

BENTHAM NEWS

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This aerial photo of much of Bentham's Main Streets was taken by Jon Brook of Bentham Imaging on 15th March. Two thirds of respondents to the Masterplan questionnaire thought our town centre looks dejected with significant traffic and parking problems: how can we make it safer and more attractive? (See pages 2 and 3)

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Masterplan: Initial Findings

By Elizabeth Adlington, Shirley Brown, Phil Gerrie and Jim Munday

The initial phase of the Bentham Masterplan is complete! The questionnaire was filled in by over 10% of the population, a good response from which we can claim to have a fairly accurate idea of how local people think about “rejuvenating the town centre” and their vision for the future development of the town. People were asked what they like and dislike about Bentham and encouraged to put forward suggestions about how the lives of people in the town could be improved. 385 of you did just that! Thank you for responding so enthusiastically to the questionnaire.



In brief: Bentham’s population is growing slowly (3,035 in the 2021 census) with 57% of the population of working age. We are not a town of retired people. Almost half of respondents considered that the **best thing about Bentham** was the community ethos, the friendliness and helpfulness of people. A quarter of respondents chose the local environment as the best thing. One third chose as **the worst thing about Bentham** the town centre’s dejected appearance and another third the roads, traffic congestion and parking problems. Another quarter chose difficulties with public transport particularly the lack of a useful bus service.

Lots of really good ideas were suggested: everything from fuller use of the Town Hall for events and community services, to regular removal of litter and dog waste, to a sports centre and gym ... the ideas kept coming. **We can only give a snapshot of our findings here, so if you want a fuller picture, please read our 15-page Initial Findings on the Town Council’s website (www.benthamtowncouncil.co.uk) and the Bentham News website (www.thebenthamnews.co.uk).**

The results have now been analysed and presented to Bentham Town Council (on March 6th) and to Craven District Council (on March 8th). Both councils have given the go-ahead to move on to the next phase, implementing some of the suggested changes. What does that mean? In practical terms we now need to involve North Yorkshire Council and interested individuals to develop, plan and take forward specific ideas – we can’t do everything at once, much as we’d love to. We haven’t the capacity to work on them all so we are concentrating on those that look as though local action could have some success. Through the questionnaire we received many offers of help from individuals and groups who want to remain involved in discussions. So, some development groups are beginning to form up.



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Development Groups:

WiFi improvements: Already Ken Durkin has come forward to work towards bringing B4RN to more of Bentham (*see his article on page 17*) and with the County Council we're exploring bringing free WiFi to the Main Street.

Town Centre improvements: Our front-page photo gives an overview of the area, we would like to gather residents' views on the key issues and look at ways of addressing them, especially bearing in mind the current proposal that Bentham becomes a Conservation Area. Some things we might get money for, others not, and some things we can do for ourselves. We will be contacting those who expressed an interest in this issue to find ways of making improvements.

In the longer term: We know that **local public transport** is really a massive concern for many Bentham people, so we will be looking to get a group together to look at ways forward with providing sensible and workable public transport. We will need to put together a final Masterplan which can be fed into the future planning of North Yorkshire Council. This collaborative venture will put forward bids for future finance and lay out an investment plan for Bentham. Some improvements can only be executed by public agencies with legal responsibilities in that area. For example, the County Council Highways Department has responsibility for the maintenance, safety and upkeep of roads and traffic control measures. There is no obligation on them to improve the road layout, only to maintain it. Finance for this work is delegated by central government. So, although this was the biggest concern raised, any improvements will depend on the county council – we intend to make sure that they understand the urgency and complexity of this issue.

The four of us have worked hard to get The Bentham Masterplan to this stage. We are now looking for input from other interested individuals and organisations (like Community First) to move things on. The Town Council have pledged their support, and we are getting valuable ideas from Andrew Laycock (Economic Development Officer at North Yorkshire Council) and have already been joined by Dr Mark Dawson (a Bentham resident who works at Lancaster University and who is highly invested in the development of the town).

We loved going through the questionnaire responses. It was great to read "I like everything about Bentham" and "I wouldn't change anything". We want to keep Bentham as a great place to live and work, a solid town where almost everyone thinks that other people are so important. How lucky are we to live in a town where people, overall, like and look out for each other, this is what we want to build on.

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"Farmers who don't enjoy the lambing season should do something less stressful, like bomb disposal."

By John Dawson (a farmer)

To many people April means a pleasant spring break, perhaps a trip to the Lake District to take in the spring blossom and do a 'Wainwright'. Or a little trip abroad to lie on a beach and drink sangria (whatever that is) for a week or two to help get over the long and arduous winter.

To the average peasant farmer, April is a whole month of despair and disappointment which we know as lambing time. It is the agricultural equivalent of the battle of the Somme with a struggle for survival in the mud and rain with the outcome far from sure. The only thing that is sure about lambing time is that it will come to an end, rain or fine, cold or not so cold, lambs will be born every day until it is ended, not like hay time where the weather dictates the speed of play.

Lambing time has been planned for all winter, the sheep have lived well with an abundance of homegrown hay and even some very expensive bought in feed that required another extension to the overdraft to pay for it. The hospital beds are set up in the barn for any new mums that might require overnight accommodation, the collie dog is in fine fettle and ready for anything, the quad bike is serviced, medicines and treatments are stashed in the cupboard and some syringes and partly used bottles live in pockets ready to fall out and break on the bedroom floor causing marital disharmony.

However prepared the peasant farmer is for the lambing season it makes very little difference, lambing time hits a farm like a steam roller and much of the time is spent responding to many and varied crises on a daily and, sometimes hourly, basis. This is part of the fun and must be enjoyed, the minute you stop enjoying letting little lambs suck for the fourth time in a day, just because they are idiots, means it is time to call it a day, maybe do something less stressful, such as bomb disposal.

There are two main ways of 'doing' a lambing season and both have disaster written all over them. The first is to house all the sheep in a warm cosy shed, completely weatherproof. All is well, baby lambs are born into lovely clean straw with no foxes lurking to swipe a slow twin and certainly no need for the shepherd to dress like they're off on a polar expedition.



The trouble with warm cosy sheds is that they must be built in the first place at astronomical cost, and then the shepherd has to be present at all times, night and day. The minute you look away to "turn the vicar's bike round" six sheep give birth to fifteen lambs all in a heap. You then spend the next hour trying to find everyone a lamb that they will accept with any orphans going in the pet lamb pen. It is standard practice that as sheep lamb they are taken out of the lambing shed into the field but if the weather is really bad, known technically as "a stinker" this is not practical and soon all the individual pens are awash with new families. It is bed blocking in the extreme, when this happens sheep and lambs are penned just about anywhere. I knew one shepherd who was caught red-handed carrying hurdles into the living room, and the fact he had removed his wellies carried very little weight in the case for the defence.

The other method is to lamb outdoors which is just as disaster ridden, open to the elements with long, wet, cold nights taking their toll on sheep and baby lambs, not to mention the shepherd. At least outside an expectant mum who may feel the first pangs of childbirth is able to take herself off into the privacy of a field corner and hopefully give birth without too much interference from other sheep or the ever-ready Mr Fox.

