opportunities but I am keen to ensure that we develop the arts and music curriculum too. There is a lot of evidence-based research that demonstrates how engaging in the arts and music can impact on academic success and personal development, so this is an area I am keen to explore further within our federation.

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Matteo's Back in Business!



Settle restaurant owner Matteo D'Ali is now trying to restore his life and business after a three-month nightmare in which it looked as though he might never be allowed to return to the country he has called home for 40 years.

Speaking in his marketplace restaurant as he got ready to re-open at the end of January, Matteo told of how a week-long holiday in Spain ended with him trapped in a bureaucratic labyrinth from which there appeared to be no escape.

Born in Italy, Matteo came to England as a child with his mother and two siblings. He has lived in Settle for 25 years and runs the popular 'Rosa and Matteo's' restaurant under the Shambles.

He has an Italian passport and over the years has travelled widely with no problems, including a trip to Italy last March. He was aware that post-Brexit changes were due to come into effect but felt confident that it was all right for him to go on holiday to Spain at the end of the summer. It was only on the way home, at the airport check-in desk in Spain, that things turned sour.

He was not allowed to board the

plane as he did not have the necessary paperwork to let him into the UK. Matteo admits that he should have applied for UK settled status by the 2021 deadline but did not do so as his proof of identity had earlier been lost by the DVLA.

Frantic efforts over the next three months got nowhere. Matteo was bounced between Home Office and immigration officials. The documents he provided never satisfied the bureaucrats. The fact that he had a national insurance number, something that can only be given to someone with a right to live in the UK, was not enough. Friends in the UK made representations on his behalf, including to local MP Sir Julian Smith.

What finally broke the deadlock was media intervention. A demonstration by local supporters was organised in Settle marketplace and the Yorkshire TV Calendar programme took up the invitation to film it. Naturally they approached the Home Office for comment.



Phil Hinde from *Community News* takes up the story: "On a wintry January morning I was with a group of Matteo's supporters meeting outside the restaurant

to be filmed talking to a television crew about the case. Meanwhile the TV News production staff were pressing the authorities for the ‘official’ side of the story. Then, just as campaign leader Paul Caffrey had finished speaking on camera to the reporter, word came through via the TV office in Leeds that the bureaucrats had announced fast-tracking of Matteo’s appeal and had agreed to allow him to return to Britain. It was a ‘wrap’, the interview film would be canned and the story never aired in the way anticipated!”

The story might not have been broadcast but it changed Matteo’s life for good. As he puts it, “within 36 hours of the media enquiry everything changed”. He got one message saying his case was being reviewed and then a second attaching the papers that would allow him back into the UK.

In the meantime, Matteo had been using up his savings. He had remained in Spain for a week, before moving to France then Italy. But having lived in the UK from childhood, his Italian is as he puts it was ‘that of a ten-year-old’ – certainly not enough to hold down a job in the catering trade, the only profession he knows.

As an EU citizen Matteo was able to travel to the one country where he would be able to speak the local language – Ireland. He managed to get a job as a cook and was working in Dublin when news of his permission to return home came through. He worked two days’ notice and then got a plane home, using the documents that had been emailed to him without any trouble.

Matteo is clearly and understandably bitter that a media enquiry over the Christmas break was able to achieve,

in less than two days, what all the representations by himself and some influential friends had been unable to do in nearly three months.

He says he was always confident that he would be allowed to return but did not know how long it would take and he is concerned that others in his position will not have the determination or support to persist in the face of all the bureaucratic obstacles. “It feels as though they would just be happy to be rid of people in my position,” he says.

The delay in sorting out Matteo’s case had other implications for him. Not able to say when he would be allowed back, and using up his savings, he was unable to keep up the rent on his flat, which just a few weeks before he got back was cleared and all his belongings sold or given to charity.

“Fortunately,” he said, “I don’t have too many treasured possessions, though there were some things I was sad to lose”. More significantly for his business, the unit that he rented under the town hall for storage had been cleared and, whilst he did not lose the restaurant itself it suffered from damp as a result of not having been used for months. That has, however, given him the chance to do a complete repaint and take stock of the furniture. Chairs were being checked and sorted during our talk.

Matteo was planning a buffet supper for his supporters at the end of January and is taking bookings again from the start of February. Looking to get back to normal after a very disturbing interruption.

Mike Smith

Spotlight on Wellbeing - Pip Carr



Writing and reading in its many forms can contribute greatly to our sense of wellbeing. Simply learning some strategies that involve putting pen to paper, or reading the written word can be very cathartic, increasing self-awareness and helping us leave our fears behind.

1. Journalling – try writing in a journal every day just for five minutes, putting down anything that comes into your mind. Don't censor it or worry about grammar or whether it makes sense. This can clear your head of stuck negative thoughts and feelings that may be going round in your head, leaving space for more positive or hopeful thoughts. Reading this journal back can also help you to get things that are worrying you into perspective.

2. Gratitude journal – if you find yourself in a low mood, lacking motivation, or feeling somewhat hopeless, try writing down each day at least three things for which you are grateful. This can really help us to focus on what is positive in our lives, even if it's the tiniest things (if your mood is very low and has been for some time, please seek professional support).

3. Three good things – similar to a gratitude journal, but this is about recording three good things that happened today. They could be as small as 'I remembered to put the milk bottles out', 'I had a call from a friend', 'I cooked myself a meal'. When you've identified these three things, think to yourself why were they good? What did they mean for me?

4. Life Story – if you are struggling with a sense of purpose in your life, or maybe feel you have lost your way, try writing about your past, your present and your future. What have you enjoyed, what lessons have you learnt, what would you never do again, what have you achieved. What does your life look like now and how can you take these observations into the future with you?

5. Creative writing – this can be a really good way of expressing emotions that you may struggle to verbalise. Again, don't worry about grammar, form or whether your writing makes sense; just write and see where it takes you. Try these ideas to get you going:

Choose your favourite colour and write about why you like it.

- Look outside your window and describe what you see.
- Find a photograph of yourself from the past and describe it in detail.

The more you write, the easier it becomes and remember, no one has to see this writing but you.

6. Reading fiction or non-fiction can be a wonderful way of 'switching off' your busy brain, taking you away from your everyday life into someone else's world. Reading also encourages empathy when we walk in someone else's shoes.

7. Reading poetry out loud – If you are feeling frazzled and stressed, try reading poetry out loud. There is something about the rhythm of poetry and the breath control needed, that makes it very calming.

Remember that the library offers free access to every conceivable type of book you can imagine, fiction and non-fiction. You can also use the computers and printer.

As with all things connected with wellbeing, if you are struggling with your mental health please seek support.

"I can shake off everything as I write; my sorrows disappear, my courage is reborn"
(Anne Frank)

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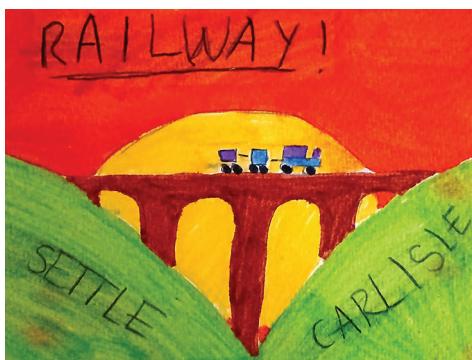
150 Years of the Settle–Carlisle Railway *The line that refused to die.*

Our local treasure and one of the world's most celebrated railways, the Settle–Carlisle line, marks its 150th anniversary this year with a programme of celebrations, exhibitions, and community events honouring its remarkable history and enduring importance.