Bleak Bank sheep lamb outside, and we tend to leave them alone when darkness falls, entering a field of heavily pregnant sheep with artificial light tends to cause mayhem as the flock rushes into the far corner in some kind of stampede. Instead, we use the hours of darkness to milk, feed and clean out cows. Much better to arrive at the maternity fields just as dawn is breaking and the sheep are beginning their day. Any mums requiring assistance can now be dealt with in daylight, and both they, and I, know the shepherd will not let them down.....



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Celebrate the King's Coronation

River Wenning Group – Update After Successful Film Show

By River Wenning Group

The back end of February blew in blustery gales and flashes of blue sky, reminding us that spring was on its way.

On Friday 24th the River Wenning Group showed the film *Riverwoods* in Bentham Lower Town Hall, followed by an illustrated talk from Jemma Wilson and Fiona Brewis from the Lune Rivers Trust. The audience numbered about sixty people, from older members of the community to a baby in arms, and we used all the chairs until there was standing room only.

The film focuses on the extraordinary life cycle of an Atlantic salmon in Scotland, showing the interdependence of the fish, trees and wild creatures along its native river. Jemma and Fiona then spoke about their work along the Wenning and its tributaries, investigating water quality and aquatic life. Did you know there are rare crayfish in one of our local becks? They also told us about their work with school children, identifying trees in winter and planting seedlings.

Lively questions and discussion followed, exploring concerns about pollution of the Wenning from sewage and farm run-off, and about steadily diminishing numbers of fish over the years. Anglers, bathers and walkers who enjoy seeing flowers and wildlife along our beautiful riverbanks are all determined to protect the Wenning, especially in the face of new housing developments which lack any guarantee of upgraded water treatment works to cope with additional waste. Our existing infrastructure is already giving way under the strain and discharging raw sewage.

In the audience were local residents who have known the Wenning since childhood, parents and grandparents concerned about little ones playing in the river, a Bentham expert on caddis fly larvae and an Emeritus Professor of Environmental Change who has been involved with the Ilkley Clean River Campaign and offered advice and expertise. Many of the audience left contact details and are keen to help protect the Wenning. A network is growing. If you are interested in receiving updates you can send your name and email address to: riverwenninggroup@gmail.com And watch this space in the Bentham News!

Editors' note: BBC Two has screened a two-part documentary, "Paul Whitehouse: Our Troubled Rivers" on Sundays 5th and 12th March. These examine the issues rivers in England and Wales are facing – they make uncomfortable viewing but remind us of the importance of our rivers and that we ignore or mistreat them at our peril. You can watch them on BBC iplayer.



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Bentham Social Media Roundup

Not all our readers use social media, but many local stories appear there, so here's our look at this month's highlights from in and around Bentham on Facebook and elsewhere, edited by Matt Purcell.



Martin Collins congratulated all those involved with the repair of the town hall clock. It has recently begun to run again after undergoing an extensive refurbishment. **Gareth Adams** reported that the clock has had many of its original bushings and bearings replaced and has had an electric winding mechanism fitted. It should continue to chime for many years to come.

Phil Gerrie reported that the proposed development off Springfield has been refused by the Planning Inspector. Correspondents were generally relieved that the development will not go ahead.

North Yorkshire Police reported that door-to-door salespeople have been operating in the Bentham area. They remind all residents that such salespeople must have a permit issued by the police, and that no such permits have been issued for Bentham and the surrounding area. They advise residents to politely decline any approach and to report the matter to the police immediately. Further advice and free 'no cold callers' signs are available from the regular drop-in surgeries held at the Town Hall.

And finally, a number of impressive photographs have been shared this month. Some old aerial shots of Angus Works and Ford Ayrton Mill from times past by **David Johnson**, some old memories of Bentham posted by **Emma Wood**, and a fine picture of a snow covered Ingleborough from the Golf Club by **Rob Brown**.

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Bentham Woman Seeks Backing for Record-Breaking Solo Row Across the Atlantic

By Viv Barclay



Photo by Jon Brook of Bentham Imaging

I am defying the menopause in a bid to row 3,000 miles across the Atlantic, solo, and achieve a Guinness World Record for womankind in December 2024. From La Gomera to Antigua, rowing doesn't get tougher than this. The hardest part, though, is getting to the start.

"Are you mad?" If I had a fiver for every time someone's asked me that question, I'd be halfway to my campaign target already. Yes, it is known as the World's Toughest Row and yes it has brought grown men to tears, most famously Ben Fogle and James Cracknell, but despite being post-menopausal, I'm still in full possession of my faculties. Listen, I've given birth twice and survived driving on the road between Ingleton and Bentham for the last 12 years - I've got this!

'If I can see it, I can be it' dawned on me after watching four other middle-aged women, The Yorkshire Rows, cross in 2016. However, I talked myself out of it and a few years later, I had a choice: sit invisibly on the sofa with a glass of wine 'binge-flix-ing' or challenge myself to live life, learn new skills and help others. "You've got to have some adventure in your life," my dad said, and so heart pounding and hands shaking, I signed up.

Most FAQs about the row concern the type of boat and everyday functions of being human; food, sleep, steering/avoiding tankers while asleep and the on-board toilet facilities. There's all the info here <https://www.mumentous.com/> but the answer to the last one is a bucket.

I'm supporting The Menopause Charity because it can seem like you're losing your marbles during this life stage and certainly your mojo, leading to a staggering 87% of

women reporting feeling invisible. I want to do something to change that and a record-breaking row (I'll be the oldest solo woman at 59), I hope will raise £50,000 to help create that change. The risks are mitigated but there's no question this challenge will endanger my life. However, if it supports other women, I don't think there's anything mad about that.

To sponsor me: gofund.me/2fc2e198

Business sponsorship enquiries: viv@mumentous.com

Follow my journey: <https://www.instagram.com/mumentous.atlantic.row/>

Green Dreams for Cedar House.

Can You Help?

By Debbie Chadwick

Cedar House School in Low Bentham have started working towards the accolade of becoming an official 'Eco School'. We would be very grateful if readers of Bentham News could help us to achieve this. Cedar House already does lots of positive things to help the environment, recycling, using environmentally friendly cleaning products, making sure cups and water bottles are reusable to reduce waste plastic, and many more similar initiatives. But we want to be much better. Our pupils feel that they need to take better care of our planet.

In the Eco School award process, we have looked at the environment around us and thought of ideas that might help the planet. The children would like to develop the school grounds into a real area of biodiversity for wildlife. They would also like to grow their own food to eat in school. So, we are asking if people could donate anything to help make this happen. We would appreciate plants, seeds, planters and pots, compost, topsoil, building materials or wood that we can make things from, tools, in fact anything you think could be useful. Smaller items we will be able to collect from you, but unfortunately, we don't have the means to transport large items.

The children will also be working on bringing their Eco message into the community, so look out for them doing litter picks around the local area. The 'Green Team' will keep you updated on their work via the Bentham News.

To donate and arrange for collection or to drop at school, please text me on 07935-659004 or e-mail deborah.chadwick@aol.co.uk



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New Council Poised to Announce Dramatic Community Support Initiative

By BN Political Reporter

The biggest shakeup of local government since 1974 will take place on 1st April 2023. North Yorkshire County Council, Craven District Council and 6 other district and borough councils will be replaced by a newly formed North Yorkshire Council.

Bentham News can exclusively reveal that one of the first acts of the New North Yorkshire Council is a dramatic community support initiative: to acquire underutilised community buildings in the area by compulsory purchase. Rumour has it that Bentham's former community centre and youth café building on the Main Street is in their sights. As it is currently 'For Sale' it could quickly be acquired as a key part of a pilot study to evaluate the effectiveness of various plans going forward to better serve their rural communities. Underused buildings could fairly speedily be turned into "Fellowship Office Operational Locations".

The Council will be looking for ideas on how these locations can best be utilised, and these will be gathered by a newly formed policy unit from within the Department for Levelling Up: "Joint Operation for Knowledge and Enterprise" (or J.O.K.E for short). Early indications are that, ironically, the new North Yorkshire Council may be considering using the newly acquired building as a Youth Centre and Food Bank! Expect an official announcement on 1st April.



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Ewecross Historical Society hear about The Age of Enclosure

By Mary Taylor

Dr Mike Winstanley, former Senior History Lecturer at Lancaster University and chair of the Ewecross Historical Society, gave an illustrated lecture on The Age of Enclosure, to members on Monday February 27th in Bentham Methodist church, when the scheduled speaker was unable to attend. Using maps and aerial photographs of the land, he said that moor, waste and common land needed to be brought into cultivation to grow wheat to feed the population, and this accelerated during the Napoleonic War. Enclosure roads and field boundaries are in straight lines, as seen on Bentham Moor towards Burton which was enclosed in 1767-68, and strip cultivation was discontinued except for one parish in the Midlands which still uses this method of agriculture. Mike gave the names of the landowners on the committees who allocated fields to the different farms, mentioning the 6,000 acres of moss land at Heversham, much of this was allocated to Trinity College, Cambridge. Across the border south and west of Bentham, Tatham was enclosed at the General Enclosure Act of 1853. Landowners met at Tatham Bridge Inn, Pudsey Dawson from Hornby Castle owned the land and retained shooting and mineral rights. Burnmoor south of the cattle grid and Lythe Fell are named Stinted Pasture, for one stint the owner of that stint can graze one cow on the fell, or 5 sheep, and they have rights to gather rushes, stone and turves for the fire, but only for their own use. There were many complaints about Yorkshire sheep straying into Lancashire before the boundary was fenced and the cattle grid put in.

Great Day Out

By Deb Hawkins

The Bentham Age Concern Friday Lunch Club organised a day trip to Boundary Mill, Colne, and again we got a beautiful sunny day! The members were picked up by our minibus and enjoyed a lovely scenic drive to Colne. On arrival we received some discount vouchers from Elaine at Boundary Mill, and then we were off to use some for retail therapy! Everybody went in different directions, and we spent four hours wandering around, looking for bargains or having a cuppa in the restaurant. We all regrouped at 2.30pm and headed back, feeling we'd accomplished a great day out.

A Big Thank You to David, our volunteer driver for driving us to Colne and making our day possible despite being a non-shopper! Also thank you to Sally, my sidekick, in helping as an escort. Now we're off to plan our next day out! Watch this space!



Don't forget the BN deadline date is 12th April for the May edition

Dan Nelson – Shoemaker Extraordinaire

By Anne Preston

If you have never visited Dan's shop on Duke Street in Settle, you should really go. You will see the most extraordinary craftsmanship, skill and dedication. Dan, wife Jane, son John and Mark Slee (*see photo below*) create standard, bespoke and surgical handmade footwear using traditional methods (some dating back to medieval times) using only natural materials; leather, rubber, canvas, linen thread etc. The little workshop at the back of the shop, heated by a wood burner, is full of old Victorian, specialist tools. Other rooms are overflowing with rolls of soft leather. The work goes on as it always has, calmly. No noise of power tools. Just people sitting 'making quietly by hand' as Dan describes it.

Dan is an expert on the changing fashions in shoes through history and recreates them using original techniques; roman shoes sewn and riveted together, medieval shoes made inside out then turned so the stitching is on the outside so the shoe will not rub; medieval pattens (*editor's note: pattens are protective overshoes worn outdoors over a normal shoe*) with wooden soles; medieval riding boots. I saw a pair of boots he is making for the one of the falconers at Warwick Castle, made as they have always been. Also examples of Victorian military boots made straight, no left or right feet. These are made from vegetable tanned leather which moulds very quickly to the shape of the foot, hence no need for different shaped lasts (*the wooden moulds around which the shoes are shaped*) for each foot. Vegetable tanning takes a long time so is not often used these days. Absolutely fascinating!



He knows everything about leather, how different parts of the hide stretch and vary in thickness, thickest on the back, soft on the belly, and what to use for which part of the shoe. He carves the lasts himself out of beech for bespoke shoes. He makes the sewing thread from linen thread which is twisted then pulled so it comes apart with a tapered end. Multiple layers of this are put together to make a sewing thread with tapering ends, which is then waxed with a mixture of pine resin, beeswax and fat, then twisted to give it strength. He then fixes a pig's bristle to both ends with this gluey waterproof substance. The thread then pulls smoothly through a small hole in the leather, becoming tight; the friction melts the wax sealing the hole and glueing the thread in place. If, for instance, the stitch is used to attach the thick leather sole, even when the surface of the stitch wears away, the glue sets so strongly the sole will still hold.

Dan also knows so much about the bones of the foot; how the height of a heel will affect the position of the foot. He can and does make surgical shoes, adjusted for the comfort and support of people whose feet are unusually shaped or painful, a master craftsman and passionate about what he does. He is always willing to teach people his craft and indeed he was overseeing a gifted amateur quietly sewing away during our interview. He does his utmost to ensure that his skills are passed on and are not lost to us, as so many other skills have been.

Dan's forefathers were shoemakers in Settle. The business began in 1847 and moved to its present premises in 1865. Boom time hit with the building of the railways – so many navvies, so many work boots to make. They used to take sacks of boots up to the shanty town at Ribbleshead viaduct on pay days. His grandad repaired boots for his regiment in WWI. Dan helped in the shop as a schoolboy and has been working there ever since. Apprenticeship takes seven years.

Dan has a 2-year waiting list for shoes and boots, Mark's is 6-8 months and John doesn't have one as he is still learning and is just making standard sizes at the moment. They don't have a website and don't advertise. The footwear you buy may be priced in the hundreds of pounds but should last 20 years. You will have to look after them, but they are totally repairable. No plastic waste and probably working out at £20 a year. Good for your feet and good for the planet. Something to celebrate!

Photos by Roger Taylor of Settle

PS If you Google 'A Thousand Threads – Daniel Saul' you can watch a short film of Daniel making the sewing threads.



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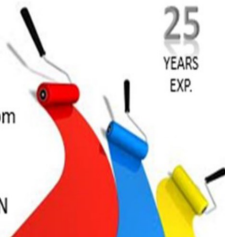
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Your Garden or Allotment in April

By Joyce Knapp



April can be such an exciting month for us gardeners as we watch everything spring back into growth and this can range from the buds opening on trees and shrubs showing an array of lush green foliage, to the good old reliable perennials which will be re-emerging from the soil after their winter rest. One of the first of these perennials to appear is Pulmonaria and it may even be in full flower by now, showing off its attractive purple/pink flowers that will provide a very good source of food for early foraging insects. When planting up perennials it is worth mixing them in amongst evergreens which can provide a back-drop of colour throughout the dark winter months, and they will sit well between either conifers or evergreen shrubs such as Christmas Box. These shrubs and conifers not only go on to provide support for any tall perennials, reducing the need for canes or frames, they also create a certain amount of shade, thereby reducing the need to water.