Freight trains were able to start in 1875 but it was not until 1st May 1876 that the first passenger train travelled the line. Now, 150 years on, the Settle and Carlisle Railway stands as a testament to Victorian engineering ambition, featuring landmarks such as the Ribblehead Viaduct, Dent Station, and numerous tunnels carved through the rugged Dales landscape. Threatened with closure in the 1980s, the line is now a thriving passenger and freight route, a magnet for tourists and a symbol of successful community-led championing and local pride.

It is supported by organisations including the Friends of the Settle–Carlisle Line, a rail user group that carries out much of the work looking after the beautiful gardens and buildings and running the shops, cafes and visitor

centres along the line. These activities are delivered by volunteers. In parallel the Settle Carlisle Railway Trust – a registered charity – works tirelessly to raise funds to preserve, restore and redevelop the infrastructure along the line. The railway today is so much more than a means of transportation. Besides offering commuters the chance to get to and from work and other important appointments, it provides days out and even holiday stays in some of its magnificent buildings, including the stations themselves. People visiting can enjoy events and activities, have an on-train guide talk them through the journey, sample delicious homemade food, learn more about the history, have a go at being a signalman, join a guided walk – perhaps a fossil hunt at the incredible Ribblehead Viaduct, or even watch a theatre piece beside the graves of workers who died during the building of the line. There really is something for everyone to come and experience.



Settle Brownies gave us some striking artwork after visiting Ribblehead last year

The 150th anniversary is a chance to celebrate the history but also to look to the future of this remarkable line, build

on links to the communities it serves and thank all the people who volunteer with passion, enthusiasm and commitment to make the stations and gardens along the line such a thriving and accessible asset for everyone.

A series of special events will take place throughout the anniversary year including guided walks, talks, exhibitions and more.

A Settle-Carlisle Passport will challenge visitors, whether you walk, cycle, or take the train, to explore every station, undertaking tasks and capturing 'evidence' of their visit to gain a reward.

The fabulous Ride2Stride festival will be back again from 28th April to 4th May with a full programme of activities focussed around the line and in the local towns and villages.

July will see events at all the intermediate stations on the line celebrating their own special anniversary - 40 years since they re-opened during the campaign to save the line. Plans are well in hand for a Family Railway Weekend at Settle Parish Church on Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th July, including a Teddy Zip Wire from the tower, model railways within the church, and a 'build Ribblehead Viaduct (Bridge the Gap)' challenge. Bob Swallow will deliver a railway talk on the 11th July in the church at 7pm.

More in depth railway-focussed events including lectures and a closing conference in November will be taking place jointly with the Midland Railway Society.

Updates on the programme will appear in future issues of *Community News* and on posters and websites.



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Happy New Year!

I've been noticing that, despite the early January days of icy weather, there are small buds emerging at the base of some perennials. You can see in the photo of the sedum that the tiny rosette shaped leaf buds are present at the base of last year's stems. This is the case for many of the perennials: tiny leaf buds waiting for more light to emerge further. By the time we get to end January we will have an extra hour and a half's daylight compared to the winter solstice: light that will help our plants grow.

The tapered bulb shoots are also present: still short but ready and waiting to accelerate. I have spotted some snowdrops out around Settle as I have been walking the dog. There are none showing flowers in our garden yet, but an early leucojum which grows next to a warm wall has one white flower bud peeping out. I also have early pale yellow primrose flowers showing themselves in a couple of sheltered spots.

I'm a very inexpert vegetable grower. More of my vegetable sowings have died than survived. However, I have worked



out that some vegetables are hardier than others: for example, some kale plants seem to have survived the cold remarkably well and the dark green leaves look very vibrant.

I always appreciate the evergreen shrubs at this time. One particular variegated pittosporum bush is thriving: I will definitely need to prune it soon. A shinier leaved variegated euonymous is doing less well and looking rather sad: this one probably needs a sunnier spot this year.

I have spent the occasional short spell during the cold trying to clear weeds from flower beds. I have got out the big garden fork to tackle the weeds which have connecting or straggling roots - horsetail, creeping buttercups and couch grass. While I have been doing this, and reflecting on the multiple previous times I have spent weeding exactly the same space, I have begun to think about whether a different plant arrangement might suppress the weeds a bit more. I definitely have some spaces where the effort to enjoyment ratio does not always feel quite right.

One of the plants which definitely requires little effort and gives much joy is a very mature rosemary bush. It has some tiny pale purple blue flowers emerging alongside its aromatic leaves: it is a real pleasure to smell, taste and look at. Do enjoy your gardens in 2026!



Sedum leaf buds amongst last year's stems



Rosemary with flower buds



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On Hutton Roof Crags, looking east towards Ingleborough



'Up on the Roof' – a Twixmas Outing

Needing some post-feasting exercise, and hankering after fresh air and new horizons it was time to get walking again. The short hours of daylight, and the somewhat patchy holiday period public transport, encouraged me to sacrifice my usual eco-principles and jump in the car – but without driving too far from Settle.

What to do then? Well, I listened to The Drifters, and they advised me to go 'Up on the Roof'. '*....all my cares would just drift right into space (Up on the roof). On the roof, it's peaceful as can be, and there, the world below couldn't bother me.....'*

So, where to find a convenient roof? Driving down the A65 just past Kirkby Lonsdale I had oftentimes seen the signs pointing down side roads to Hutton Roof, and I'd heard this was a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and a nature reserve for its plants, birdlife and geology. It sounded a good option. Getting there was a little confusing as I was successively welcomed to Lancashire, back into Yorkshire and then Cumbria in the space of a few miles. This is partly due to the endless bureaucratic tinkering with local authority fiefdoms, and the signage doesn't seem to have kept up; over the years, Lancashire in particular has had more boundary changes than Poland, and now the community of Hutton Roof is part of the new Furness and Westmorland area. Sadly, I learn that the 'roof' word does not actually refer to the

dramatic limestone plateau hanging above the village, but probably derives from some medieval lord's moniker used to distinguish this Hutton from all its namesakes up and down the country.

But as a place to walk it does not disappoint. Starting from the little cluster of houses, I cut up through the thorny woodland towards the summit. It is certainly limestone country, but to adapt the old 'Star trekkin' cliche, 'not as we Settle folk know it'. The rock strata are more tilted, the impressive areas of limestone pavement all on the slope, and thanks to



the damp weather coming in from the Irish Sea, trees and rocks are covered in copious amounts of vivid green moss. The crags, popular with bouldering enthusiasts, slope inwards towards the hillside and the grykes are bottomless crevasses. Although this is open access land there are few established rights of way; the wandering paths through the cliffs and crevices seem to have been made mainly by the resident roe deer. You could easily lose a whole hiking party here; if they ever decide to film a Cumbrian remake of *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, this would be the place to shoot.

Eventually, after winding in three dimensions through the escarpment, I came out on top and headed for the trig point. Here there are fewer trees and bushes and the 360 degree view is exceptional, from Morecambe Bay, across Arnside and the Kent estuary to the South Lakeland fells, then round to the Howgills, Gragareth, a slightly novel angle on Ingleborough, and finally an extensive panorama of the Forest of Bowland. A quick (it was December!) sip from my coffee flask then down through trees to the car park at Dalton Crags. At busier seasons this is probably a better place to start a walk as the parking opportunities back in Hutton village are very limited. After a short road section I find a public footpath across the edge of sheep fields back to my car. This last stretch may sound a bit dull, but the path runs high enough to keep a fine outlook across to the south-western corner of our Dales, above Leck and Ingleton. I'll be back in spring or summer to see more of the botanical side of this fascinating area. Meanwhile, '*Go up where the air is fresh and sweet.....get away from the hustlin' crowds - go up on the roof (Up on Hutton Roof)!*

Phil Hinde

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Monthly Meetings

Thursday 12th February

Tim Foreman

*Anecdotes of an ordinary
gentleman*





Thursday 12th March

Rosemary Kind

Dog breeding champion

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New leader for Settle Voices

David Burbidge (above) is the new leader of Settle Voices community choir. He took over from Janet Russell who had led the choir for over 20 years. David is a highly experienced choir leader who already runs Bentham Voices and also Lakeland Voices, which has been singing in Kendal and the Lake District for 30 years.

David was the first paid-up member of

the Natural Voice Network, and he started Lakeland Voices in 1993 when he was apprenticed to Frankie Armstrong. In those days it was rare to find a choir in Kendal that wasn't a formal choral society, standing in rows and using written music. David has twice organised the Street Choirs Festival in Kendal, most recently, in 2023, when more than 900 singers gathered for a weekend of concerts, massed singing, and walks.

David prefers, whenever possible, to teach the songs by ear, by call and response, where everyone sits or stands in a circle so that they can hear the four-part harmonies being created. He wants everyone in the community to feel welcome to join his choirs and this continues the tradition of Settle Voices: anyone wishing to join the choir does not need to be able to read music and there are no auditions. All you have to bring is your voice and a willingness to join with others to create a unity in harmony.

The lungs are alive

A personal view by Ian Gray

According to Jacques Launay, Postdoctoral Researcher in Experimental Psychology, University of Oxford, “Singing in a choir offers significant physical, mental, and social benefits, including stress relief, improved mood, better posture, and enhanced lung function through endorphin release, while fostering a deep sense of community, boosting confidence, reducing loneliness, and improving memory and cognitive skills via shared musical goals and social bonding. It’s a transformative activity that builds discipline, cultural appreciation, and a lifelong love for music through collective achievement.

“Singing provides an inclusive means of combating the disintegration of communities that is becoming endemic

in many societies today. So whether you’re more into chamber music, the Beatles or Frozen singalongs, finding the right choir could prove the perfect way to improve your health, well-being, and social life.”

So what’s stopping you? Make a belated New Year’s resolution and join the fun with Settle Voices’ informal folksy warbling led by choirmaster David Burbidge at 1pm every Monday at the Catholic Church, Settle and, for more challenging ditties, Langcliffe Singers, directed by Darren Everhart at 7.30 pm Tuesdays at St John’s, Settle.

These two choirs are in no way in competition with one another, so it’s perfectly permissible to enjoy both, as several folk do. Just turn up and have a bash! What have you got to lose? Singing in the bath can be enjoyable but usually somewhat solitary. Try performing with

Recent research is beginning to show how much singing together improves physical and mental health as well as a general sense of well-being. So, if you think you would enjoy singing but have never plucked up the nerve to join a choir here is a good opportunity to take the plunge. Settle Voices meet on Monday afternoons during term time from 1pm - 2.30pm in the Catholic Church Hall, Tillman Close. Sessions cost £5 each, although the first one is free for those who are looking to join. If you are interested or would like more information, email Pete Eastman: lizandpeteeastman@btinternet.com

As David Burbidge says, quoting the Woodcraft Folk: *"And this shall be as a bond between us - that we are of one blood you and I, that we cry peace to all and claim kinship with every living thing; that we hate war and sloth and greed and love fellowship - and that we shall go singing to the fashioning of a new world."*

your clothes on with a friendly group of like-minded people.

Some of you may have sung in the privacy of your own homes when the wonderfully zany Stephen Taberner, leader of the superb Spooky Men's Chorale, conducted global singalongs by Zoom during Covid lockdowns. Better than nothing, but how much better to sing together!

You may have taken part in local 'Come and Sing' performances of Karl Jenkins's 'The Armed Man' and Carl Orff's 'Carmina Burana' and no doubt enjoyed them thoroughly. Or you may have been in the audience for concerts given by the Langcliffe Singers, Octameron and other choirs. If so, why limit yourself to sporadic treats? Join in! A recent 'Spooky' album is entitled 'We'll give it a go'. Good positive advice!

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FAMILIES, EH? MOLLY AND THE CAPTAIN by ANTHONY QUINN

This is the fourth novel I have reviewed by contemporary British novelist Anthony Quinn, and possibly not the last, so I hope the *Community News* editor will continue to indulge me. The previous three were *Curtain Call*, *Freya* and *Eureka!* and I now turn to Quinn's latest, *Molly and the Captain*, published in 2022.

The story is divided into three sections, spanning two centuries: it opens in the 1780s, switches abruptly to the 1880s, then abruptly again to the 1980s. Quinn writes each section in the style of the period: the first reads like Jane Austen (beautifully done, too), the second like Thomas Hardy, while the third is in the English of our times. Neither of the first two sections work up to any great climax or unravelling, and there is no continuity of character between them. So what holds the book together? Perhaps improbably, the answer is daughters and the art world.

In 1785 William Merrymount is a successful society portraitist, active in London and Bath; he is widowed, with two daughters, Molly and Laura. Laura, somewhat bossy, is known to her family as The Captain. Through her narrative and letters to her cousin, we learn what the Merrymounts get up to. William completes, entirely for his own satisfaction, a highly regarded portrait of the two daughters in a night setting. It becomes known as *Molly and The Captain*, and, despite offers, Merrymount steadfastly refuses to sell it. However, behind his daughters' backs,

this energetic man is carrying on an affair with actress Lizzie Vavasor. When Lizzie gives birth to a son, Edmund, the boy is given another man's surname, for the sake of propriety. Eventually, Edmund is introduced to Molly and Laura, but neither suspects him to be their half-brother. Yet, when the truth emerges, the girls love him dearly, and Laura, no mean artist herself, paints his portrait. Sadly, and simply because she is a woman, none of her work enjoys public recognition. As time passes, the portrait is assumed to be her father's work and is catalogued merely as *Portrait of a Young Man*, the true origins of the painting having disappeared.