I find that as I grow older, I am always on the lookout for ways to reduce the workload involved in looking after both a garden and an allotment and an added bonus is that this often leads to me using methods that are more environmentally friendly. A good example of this is the two large water butts we now use to collect rainwater via the guttering on the shed in the allotment, prior to which we took large containers of tap water by car to provide much needed water for the crops.

I heard on the news recently that the price of soft fruit such as strawberries and raspberries is likely to increase dramatically this summer, due to a lack of people willing to pick the crops, so now is probably a very good time to consider growing a few plants ourselves. It is relatively easy to start a strawberry bed and you may wish to begin with just three strong plants as these will go

on to produce new plants later in the year by putting out runners. When the flowers begin to fade, we can put a layer of straw around each plant as this will help avoid soil splashing onto the developing fruit.

The only other job is to provide some form of netting over the plants to prevent birds helping themselves to our luscious fruit before we have a chance to pick it.

Pruning this month is restricted to just a few shrubs the most popular of which is probably a lovely evergreen known as Viburnum x bodnantense. This is best achieved by removing 1/5 of the stems quite low down, along with any weak shoots found at/near the base. This will help to keep the shrub tidy and encourage flowering next year in late winter/early spring.

Nature Notes

By David Fisher



There I was going on that road to Greystonegill, High Bentham, when a stoat with a black tip to its tail, which was very distinctive went into a dry stone wall, as I watched it cross the road. Fishing season starts soon and I am already preparing tackle to wet a line when it gets underway. Overhanging trees along the riverbanks will be providing insect life to the fish as they get blown onto the river surface. A fish will lay in wait for the food to come to it downstream then rises up to take a fly etc. These fish if not spooked can be targeted if conditions are right for the take.

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Get B4RN To Bentham!

By Ken Durkin

Bentham is fortunate to be surrounded by high-speed broadband. Some respondents to the Masterplan Questionnaire mentioned the importance of tapping into this network. High Bentham is the last centre of population in the area in need of connection. Low Bentham, Burton, Ingleton, Kirkby, Barbon, Hornby, Keasden, Wray, Clapham, and Austwick all have access to B4RN's 1000 Mb fibre network.

People tell me we don't need it in Bentham. What we already have is good enough. It's also cheaper than B4RN. Why do we need a broadband speed as fast as the London Stock Exchange? Anyway, BT will soon roll out superfast broadband. It's also more financially secure and the government would bail it out in financial difficulty!

I answer: You don't need to be an estate agent to realise that property values will be higher if 1000 Mb download and upload speeds are accessible for your property rather than 44 Mb and 7 Mb (as published on p12 of March BN). So, even if you personally have no interest in the service I'm sure you will be interested in benefitting from higher values, if not for yourself, then perhaps your beneficiaries.

People say BT will soon provide access to a comparable service. I checked this. They have supplied 8m of 28.1m homes with fibre access. They plan to connect more in the years to come. For 900 Mb they charge £54.99 per month. I have heard B4RN is expensive. For 1000 Mb it's £33.00 per month, a current saving of £21.99 per month.

OK, but who wants high speeds? We're satisfied with our existing set up you might say. Some people might remember how slow BT were to get broadband to Bentham. Internet speed by modem dial-up (0.512 Mb) was too slow to keep pace with the development of websites and software packages.

Another objection is to do with the financial stability of B4RN, especially in view of the recent downturn in tech stocks. **B4RN does not trade for profit.** It is a Community Benefit Society and its finances are transparent and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Accounts are submitted annually to the FCA and are available for public scrutiny.

B4RN responds to community organisation, so our first job is to get ourselves organised. I have registered a website address for our non-existent committee, the-bbc.co.uk, the Bentham B4RN Committee. The next step is to get some members, so if you want a share in the revitalisation of Bentham in the years to come, let's get things started. Please email me at call61709@btinternet.com.

ADDENDUM

Since writing this I have learned that High Bentham will not qualify for a government grant because a company (presumably BT) has applied to supply fibre broadband commercially. In view of BT's tardiness connecting Bentham to broadband early this century, it is extremely disappointing. However, I'd rather not give up on the idea of getting B4RN to High Bentham just yet. I'll let you know of any developments.



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St John's Hospice London-to-Paris Charity Cycle Challenge 2023 in Memory of Stan Wilkinson

By Oliver Wilkinson

You may have noticed a keen cyclist out and about on the highways and by-ways of Bentham and beyond. As the wind howls and rain drives you may wonder what on earth has possessed that cyclist to go out. Well, I must confess – it is probably me. And the reason for such foolhardiness is that I'm in training for a cycle challenge from London to Paris this September to raise vital funds for St John's Hospice in memory of my dad, Stan Wilkinson, who passed away unexpectedly last year.



I hope that many readers of the *Bentham News* will remember my dad and recall his larger-than-life personality. He'd certainly have had something witty to say about the challenge I've taken on! Some may remember that dad was a keen cyclist himself. Latterly you'd have seen him on his electric bike, donning a Dennis the Menace striped jersey, and "skifting" (a word dad made up!) around Bentham with a cheery 'hello' or a whistle. More often than not he'd be stationary, bike propped up, chatting to a friend in the town. Prior to this dad also liked to ride his racing bike – actually he suffered a nasty mishap on this when he sheared the bike's crank clear off when riding up "Winder Wheel" in Low Bentham. Dad also took on some charity fundraising rides including an 80 odd mile ride from Carlisle back to Bentham. He did this with a work colleague when they worked together at Heysham Power Station; though neither could remember whose idea it was!

Partly inspired by dad's charity ride from Carlisle I wanted to do something to mark his memory in a way that would raise vital funds for St John's Hospice, Lancaster. The hospice looked after my dad in his final hours, and they gave him the love and care that he so greatly deserved. I'm sure that many in Bentham will be familiar with the hospice and the care they give to those with life limiting conditions. I cannot commend St John's Hospice, and their staff, highly enough for the vital work they do – nor can I ever pay them back for what they did for my dad. But my goal in taking on this challenge is to raise as much money as I can for the hospice to help to make sure they are there to offer that care to those when they need it most.

I'm asking the people of Bentham to help me achieve this goal. If you are able, please support me in my challenge by sponsoring me. Donations can be made on my Just Giving Page (<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/oliver-wilkinson9>). Alternatively, you can contact me directly (wilkinww1@gmail.com) if you would like to donate via cash or cheques. These donations will be recorded on a St John's sponsorship form.

The ride is over 300 miles, and it will certainly be a big challenge for me – but in a funny way that seems fitting. It's a big challenge in memory of a big character.

Above, photo of Oliver and bike outside his home in Bentham.



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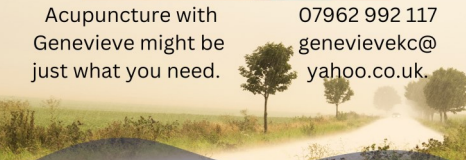
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With the longer days it is lovely to get out in the garden - but the aches and pains of the unaccustomed exercise aren't so lovely!



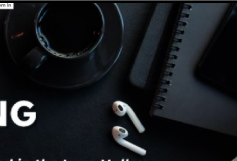
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People Page

Eglin JEAN

Born 28.08.1927 Died 06.02.2023

I would like to thank everyone who sent warm and kind messages of support following the sad loss of my much loved Mam Jean.