In 1809 the Merrymount narrative is suddenly cut short, and we are led immediately into section two, *Kensington Gardens*, which opens around 1883. We now have, instead of a father and two daughters, a brother and two sisters. The brother is artist Paul Stransom (how original Quinn is with names!) and his sisters are Maggie and Ada. Paul, a victim of spinal scoliosis, is cared for at home in Chelsea by Maggie, while Ada enjoys a contented Victorian marriage, with children, in Sussex. Tension bubbles away between the sisters because the younger but intellectually gifted Maggie was expected to give up a place at Cambridge to nurse their dying mother, and to keep house for Paul. Well into her twenties and heading for spinsterhood, Maggie is nevertheless sought by two admirers, one wealthy and

self-confident, the other poor and shy. Maggie needs to choose, but I won't reveal her decision. Suffice it to say that Quinn portrays her emotional twists and turns amid the social expectations of her day with great insight and sensitivity. And with convincing accuracy he likewise catches the flavour of Victorian society's attitudes to Paul's deformity and the solace that painting provides. Moreover, with music halls, palmistry and a trip to the seaside, Quinn adds colour and noise to the London art scene. Suddenly, the *Portrait of a Young Man* re-emerges for auction, forming a connection of sorts between Maggie Stransom and one of her suitors. Then, equally suddenly, *Kensington Gardens* is cut short.

Fast forward, then, to the 1980s and to *Flowers of Romance*, the final section of the book. Here we have Nell Cantrip and her two daughters Billie and Natasha in a symmetry of sorts with the earlier sections. Nell and Billie first appeared in *Eureka!* Quinn's novel of London high-life and low-life set in the 1960s. Nell, now 62, is an underrated painter heading reluctantly for her first exhibition, while Billie, a light-fingered waitress in *Eureka!*, is now a highly regarded actress of 37. Mother and daughter collide over a rising young

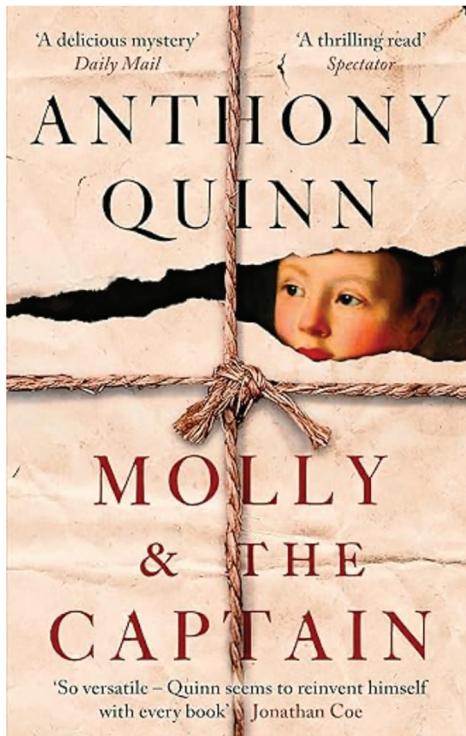
pop star, Robbie Furlong, aged 22, when they both, in ignorance of each other, bed him. Daughter Natasha cleverly referees the fight, so this family farrago ends well despite the intrusion of a sexually transmitted disease (a first occurrence, I think, in a *Community News* book review). One day, out of the blue, Nell learns from a distant cousin she had never heard of, that the Cantrips are descendants of

William Merrymount.

Simultaneously, *Portrait of a Young Man* comes up for auction and Nell desperately wants it. But can she afford it? She can – just. And when she has its damaged frame restored, up pops the novel's *finale*, a complete surprise that I am certainly not going to spoil. It is exquisitely touching.

Quinn is an immensely talented writer of beguiling prose who, like his artist characters, deserves to be better known. I recommend *Molly and the Captain*

as wholeheartedly as any other book I have reviewed for the *Community News*. Happily, you can find *Molly* in North Yorkshire libraries. Just one word of warning, though: when you scan the shelves, make sure you pick Anthony Quinn, not (the completely different) Anthony J Quinn.





'Journeys of Hope'

Love letters found in an attic sparked a journey of discovery for Settle resident Alison Marshall (pictured). After Brexit, she and her mother were investigating whether they could qualify for an EU passport. What they found were the letters of Sonia Donen and Meyer Fortes, Alison's grandparents, who were brought up in a Jewish immigrant community in South Africa in the second decade of the twentieth century. Sonia and Meyer had fallen in love and in 1927 Meyer embarked on one of several intrepid journeys in his life, to England to pursue an academic career. Sonia stayed behind and their correspondence charts the hopes, fears, successes and disappointments of their time apart. Meyer writes about his first impressions of England: 'the green and pleasant countryside', the smelly fog and 'monstrous' tube trains of London. Sonia feels the pressure of her parents' expectations to stay in South Africa. However, she is very feisty saying she could go to Russia and 'coin... my own future'! To find out what happens to them you will have to read the book - *Journeys of Hope* by Alison Marshall.

The fascinating thing about *Journeys of Hope* is how Marshall weaves in small details of other relatives of Sonia and Meyer; some generations back, who were grain traders in Ukraine or tailors in Leeds. Others in the twenties emigrated to America to work in the emerging film industry in Hollywood or had a hand in setting up glamorous department stores in California. Historical perspectives also move from the personal to the political. Complex historical facts are explained clearly and simply to the reader.

Alison takes us on journeys from the Jewish Pale of Settlement and Tsarist Russia to Meyer and Sonia's research trips to Ghana in Africa. Through these details, which are seamlessly integrated into the narrative, the reader gains reflections on migration in general, seeing recurrent themes over the centuries which are very thought provoking.

The final layer to her story is Alison's amazing travels to Ukraine and Poland, some after the outbreak of war, which document the lives of ordinary citizens, trying to continue their day to day lives faced with political turmoil, air raids, and constant anxiety. Her volunteer work with local charities provides a fascinating insight into how communities in Ukraine continue to function and support each other. Alison's many practical activities include preparing food for the front line and making camouflage helmet covers.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book and learned a lot. It merits re-reading too; both for its heartwarming central story and the historical perspective it throws on times of war and migration now and in the past.

Pippa Doran

Journeys of Hope is published by Troubador (ISBN:9781836284444) and is available from Limestone Books and other retailers.

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RUGBY NEWS

North Ribb top league again

When I last gave a seasonal update on our progress, we were sitting third in a very competitive league. This was a very satisfying position given our recent meteoric rise. Well, since then we are unbeaten in the league with six straight wins over some previously senior teams not least a win against once mighty Waterloo, to cement our position at the top of the league with eight games to play.

It is quite a remarkable achievement for such a small club as ours, punching way above our weight on a playing budget of zero. In fact, when we played Northwich in December, they had nine (yes nine) South Africans in their team. Goodness knows where all their local talent has gone to play.

This North Ribblesdale side are packed with local lads who simply love playing together. Despite several of them being offered contracts at higher ranked clubs, they have collectively chosen to stick together and see how far they can progress.

Our incredible series of success will surely eventually run out of steam but until that happens the whole club is enjoying an unprecedented achievement having won an unbelievable 49 of the last 53 league encounters.

If we are to progress as champions again, we will be only the second team to achieve the feat in the 38 years since the inception of league rugby. The only other club to do

it was a re-formed London Welsh who after going bankrupt started life as a new club at the bottom the pyramid after previously being at Championship level, so no real surprise there.

Our Stags team are doing well also having only lost three times thus far and our rejuvenated Ladies side are now back up to full strength and competing well in their league.