Sincere thanks to Liz and Anne at Bentham Methodist Church for conducting the funeral service to our wishes, Jimmy and Tara at B&W Funerals for their guidance and Doctor Lupton, Abigail and the District Nurses at Bentham Medical Practice.

David Eglin

My dear friend Michael and I have served on the Victoria Institute Committee for many years. We both found it an enjoyable and rewarding experience. The VI committee are a friendly, dedicated group who over the years have re-vitalised the building, making many improvements. The building is now a warm and welcoming venue for many organisations to hold their events. The VI cater for the whole range of ages, for regular meetings and occasional celebrations. Michael and I have now retired from the VI committee and we are looking for new members to see to the day to day running and the planning of fund-raising events. If you have an hour or two to spare each month and would like to become a committee member, please contact our chairperson Diane Faraday-Williams or Andrea on 63162 or email v.imanager@hotmail.com

You will receive a warm welcome and a rewarding experience.

Kay Piper



St John's, Low Bentham on Saturday 18th March. By Jon Brook of Bentham Imaging



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Tatham Fells CE (VC) Primary News

By Fiona Ip (Headteacher)



We had an amazing time at the Lune Valley Gymnastics competition at Heysham. A team of our pupils competed in pairs on a full competition floor. They performed confidently and pulled off team bronze medals as well as gaining a lot of confidence in performance. Many thanks to Mrs Speight, our PE specialist and Lucy Ip, lead coach from City of Lancaster Gymnastics, for making it possible.

The week before we were busy with a swimming gala at Heysham which was also thoroughly enjoyed by our children. Thanks to the Lancaster sports partnership for giving our children so many opportunities.

This half term our KS2 pupils have also taken part in a workshop project with Ludus dance company to learn about germs and vaccination through dance, drama and singing. This linked in well with their work on humans and they delivered a confident performance passing on their knowledge to our KS1 pupils.

Y5/6 also took part in the Lune Valley Schools swimming Gala and juniors have been practising for Lune Valley netball tournament.

Our infants have learned all about Pompeii in history and in geography have compared their lives with those of children in the rainforest area of Kampong Ayer.

We are looking forward to the development of our new forest school area. Mrs Entwistle, experienced teacher and owner of Swallows and Amazons Forest School will be working with us every Friday during term time. We will also be offering free forest school sessions to the preschool children/toddlers and their carers on Friday mornings from 10-11.30am in the summer term- watch this space!





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Town Hall

As work is being carried out replacing the windows in the ballroom no information about use of the Town Hall has been sent to Bentham News for April.

St John's

Easter Egg Bingo 5.30pm on Friday 31st (March) at the Victoria Institute. A popular family event with pizzas and lots of chocolate! Adults £5 accompanied children £2 "Daffodils and Crosses" Flowers and Cream Teas at St John's on Easter Sunday April 9th and Easter Monday April 10th from 2pm-4pm

WI (see pages 36-37)

High Bentham

Thursday 6th, 7:30pm, Bentham Town Hall?

Low Bentham and District

Thursday 20th, 7:00pm in the Victoria Institute

Tatham Fells

Tuesday 11th, 7:30pm, Old School Tatham Fells.



Events in April

Bentham Golf Club

Every Friday except Good Friday 7th April
11:00am - 2:00pm, Age Concern Bentham Friday Lunch Club



Footpath (see page 35)



The 4th April walk starts from Low Bentham car park at 9.30am. For the remaining three April walks, meet first at Lairgill for 9.30am.

Tuesday 4th. Susan Badley, 015242 62502, Furnessford and Hindburn bridges, 9.5 miles.
Saturday 15th. Sue King, 015242 41523, Storth and Arnsdale, 7.5 miles.

Friday 21st. Mary and Kate Taylor, 015242 61672, Littledale and Caton, 7 miles.

Thursday 27th. Jim Shuttleworth, 07767-644654, Ravenstonedale and Smardale, 8 miles.

Methodist Church

Monday 24th April

10:00 - 11:30am, **Toddle In**, £2.00 per family. For children newborn to starting school, and their parents/carers.

The Pantry

Every Wednesday

11am-12noon and 3:30pm-5pm

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Victoria Institute

Every Monday

10:00am-12:noon, Office Open Enquires/
bookings.

11:30am-2:00pm, Community Link Café.

Light lunch and activities.

6:15pm-7:45pm, Tai Chi.

Every Tuesday

10:00-12:00noon, Kay's Chat & Mexican Train
meet, £2 tea and biscuits.

4:00pm-9:00pm, Helen Howard School Of
Dance. Term time.

Every Wednesday

9:30am-12:00noon, Office Open, Enquires/
bookings.

10:00am-12:00noon Post Office Services.

11:30am-2:00pm, Community Link Cafe`
Lunch club.

4:00pm-8:00pm, Helen Howard School Of
Dance. Term time.

Every Friday

10:00am-12:00noon, Post Office Services.

Every Sunday

11.00am-12:30pm Cornerstone Church
Service.

Saturday 8th Book Swap and every
2nd Saturday.

Friday 28th

Hip Joint 12.30pm (*see page 27*)

Bentham Fire Station

Thursday, 6th and 20th, 10:00am

Bentham & District Dementia Friendly
Community Breakfast Club

Pioneer Projects Looking Well Studios

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Every Monday (except 10th),

Meet Lairgill carpark 9.20am Health Walks
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Every Monday (except 3rd & 10th), 10.30am to
12.30pm, Making Connections Dementia
Group

Every Tuesday (except 4th & 11th), 10.30am to
12.30pm, Creative Community Hub

Every Tuesday (except 4th & 11th), 11.45am to
1pm, Creative Writing Group face to face and
Zoom

Tuesday 4th, 2pm to 4pm, Book Group

Every Wednesday (except 5th & 12th), 10.30am
to 12noon, Sing Along to Every Song – face to
face and Zoom

Every Wednesday (except 5th & 12th), 2pm to
4pm, Art for All

Every Thursday (except 6th & 13th), 12.30pm
to 3.30pm, Community Art Shed

Every Friday (except 7th & 14th), 10am to
12.30pm, Mental Health & Wellbeing Hub

*For more info and to join any of the above groups
please contact 015242-62672 or
office@pioneerprojects.org.uk*

Ewecross Historical Society

7.30pm on Monday 24th April, High Bentham
Methodist Church: AGM followed by a
talk by Jack Warbrick: Cinema-going in
Morecambe in the 1950s and concluding with
a Jacob's Join. Visitors welcome: free.

Bentham Community Library

Monday 2:30pm - 5:00pm

Wednesday 10:00am – 2:00pm

Friday 2:30pm – 4:20pm

Saturday 10:00am - 12:00noon

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Rotary Club of Lunesdale *by Lilian Barton*

It is good to have started holding meetings regularly again at The Highwayman in Burrow (as we did before the Covid pandemic) where we can enjoy a drink, a meal and catch-up with fellow Rotarians. I can report that we have enjoyed some good talks in the past month. Ron Nelson gave an excellent talk about the Barrow-in-Furness shipyard. Some of the most notable vessels built there include the Royal Navy flagship HMS Albion and the former flagships HMS Bulwark and HMS Invincible sometimes referred to as the Pride of Barrow. On 23rd February Mike Willets, of the Rotary Club of Carnforth, gave a talk about the school which he founded in Kitale, Uganda in 2005. Great things have been achieved with this project with some of the students achieving university entrance. Duncan Hamlett and I visited the school in 2014 and were most impressed with the opportunities and achievements we saw. On 2nd March Dr Simon Kaye and his wife Pauline gave a joint presentation about the charity they support 'Children of Hope'. Money raised for this charity is used to establish an education fund for young Ugandans to obtain qualifications in healthcare which ultimately will benefit their own communities. On 9th March our meeting was cancelled because of freezing weather and dangerous road conditions. That was a first! Thankfully, at last, spring is here.

Hornby**Swimming Pool - Coffee Morning** *by Roger Carter*

The re-opening of the Lune Valley Community Pool is a great local community success story and the pool in gets a great deal of support from local schools, families and friends. The recent very successful Swimathon organised by Georgia and Scott proved yet again the value of this support. Well done to everyone who took part, full results are available on our website. We are holding a **Coffee Morning on Saturday April 22nd at 10.30am in the Hornby Institute**. Enjoy cake, coffee, tea and have a chat with the team and join in the inevitable raffle followed by an AGM at 12noon which you may also wish to attend; it's optional! We are constantly reviewing the pool timetable to suit demand and would welcome any ideas and suggestions for the future. There will be an open forum but any specific questions for the Trustees should be submitted prior to the meeting. Further details are on our website.

For all Hornby Pool general enquiries please contact Georgia or Scott on 01524-805666.

Lunesdale Probus Club April meetings *Roger Carter Hon Secretary Tel: 015242-22283*

The April programme will consist of two very interesting and diverse sessions - 'bells and whistles' perhaps? Our first guest speaker on **3rd April** will be **Georgina Somerville** of Green Rose/LEAP (local energy advice programme) who will be speaking on **Taking Control of Domestic Energy** and giving advice and techniques. On **17th April**, **Enrique Llinares** will speak on the origins of **Morris Dancing in England**. Enrique is well known as an expert and practitioner on this topic.

Lunesdale Probus Club meetings are held on the first and third Monday of each month. Guests, friends and visitors are always welcome to join us at the Hornby Village Institute at 10.30am for coffee and chat before each meeting. No obligation to join - just come along and enjoy.

Ingleborough Archaeology Group

Talks 7.30pm Mondays Ingleton Community Centre. Raffle and Refreshments.

April 17th: Jean Robinson *New research at Raikes Road burial ground, Skipton*

Settle Photographic (<https://www.settlephotos.org/>) contact secretary@settlephotos.org

Monday 3rd April: 5th Annual Photographic Competition 7:30pm St John's Methodist Church (+ Zoom) judged by Christine Hodgson. More details for April on website.

Burton Film Nights :

Saturday 1st April : 'Mrs Harris goes to Paris'. Village Hall, 7.30pm. Tickets £5 available on the door from 7pm and refreshments available. Friday 5th May : 'See how they Run'.

MURDER AT THE HIP JOINT LUNCH CLUB!

**Friday April 28th at 12.30pm,
Victoria Institute, Low Bentham**

Hip Joint moves to Low Bentham this month. Well, we said it was going to be a mystery and a mystery it certainly is... We welcome you to a MURDER MYSTERY!

Enter the Brown Trout pub in Bentbridge, watch a cunningly crafted plot unfold and put your sleuthing skills to the test. Will it be you who discovers whodunit? Imagine yourself in the pub watching the cast rehearsing for a play. In the play, on the face of it, everything is familiar, orderly and running as usual. However, below the surface there is discord – someone is plotting murder. An awful crime is about to be committed.

Who will be the victim, who the murderer? How are YOU going to find out? by questioning the shadowy suspects yourself! What else would you be eating in the Brown Trout pub, but delicious pub grub! We won't be pulling pints, but we will provide you with another Hip Joint feast. So come along to something completely different. You will be drawn into a web of intrigue and mystery. You will WANT to solve whodunit!!

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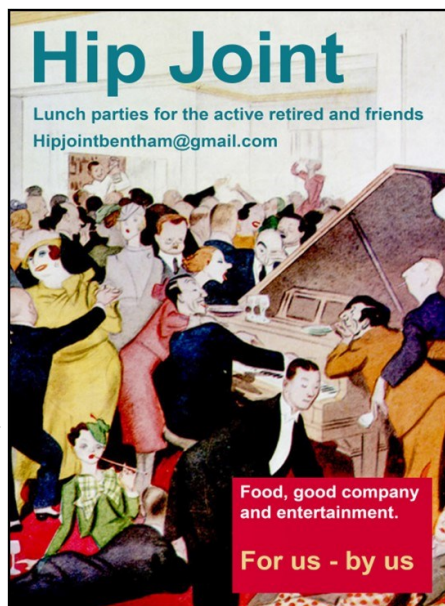
If you have any queries, please email hipjointtickets@icloud.com.

There is the option of a £5 ticket if you are on a reduced income.

Please email hipjointbentham@gmail.com to obtain a £5 ticket.

Tickets must be booked by 24th April for catering purposes. There is no need to print out your ticket as we will have a list of those who have booked.

This is the last Hip Joint until the autumn, so be there!



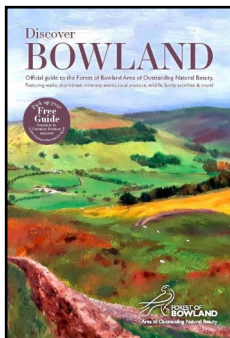
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The Forest of Bowland launched its 2023 'Discover Bowland' Guide

By Sandra Silk, Project Officer, Forest of Bowland AONB

As well as offering practical advice and information on making the most of holidays and short breaks in Bowland, the Discover Guide also showcases the increasingly diverse tourism options in the amazing landscapes of the Forest of Bowland. From perennial favourites like hiking, cycling and increasingly popular e-bike tours, to exploring the night skies, food tourism and the therapeutic benefits of walking with alpacas, the new Guide is packed with useful tips and practical information. As we know,

the Forest of Bowland has miles of footpaths and traffic-free cycle trails, outstanding local produce and 'Dark Skies' away from sources of light pollution making it increasingly popular for spring, autumn and winter breaks. The Discover Guide is useful for everyone who wants to make the most of their time in Bowland. The 116-page Discover guide also includes features about the fantastic work of the AONB Partnership including habitat restoration work for peatlands and hay meadows as well as a series of short break itineraries and useful information on accommodation, hospitality and events. It should be available in tourist information centres and can also be downloaded online at-

[Discover Bowland Guide | Forest of Bowland AONB](#). The Guide is free, but donations are welcome to [Champion Bowland](#) – the charity which supports sustainable tourism, environment and community projects across the AONB.

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Police Report

Members of your Safer Neighbourhood Team covering the Bentham, Ingleton and Settle area are PS1006 Paul Evans, PC871 Ian Hunt, PC188 Jane Carpenter, PCSO5561 Jayne Grace and PCSO5881 Julia Runciman. They will be keeping you updated on recent crimes and incidents in Bentham and the surrounding area.



There were **27 incidents** reported between 12th February and 9th March 2023.

These included safeguarding, abandon/hoax calls, wanted/absconder, sudden death, civil dispute, crime of violence – dog bite – Low Bentham, fraud – Lloyds Bank, drink driving, harassment, domestic dispute, anti-social behaviour and missing person found safe and well.