In the next few weeks, the club will be undergoing a complete £38,000 overhaul of our utility systems that should help to reduce our costs by some 35 per cent. This is in large part due to a grant from the Derbyshire Quarries organisation (Tarmac) who have very kindly sponsored the project and should help “future proof” the club for many years to come.

Anyone wanting to join our vibrant and friendly club please feel free to make an approach to anyone whose details are on our social website, or feel free to contact me on 07711 028287. I can guarantee a warm welcome and lots of fun with the opportunity to travel with the team on away trips and getting yourselves integrated into our great community club. I look forward with some trepidation to my next report after the season end and hopefully another milestone being reached in our proud history. Fingers and everything else crossed.

Gavin Davidson
Chair, North Ribblesdale RUFC



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Evening Service - 6.30pm
On the 4th Sunday of the month

- All welcome
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- Worship band
- Modern songs
- Encouraging message
- An encounter with God

Bowled Over!

Settle Bowling Club has been in existence since 1898 - one hundred and twenty-eight years. A green was opened for play on Wednesday 27th April 1898. It appears that a new green was then created and opened on 6th May 1903. In the March of that year it had been decided to erect a pavilion and this was opened on the 10th June.



Records show various references to improvements or alterations to the pavilion over the following years, but there were no major developments until 1945 when rumours began to circulate that the Ashfield Hotel (now the Settle Social Club) was to be put on the market. This of course raised questions as to the club's future as the green was on a lease in part of the hotel grounds. After much consultation and deliberation, the land on which the green is sited was bought by the members in 1950.

In 1961, the first league match was played in the Skipton and District League. After admission to the league, there was a general feeling that the facilities in general, and the toilets in particular, were in need of upgrading. Since then, there has been a steady improvement in the amenities.

A great debt is owed to the enthusiasts, past and present, who have given freely of their time and labour for the wellbeing of the club.

Settle Bowling Club is affiliated to the

Skipton & District Bowling Association and the Worth Valley Bowling Association. We have teams in the Skipton Merit and 54321 Leagues and the Worth Valley Veterans Leagues and Wednesday League. The Leagues run from April to October each year.

Subscriptions run from January to December. The fees are:

- Male/Female Members: £65.00
- 1st Year Male/Female Members: £35.00
- Junior Members: £5.00
- Sitting Members: £5.00
- Daily Fee: £2.00
- Daily Table Tennis Fee for Non-Members: £2.00

Settle Bowling Club invites people to join and participate in 'social bowling'. We do not expect everyone to play competitively in the teams. It is, after all, a fun game that keeps you relatively fit. We also have table tennis facilities when there is no bowling available.

The greenkeeper keeps a very tidy green and a number of members look after the garden and car park. In winter, there are also jobs which need to be done, such as weeding, and trimming the tops of the hedge.

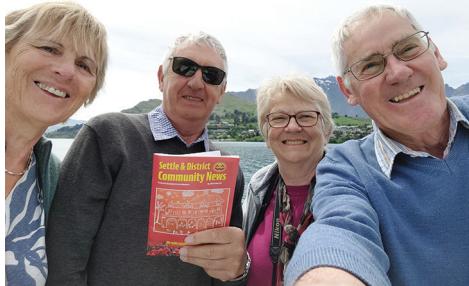
To exist, we need new players - so why not give it a go. Everyone is welcome

Please contact: John Chambers Secretary and President. Email Address: john.chambers@gmx.com - Telephone: 01729 360112 or 07905 701824.

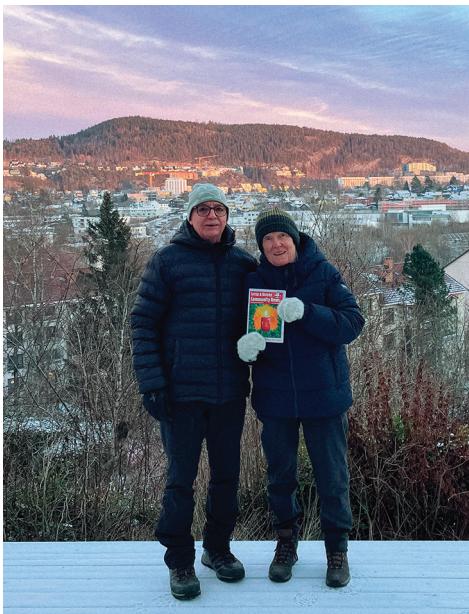
John Chambers



GOING GLOBAL



Although travelling independently, a remarkable coincidence found Sheila and John Rushton, and Kath and Phil Simnett, who live a quarter of a mile away from each other in Rathmell, on the same boat trip on lake Wakatipu, Queenstown, New Zealand in November - and a copy of *Community News* miraculously appeared!



Sue Rodgers writes: "Just got back from our Christmas trip to Norway. Not enough snow to ski but managed to get in loads of walks. The picture shows my husband

QUIZ TIME

In the year of '26

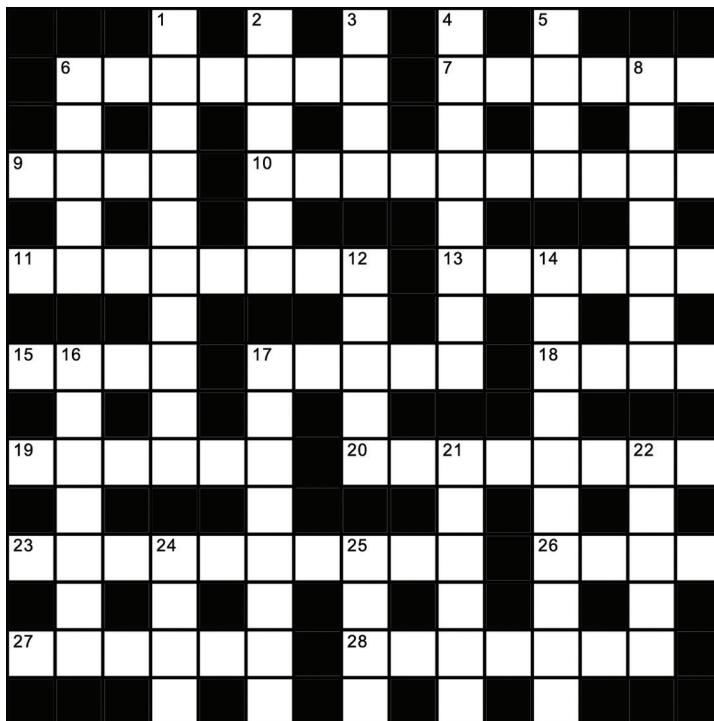
As we start 2026, can you link these happenings to all the '26' years in the last millennium?

1. The Chatterton Massacre occurs in Lancashire.
2. St. Francis of Assisi dies.
3. King Edward II is overthrown by his wife and her lover.
4. King Canute rules over England and Denmark.
5. 'Gulliver's Travels' by Jonathan Swift is published.
6. Battle of Paniput establishes the Mogul Empire in India.
7. The so-called 'Parliament of Bats' meets at Leicester.
8. King Charles I crowned King of England.
9. The General Strike.
10. Omar Khayyam, Persian Poet and Mathematician lives in retirement in what is now Iran.