20th February – around 4.40pm theft from outside 35 Main Street of antique 2-wheeled trolley with blue plastic bucket which holds wood – any information please call 101 (ref 0377)

21st February – on Ireby Road a garden shed was broken in to and gardening tools were stolen - any information please call 101 (ref 0028)

6th March – between 8.30am and 9pm, a Green Ranger 570 Polaris PO17TLU was stolen from land adjacent to the church at Thornton-in-Lonsdale – any information please call 101 (ref 0498)

6th/7th March - between 5pm on 6th and midday on 7th - theft of Ifor Williams 4-wheel plant trailer reg PK15YWV and orange Kubota K800 mini digger with bucket from High Street Ingleton - any information please call 101 (ref 0171)

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Town Council Meeting on 20th February

By Jane Proctor

These are not official Bentham Town Council minutes but a factual report of matters discussed at the Town Council meeting. The official minutes will be posted on the BTC website in due course.

The second Town Council meeting in February must have been one of the shortest on record lasting a mere 21 minutes. Having said that the council moved into closed session afterward so not home quite so quickly for Cllrs Adams, Burton, Gerrie, Hill, Jones, Paige and Pearce along with Christine Downey, the Town Clerk. The others present at the meeting, two members of the public and your BN reporter, all headed off. Cllrs Marshall and Stannard had sent their apologies.

Resignation of the Town Clerk

The reason for the closed session was to discuss what arrangements should be put in place following Christine Downey's resignation. In the Comments and Concerns section at the beginning of the meeting Bentham News asked to place on record their thanks for all the help and assistance Christine has given to them over the years, and wished her well for the future. A member of the public present also echoed the comments made and Cllr Adams said that a number of members of the public had stopped him in the street to express regret at Christine's departure. She will be much missed and a hard act to follow.

River Greta's designation as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation

The Council was also addressed by Cllr Belinda Strickland of Burton Parish Council under Comments and Concerns. Cllr Strickland informed the meeting that in 1995, following an extensive ecological impact assessment in 1993, Bentham and Burton Councils had worked together to ensure that the flood plain for the River Greta was designated a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The area is much valued locally as a quiet place and a route well used by dog walkers. There is now concern that a proposal for the development of eight one and two bedroomed holiday lodges, five of which would be within the SINC, will threaten the site designation. Craven District Council are currently carrying out an Environment Impact Assessment of the site the outcome of which will probably determine if a planning application follows. The Town Council unanimously agreed to support Burton's efforts to maintain the status of the current SINC.

Bentham Winners

Some while ago, Craven District Council Legacy sub-committee asked Bentham Town Council to nominate people who have demonstrated excellent community spirit. They nominated Gerald Townson for an individual award for his work on the Bentham Line and the Playing Fields Association for their community work as a group. Both won their respective awards and Gerald Townson and Lisa Guy (representing the PFA) will be attending a prize presentation evening at 6pm on 30th March in Skipton Town Hall. Cllr Jones will be attending along with the winners. This will be one of the last acts of Craven District Council before it is replaced by North Yorkshire Council on April 1st.

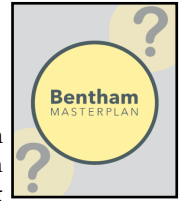
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Bentham Masterplan Presentation to Bentham Town Council Monday 6th March 2023

By Peter Hardy (for Bentham News)

Town Councillor Phil Gerrie, who is a member of the Bentham Masterplan Team, introduced the other three members: Jim Munday, Elizabeth Adlington and Shirley Brown. He also outlined their credentials for taking on this role and for analysing the data from the questionnaires. Jim explained that the level of response to the questionnaires was over 10% which is much higher than the level of similar questionnaires in the past. He reminded the Town Council that they were partners in the Masterplan and that their cooperation would be vital in taking any plans forward and commented that Bentham's population is larger than Ingleton's, Kirkby Lonsdale's or Settle's and as such Bentham deserved more investment than it currently gets. Elizabeth detailed the results of the responses and outlined how these had been collated and confirmed, that the results were a genuine reflection of the views of Bentham people. The mayor, Gareth Adams, said that at this point we should be looking forward and not back at previous initiatives and asked for questions from the council. Cllr Tim Stannard mentioned local transport initiatives that sometime met opposition if minibuses had to travel to Lancashire, taking trade away from Yorkshire. Gareth said that it was likely that more journeys were made towards Lancaster than Skipton because of hospital appointments, he then showed a flyer that had recently been posted on the noticeboard offering free bus transport to work linked to Sedbergh. Jim pointed out that Yorkshire County Council have a climate change policy which should encourage public transport initiatives rather than more use of private cars. Cllr Leonie Pearce asked for more details about an exciting potential project involving Lancaster University which had been mentioned as a suggestion coming out of the Masterplan questionnaires, but the team were unable to give more details about this yet, as meetings were still to take place to work out whether such a joint project might be feasible. Jim said that as a result of the questionnaire 40-50 people had left contact details and expressed a desire to be involved in implementing future projects that would improve the life of Bentham people. The subject of Section 106 money coming back into Bentham from future housing developments was mentioned.

Cllr Adams confirmed that the Town Council were happy for the results of the Masterplan questionnaire to be widely shared: and all 15 pages of them can now be viewed on both the Town Council's and Bentham News' websites. He also confirmed that Masterplan meetings could be held in the Town Hall free of charge. Questions were then taken from the audience, and Ken Durkin highlighted the lack of High-Speed Broadband in Bentham. It was suggested that first steps would be to create a local group to discuss this with B4RN, an initiative that would have the full backing of the Masterplan team. (See page 17.)





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Town Council Meeting on 6th March

By Jane Proctor

These are not official Bentham Town Council minutes, but a factual report of matters discussed at the Town Council meeting. The official minutes will be posted on the BTC website in due course.

All councillors were present for the meeting except Cllr. Marshall who sent his apologies. There was no attendance by either District or County Councillors, the police or public safety officer but 12 members of the public came along, in addition to your BN reporter, which is an indication of the level of local interest in the Bentham Masterplan.

Bentham Masterplan

The evening began with a presentation by the Masterplan team (for the report see Pete Hardy's article on page 32). The team, whose credentials are as impeccable as they are impressive, gave a very professional presentation of where they had got to and to which the council gave a sympathetic hearing. A constructive discussion followed. We are fortunate as a town that a dedicated group of volunteers who are passionate about there being a vision for Bentham have banded together to work towards a better Bentham for us all to live and work in. We await with interest future progress reports.

Comments and Concerns

A member of the public present raised concern about parked vehicles on the main Low Bentham Road at Felstead and felt this was an accident waiting to happen. The council shared the concern and will raise the matter with Highways to see if anything can be done. It was pointed out however that whilst yellow lines might be painted on the road, without any enforcement action inconsiderate parking would continue to be a problem and a safety hazard.

Planning Applications

New – 2023/24814/VAR Application for variation of condition 3 (CDC Materials), 5 (CDC SDSCS) and 6 (Landscaping) to approved planning application referenced 20220/22363/FUL. Little Croft Barn, Sunderland House, Burton-in-Lonsdale, LA6 3LN – No objection

2023/24828/VAR Application for variation of condition 2 (Approved Plans) to approve planning application referenced 2022/24039/FUL for 2022, for revisions including raising roof height to accommodate 5th bedroom. Land north of Fern House, Burton Road, Low Bentham LA2 7ER – No objection

Planning Decisions

Appeal Decision – see Clerk's report, except the Clerk's report was not made available. Normally in advance of a council meeting a 'Clerk's report' is published with details of planning consents granted or refused since the last meeting. However, there is an interruption to 'normal service' caused by having no clerk, but hopefully as councillors become used to filling the void that Christine Downey's departure has left, or her replacement is appointed, this lack of information will be merely temporary.