Check your answers on page 63

Keith and myself on the terrace of our son Ben's apartment. It overlooks the city of Oslo and Grefsenkollen in the sunset. I should add that Ben read out some of the articles in a very strong Yorkshire accent at breakfast. Keith and I were in stitches but his girlfriend, Jovana, was completely bamboozled!!"

We love to see your photos from around the world so keep them coming! Email us at global@settenews.co.uk



Across

- 6. Nonsense (7)
- 7. Creature (6)
- 9. Speed; ---- missile (4)
- 10. Vague (3-7)
- 11. Compassion (8)
- 13. Wild cat (S + C.America) (6)
- 15. Against (4)
- 17. Pursue (5)
- 18. Escape (4)
- 19. Person escaping French Revolution (6)
- 20. Overanxious (8)
- 23. AD (4,6)
- 26. Metro; pipe (4)
- 27. Large drink container (6)
- 28. Knocked down (7)

Down

- 1. Gymnastic jump (10)
- 2. Junkie; fanatic (6)
- 3. Cure (4)
- 4. Mouth (slang) (8)
- 5. NZ bird (4)
- 6. Sticky; kitsch (5)
- 8. Plant of buttercup family (7)
- 12. Long; pine; crave (5)
- 14. Impudence (10)
- 16. In name only (7)
- 17. Heavy cotton upholstery fabric (8)
- 21. eg performed in ----- (together) (6)
- 22. Insert (5)
- 24. Wild party (4)
- 25. Substandard; tentative (4)

Crossword set by Ian Gray - Answers on Page 63

COMMUNITY DIRECTORY

Settle Town Council

Settle Town Council: Meets first Monday in the month (excl Bank Holidays) 7pm at Settle Town Hall. Agendas and Minutes will be posted on the Market Place Notice Board and on the website at www.settletowncouncil.gov.uk. For further details, email clerk@settletowncouncil.gov.uk or call 01729 823617.

Markets

Settle Market: Every Tuesday.
Artisan Market: Second Sunday each month.

Music

Settle Voices Choir: Every Monday (term time only). Catholic Church Hall, Tillman Close, Craven Terrace. 1-3pm. All welcome. For information contact Liz Eastman (01729) 823777.

Langcliffe Singers: Every Tuesday Rehearsals at St John's Hall Settle, 7.30–9.30pm (term time only). Contact musicdirector@langcliffesingers.org.uk

Settle Orchestra: Rehearsals every Friday evening during term time, St John's Methodist Hall, 7.40–9.40pm. Strings especially welcome! Contact (01729) 825806.

St Alkelda's Church Choir: First Sunday of the month Sung Evensong (Book of Common Prayer) 6.00pm, Giggleswick Parish Church.

Black Horse Jazzmen: Tuesdays, February 17th, March 3rd and 17th, and April 7th at The Talbot, 8.30pm to 10.15pm. Sitters in welcome. Further info: www.talbotsettle.co.uk

Giggleswick and Settle Brass

Band: Rehearsals every Wednesday at the Conservative Club, Station Road, Settle. 6.45pm for junior/training band and 7.30pm for the main band. All ages, all abilities are welcome, and we may be able to provide an instrument if needed. Contact info@giggleswickandsettlebrassband.co.uk

Recreational

Art Group: Mondays 10am-12 noon at Tosside Community Hall. Tel: 01729 840272 or email info@tossidecommunityhall.org.uk. All abilities welcome.

Life-drawing sessions, untutored, monthly on final Saturdays (1-4pm) and second Tuesdays (10-12, 1.30-3.30) at Quaker Meeting House, Kirkgate, Settle (opposite Victoria Hall). Easels & boards & refreshments provided: please bring your own paper & drawing materials. Full day £20, half day £10, three hours £15. Places limited. To book in advance/ request more info, email suevickerman1@gmail.com

Settle Photographic Group: Every third Monday, St. John's Methodist Church Hall and on Zoom, 7.30 – 9.30pm and on the 1st Monday of the month, October–April. Visitors welcome. £4.00.

Settle Rifle Club: Every Monday 7pm, Giggleswick School cadet range (behind St Alkelda's Church).

Langcliffe Village Institute Short Mat Bowls Club . 2 sessions- Thursday 2-5pm and 7-9.30pm. All welcome. Contact Pat Smelt. 01729 823033

Settle Bridge Club: Every Tuesday 7.00–9.30pm. Online bridge using the RealBridge platform and every Thursday 1.30-4.30pm in person bridge at St John's Church Hall. For more information see <https://www.bridgewebs.com/settle/> or contact Rosie Sanderson by email at rosiesanderson19@gmail.com

Settle Chess Club: Every Monday evening 6pm to 8ish at Settle Social Club, 10 Duke Street. All standards welcome. settlechessclub.co.uk

Settle Spinners and Knitters: Meet in the back room of St John's Hall 2-4pm every Tuesday All fibre crafts welcome. For more information contact settlespinners@gmail.com

Settle & District Gardening Club: Fourth Wednesday of the month January-May and

September-November at the Quaker Meeting House 2pm to 4pm. Visitors welcome: £5.

St Alkelda's Church Gardening

Group: Meets in the New Churchyard at 1.15pm every Monday. Choice of maintenance of flowerbeds, grass cutting etc in the grounds of St Alkelda's.

Giggleswick Litter-Picking Group: Meets on the first Monday of each month at 9.45am in St Alkelda's Church porch.

Ingleborough Archaeology Group: Third Monday of the month from October to April. Talks 7:30pm at Ingleton Community Centre. May to September monthly local guided walks/visits. For details, please see: ingleborougharchaeologygroup.org or email: ingleborougharchaeologygroup@gmail.com

Garden Club: Last Tuesday of each month, 2.30pm at Tosside Community Hall. Tel: 01729 840272 or email info@tossidecommunityhall.org.uk.

Stainforth Hookers meets every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month (dates may change dependent on how weeks fall) at Stainforth Village Hall for a warm and friendly dedicated crochet circle. 2-4pm and £5 per session with tea and biscuits, chatter and giggles included. We welcome those that are visiting and bringing their crochet along as well as regulars. For more information email: Stainforthhookers@gmail.com

Coffee Morning and Jigsaw Exchange

Exchange: Second Wednesday of the month 10.00-12.00 Austwick Parish Hall, 8 October, 12 November, 10 December, 14 January, 11 February, 11 March. Bring a complete jigsaw for your first free exchange, after that return one and borrow another for £1. Refreshments on sale –meet friends, stay and share friendship over a puzzle. Everyone welcome.

North Craven Flower Club: 2nd Thursday of the month (except August) at Hellifield Village Hall 2pm. First class demonstrators do their stuff, and the arrangements are usually raffled. Tea and biscuits/cakes are served after the meeting. New members (£38 per year) and visitors (£6 per session).

Hatha Yoga: Tuesdays at 19:15-20:15 at Settle Primary School. Advance booking required: yogabyscarlett@gmail.com

Young people

1st Castleberg (Settle) Scout Group: For Boys and Girls 6-18 years old. The Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers meet weekly during term time at the Drill Hall Castleberg Lane, Settle. For further information contact settlescouting@gmail.com.

Girlguiding: Rainbows ages 5-7 years, Brownies 7-10 years, Guides 10-14 years, Rangers 14-18 years. We have units in the area with availability for these age groups. Adult supporters also welcome. Get in touch via the contact page at www.girlguiding.org.

Sport and physical activities

Austwick Piccalillis Pickleball meet every Tuesday morning at Eldroth, Thursday evening at Catterall & Saturday mornings at Giggleswick. If you are interested in playing this exciting & fast growing sport, please contact us at austwickpickleball@gmail.com for times & further information. Equipment provided.

Austwick Bowling Club: Our friendly club is looking for new members. Everyone welcome, all ability levels. Open sessions on Mon, Wed and Thurs, Sats friendly matches/competitions. Season April-Sept. Green hire available. For more information on all aspects of the club contact John Jebson 01729 825786.

Table Tennis: Every Monday, Hellifield Village Institute 7.00pm-9.00pm. Contact Andrew Crabtree 01729 851806.

Line Dancing: Every Monday 1.30pm-3.00pm. St John's Church Hall. All welcome. Proceeds to charity.

Settle Badminton Club: Every Tuesday (Sept-April), Giggleswick School Sports Hall. 7.30pm-10.30pm. Contact Ian Reid 07854 211114.

Badminton: Every Tuesday, Hellifield Village Institute 6.00pm-9.00pm. Contact Bob Moore (01729) 851660.

North Craven Strollers: Every Wednesday meets at Millennium Garden, near Booths Car Park, 1.30pm.

Tennis: Regular social and competitive tennis for all standards including beginners at Austwick Tennis Club. See <https://www.austwicktennisclub.co.uk/> for details of regular sessions.

Exercise classes for Older Adults: Call Jo Wulf for further details on 07966 981985 or email jo@wolptracks.co.uk

Nordic walking: Mon 9am/Fri 10.30am. 'Racing Snails' Nordic Walking at a slower speed - Thurs 3.15pm. Please book in advance: 07966 981985 or email jo@wolptracks.co.uk

Settle Area Swimming Pool: a wide variety of sessions for adults and children including lane swimming; fun sessions and water-based exercises. Dry space activities including static cycle 'spinning', high intensity training and more gentle exercise. www.settleswimmingpool.co.uk/ for times.

Scottish Country Dancing: Every Thursday St John's Hall 7.30pm with a fully qualified Scottish Country Dance teacher.

Settle Netball: Anyone 18+ is welcome (any ability) and we train every Tuesday (term time only) 6pm-7pm at Giggleswick sports hall and the cost is £5 per week (this is for court hire, I run the sessions not for profit). Contact Charlotte Orange charlotteorange@hotmail.com

Walking Rugby meet every Friday 2.00-3.00pm at North Ribblesdale Rugby Club in Settle. We are a friendly group of men and women of varied abilities and ages, so if you would like to find out more please contact Alan Simpon 07891322096 or drop in to one of our sessions.

Settle Harriers Running Club: Every Monday and Wednesday (seniors) at 7pm and every Tuesday (juniors). See www.settleharriers.org for more details.

Settle Wheelers Cycling Club: A friendly and inclusive cycling club holding regular rides :- 11am Saturday Steady ride from

Settle swimming pool; 1pm Saturday fast ride from Settle Market Place; 9.30am (10am winter) Sunday club ride from Settle Market Place. There is also a junior Go-Ride session on Saturday mornings. Please see the www.settlewheelers.org.uk for further details or contact the membership secretary nigelbeasant@hotmail.co.uk.

Settle Bowling Club: Open all year round. All ages or abilities are welcome and crown green bowls can be provided, if needed. For further details, contact club secretary John Chambers on 01729 360112 or 07905 701824 or email john.chambers@gmx.com

Indoor Bowls: Mon & Thurs 2pm-4pm at Tosside Community Hall. Tel: 01729 840272 or email info@tossidecommunityhall.org.uk. New players welcome.

Fit as a Fiddle classes with Jo Wulf: Fri 2pm to 3pm, £6 per session at Tosside Community Hall. Tel: 01729 840272 or email info@tossidecommunityhall.org.uk.

Support Groups

Age UK North Craven: Trips for the over 60s. For destinations and prices etc. contact Janine or Amy on (01729) 823066.

Time Together Tuesday Dementia Cafe: for people living with Dementia and their Carers. Every Tuesday afternoon 1.30-3.30pm at St John's Methodist Church. Join us for a cuppa, homemade cake, information and chat.

Coffee Pot: Held every Wednesday at St John's Methodist Church from 10.30-12 noon. Scones, cakes and hot drinks available.

Settle Community Library: Stay and Play (under-5s) Fridays, 11am-12 (term time only); Knit and Natter first and third Thursday, 10.30am-12; Lego Club (age 5-11), Fridays from 3.30pm-5pm (term time only); Breathe Easy Asthma and Lung UK Peer Support Group, 2nd Wednesday 2pm (Meetings run from March to Dec). All groups are free, but donations very welcome. Visit www.settlelibrary.org.uk, check our Facebook page, or call 01609 534535.

Settle Area Refugee Support Group (includes Settle Supports Ukraine): We arrange talks & events, collect donated items

and other support activities. Always looking for bicycles, phones, iPads etc. Contact Phil 07793 036745 or Angie angie.pedley@gmail.com

Settle and District Aid in Sickness

Fund: Help with the extra costs that come with illness or immobility. Call 07709 252613 or email: janheap@hotmail.co.uk

Men's Groups

Men's Forum: Every second and fourth Monday in the month, apart from holiday periods. Friends Meeting House in Settle, 2pm to 4pm. Members with very varied interests living in the Settle area give or organise a talk about once a year on a very wide range of subjects. Good companionship and mental stimulation on offer. Contact 01729 823205.

Andy's Man Club: Free-to-attend peer-to-peer support group for men aged over 18. No fees, no registration and no pressure to talk. Every Monday, 7pm, excl Bank Holidays. Settle CofE Primary School, Bond Lane, Settle, BD24 9BW.

Women's Groups

Austwick WI meet in Austwick Parish Hall at 7.30pm every second Thursday. New members and visitors welcome. £5 for visitors. Contact: austwickwi@gmail.com or visit our website: austwickwi.wixsite.com for information

Giggleswick with Settle Mothers' Union: Every second Wednesday, The Lounge, Limestone View, Settle, 2pm. Contact: Branch Leader, Catie Jones, (01729) 822676 for more details.

Giggleswick WI: We meet every first Thursday of the month with various speakers at 7pm at St Mary and St Michael Church, Tillman Close, Settle, BD24 9RA. New members and visitors are always welcome. Contact: wigiggleswick@gmail.com. Follow us on our Facebook page.

Hellifield WI: We meet on the third Thursday of the month at 7.15pm in Hellifield Village Hall (Institute). Visitors and new members are welcome. Contact Aileen Alexander (President) Tel 01729 851318.

Long Preston WI: Every second Wednesday of the month, 7.30 pm in Long Preston Village Hall. New members and visitors always welcome. Follow us on Facebook.

Settle WI: First Wednesday of the month at 2.00 down at St John's Church Hall - Not only do we have brilliant speakers but we also have a Book Club, Knitting Group and a Lunch Club every month too - Come as a Visitor for free to see what we offer.

Settle Community and Business Hub in Commercial Courtyard. Phone Jo for more info 07977 040329

Community Fridge: Bring what you can, take what you need. Come and help yourself to surplus fruit, veg, bread and dried or tinned food, or drop off any spare food you may wish to donate. Open Mondays and Thursdays 2.30-4.15pm and Wednesdays 10am-12 noon outside the small office in Commercial Courtyard.

Public Living Room at Settle

Quakers: Mondays and Thursdays every week from 10.30am to 1.30pm. We offer hot drinks and meals (but please come before 1pm if you would like food), card and board games, jigsaws, craft activities, help with cooking or just join us for a chat and some company.

Knit (or Sew) and Natter: We meet every Wednesday in the Hub offices at Commercial Courtyard from 10am-12noon. We have sewing machines, lots of fabric, knitting needles and wool at the hub so feel free to come and use our materials and equipment or bring your own.

Ink Recycling: Any sort of printer ink cartridges, big or small, used or unused. Please drop them off at our offices in Commercial Courtyard or the collection boxes at Settle Quakers and St John's. If you have a large amount please contact Jo on hub@settlecommunityandbusinesshub.org.uk or phone 07977 040329.

Business Networking and events: Informal business and charity networking is held on the last Wednesday each month from 8.30am in a pub or cafe in central Settle. These events are free, just buy what you want to eat or drink.

All the following groups/activities are held at The Place in Settle, BD24 9RH.

Citizens Advice Clinic: Held 1st or 2nd Thursday of the month. Appointments only. Call 01729 824868 to book.

Digital Drop In: Weekly on Mondays 9.30-3pm and Tuesdays 9.30am-12.30pm. Pop in for any Tech or mobile help. Appointments can be booked on Mondays, phone 01729 824868.

Settle Cancer Support Group: Held 4th Monday of the month 10-11.45am. For anyone affected by Cancer including patients, carers, families and friends.

Making Connections - Dementia

Art Group: Run by Pioneer Projects 10.30am-12.30pm every Tuesday. Must be accompanied by a carer/family.

Wellbeing Cafe and Safe Space: Every Tuesday anytime between 2-4pm at The Place activity room. Anyone welcome no need to book. Creative Art, Puzzles, brew and a chat.

Horton Housing Drop In: Every 2 weeks on Tuesdays from 3rd June 1-3pm. Help with Housing, Benefits, Drug and Substance Dependency, Mental Health and Budgeting. Drop in or phone 01729 824868 to book.

Age UK - Coffee and Chat: Every Wednesday 10.30-12.30pm. All are welcome.

Age UK - Movement to Music: Every 2 weeks on a Wednesday starting from 10th April 2-3pm.

'Better Days' Pain and Chronic Fatigue peer support group: Held on the 1st Wednesday of the month 1-2.30pm.

North Yorkshire Horizons - Adult Drug and Alcohol recovery service: Every Thursday by appointment. Phone 01723 330730 for more information or to book an appointment.

Gr8 Minds Counselling: For anyone aged between 5 and 18. Every Friday at 10am-1pm appointments only. For appointments self refer or via Townhead Surgery.

Community Activities

Langcliffe Village Institute : Friday 12th December - The Big Langcliffe Quiz Night. if you know your history, geography, music and current events join us at 7 p.m. at for a fun night of quizzing. Teams of up to 4 people, £5 per team. Prize for the winning team.

Cuppa and chat at Stainforth Village Hall:

Come along to our community Village Hall for a cuppa, company and a chat. First and third Thursday's every month starting at 2.30pm. Donation for tea/coffee and biscuits greatly appreciated. Everyone welcome.

Rotary Club: 2nd and 4th Thursday each month at 6.30pm in the Maypole, Long Preston. All welcome. Secretary David Blackburne 01729 822445.

Craven Conservation Group: Natural History group affiliated to Yorkshire Naturalists Union. Indoor meetings in Settle, and field trips. Website - craven-conservation-group.org.uk

Action on Climate Emergency (ACE)

Settle and Area: Monthly Green Cafe second Saturday of each month 10.30-12.30 at Settle Methodist Church. Details at www.acesettelandarea.org

Castleberg Masonic Lodge: Meet every Thursday before the full moon except July and August. Full dates at www.settlefreemasons.co.uk or by contacting Chris Maudsley on 07879 474786 or email info@settlefreemasons.co.uk

Three Peaks for Palestine: Sharing information and activity in support of justice for Palestinians. Vigils alternate Saturdays in Settle Market Square. A regular bulletin to keep you in touch. Contact us at threepeaksforpalestine@gmail.com

Notify any changes or additions to directory@settlenews.co.uk as soon as possible so we can ensure that all the information we include here is as accurate and useful as possible.

Support Community News!

We invite readers to make a small donation to help sustain *Community News*. Although the magazine committee and our loyal band of distributors are all volunteers we still have to pay for the printing. Just £5 will cover the cost of printing your annual personal set of six copies. A larger donation or better still, a standing order, will maintain the magazine and reduce our reliance on the volatile advertising market.

How to donate

Preferred payment is by BACS or Standing Order (reference 'Reader Donor') to: Settle and District Community News National Westminster Bank Sort Code: 01-07-93 Account No: 53002016

Quiz Answers

1. 1826;
2. 1226;
3. 1326;
4. 1026;
5. 1726;
6. 1526;
7. 1426;
8. 1626;
9. 1926;
10. 1126.

Crossword Solution

Across: 6. Twaddle; 7. Animal; 9. Scud; 10. Ill-defined; 11. Sympathy; 13. Ocelot; 15. Anti; 17. Chase; 18. Flee; 19. Emigre; 20. Neurotic; 23. Anno domini; 26. Tube; 27. Flagon; 28. Floored.
Down: 1. Handspring; 2. Addict; 3. Heal; 4. Cakehole; 5. Kiwi; 6. Tacky; 8. Anemone; 12. Yearn; 14. Effrontery; 16. Nominal; 17. Cretonne; 21. Unison; 22. Imbed; 24. Orgy; 25. Iffy.

ADVERTISE WITH US

Ordinary commercial advertisements are charged at the rates below.

Charity Rates: No charge will be made to advertise charity events or matters of general social interest.

If participation in an event is to be charged for then our normal advertising terms apply.

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Full page

190mm tall x 128mm wide = £160

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95mm tall x 128mm wide = £80

OR 190mm tall x 63mm wide = £80

Quarter page

95mm tall x 63mm wide = £40

OR 47mm tall x 128mm wide = £40

Eighth page

47mm tall x 63mm wide = £20

These rates are per issue.

10% discount for an annual contract (6 issues)

ALL ADVERTS TO BE PREPAID

To enquire about advertising or to book space, please email advertising@settlenews.co.uk or call 07484 174333

HOW TO PAY

Payments may be made by bank transfer (reference 'Advertising') to: Settle and District Community News

Sort Code: 01-07-93

Account Number: 53002016

Or, send a cheque payable to Settle and District Community News to: 6 Townhead Croft, Settle, BD24 9LG.

Next Issue (Apr/May 2026) is published on 2nd April

The deadline for copy and advertising bookings is 11th March



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