Cllr Adams informed the meeting that this item related to the new proposed Springfield Development and that the developer's appeal against the refusal of planning consent had been unsuccessful on the basis they were not going to build sufficient houses on the site.

...../Continued on page 34

Continued from page 33

2023/24714/CPL: Valley Field, Low Bentham Road, LA2 7BT. Craven District Council hereby certify that on 16th January 2023 the development described in the first schedule to this certificate in respect of the land described in the second schedule to the certificate and cross hatched on the plan attached with this certificate, was lawful within the meaning of s192 of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended). Which all boils down to a request for a certificate of local development being approved.

Highways Matters

November's Council Meeting had made a referral to North Yorkshire Highways to see if anything could be done to improve the crossing point at the bottom of Robin Lane to reduce the kerb height, so it was more easily navigable for mobility scooters. There had been some activity since then, not to reduce the kerb height but to remove the tactile paving, and similarly outside the Coach House. The council noted the need to find out what was going on.

The Clock – you may have noticed that the Town Hall clock now tells the right time. The repair was not cheap at approximately £8,000 but Benthamers can now rely on the time shown.

Tourist Information Point – will open for Easter, but there will not be a coffee morning on 24th June for the TIP so if you want to make a bid for the vacancy email the clerk (whose emails are being picked up and responded to. Amazement was expressed at the sheer number of emails received by the clerk – “more than the Queen”). If you do want to make a booking the email address is:- **bookings@benthamtowncouncil.co.uk**

Vintage Panto Poster – the council are to accept a 1909 Panto poster which will be suitably displayed. It was noted the fun went on until 2am in “the good old days”.

Friends of Bentham Library – Cllr. Gerrie reported that the group has now wound up its activities with Pioneer Projects being the lead organisation. The surplus bank balance will go to Pioneer Projects but with the rider that the funds be used for library purposes.

River Wenning – Cllr. Pearce reported on the success of the evening with the Riverwoods film and presentation by the Lune Rivers Trust (*see report on page 6*). Given the local interest in improving the water quality and general environment of the Wenning, a ‘River’s Group’ has been formed and further updates will be given.

Finally - The March council meeting was the first without the assistance of the Town Clerk and a degree of multi-tasking was taking place with Cllr Hill as minute taker. Cllr Adams said an advert for a new Town Clerk had appeared in BN and he wanted to get the word out (full time job with attractive rates of pay) – so if there is anyone out there who is interested, Cllr Adams is your first point of contact, and he will be delighted to hear from you.

***Don't forget the BN deadline date is
12th April for the May edition***



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Four Walks in April

By Don Cartledge

The Wenning Valley article in last month's edition of the Bentham News stated that "many people said the lovely countryside around us was their favourite thing about living in Bentham." Well, on April 4th there's an opportunity to explore that lovely countryside, so if you're interested, just pack a flask and some lunch and turn up at Low Bentham car park for 9.30am.



For the remaining three walks, meet as usual at Lairgill for 9.30am.

The first April walk is on **Tuesday 4th** and, led by Susan Badley (tel. 015242-62502), it covers about 9.5 miles. Starting from Low Bentham car park, we use familiar local paths and minor roads to make our way to Mewith Lane at County Bridge then, via Hill House, to Spens Farm in the Hindburn valley. Across Furnessford Bridge awaits a steep climb up the valley side to reach Birks Farm and the delightful, elevated road that passes Cragg Hall, usually offering splendid views northwards. It's then downhill to Lower Broadwood and a second crossing of the river at Hindburn Bridge. The path follows the river downstream before climbing up to Mealbank and towards School Hill and Higher Perries and on to Greenfold and Robert Hall, overlooking the Wenning valley, before returning to Low Bentham via Eskew Lane.

On **Saturday 15th**, Sue King (tel. 015242-41523) takes us on a 7.5-mile ramble around Storth and Arnside. The walk starts in Storth and parking is along the riverside, about 300 yards beyond the Storth road junction when approaching from Milnthorpe. We follow the old railway track and coastline, and a gentle climb takes us past Dallam Tower and up through the wooded limestone crags above Storth. It's then down to Hazelslack and across Arnside Moss to Arnside and back along the old railway track to the start.

A 7-mile walk round Littledale and Caton on **Friday 21st** is led by Mary and Kate Taylor (tel. 015242-61672). Parking is at Cragg car park, reached by taking the Littledale road from the Black Bull at Brookhouse. Walking back up the road over the cattle grid we turn left then right on the path to the far wall. The route continues past Pott Yeats down the road over Foxdale and Uldale becks, turning right at the road junction. Passing a derelict chapel, the path descends to a bridge and ladder stile to reach Littledale Hall, then it's through a wood and on to eventually reach Bellhill. We carry on between buildings, over a brook and through a wooded area back to the start.

Finally, on **Thursday 27th** we have an 8-mile walk around Ravenstonedale and Smardale. The leader is Jim Shuttleworth (tel. 07767-644654) and the walk starts from near the Kings Arms at Ravenstonedale. Taking the road right, we cross the A685 and keep on the right-hand side of the valley on to Smardale Bridge where we continue up on to the moors. Hopefully we'll get a good view of Smardalegill viaduct which we will cross later. The path eventually leads to the small village of Smardale where we turn left onto School Lane then left again onto the old, dismantled railway track. Soon after this, it passes under a viaduct that carries the current Settle to Carlisle line and keeping on the old track bed for almost a mile, we get to walk across the Smardalegill Viaduct. Another mile on, and the track is on the left back to Smardale Bridge along the other side of the valley, returning to the start.



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Low Bentham and District

By Kathryn Brownsord

The speaker for our February meeting was Cathy Rowland who gave a talk and demonstration on "The wonders of Wax". We were shown how to virtually paint with wax and a hot iron. It was amazing what beautiful pictures, cards and even bags could be made using wax. Four of our members were allowed to have a go and take home our "works of art". Cathy drew the raffle and judged the competition of a candle.

The lunch club in February was held at The Black Bull where 12 members enjoyed a lovely meal.

Two teams from our WI entered the Bentham Agricultural quiz, although we didn't win, we had a good night's entertainment.

Our meeting on April 20th will be "From a Dormitory Window" by Charlotte Hayle. We meet on the third Thursday every month at 7pm in the Victoria Institute, Low Bentham. We hope to see you there.



High Bentham

By Jan Stuiver

On March 2nd members of High Bentham WI listened to a very interesting and informative talk by Lee Cartledge of Bentham Pottery. He told us a little about the history of his own family pottery business and a great deal about the days when Burton-in-Lonsdale had several thriving pottery businesses. We were fascinated to discover that the last working potter in Burton, Richard Bateson, became, for the last years of his working life, a teacher at the Royal College of Art, the Central College of Arts and Crafts and Wimbledon School of Art. Between 1946 and 1964 he taught a generation of studio potters the pottery throwing skills he had spent a lifetime learning.

On March 20th some members will be attending the Lancashire Federation fun quiz at Arkholme, and on Wednesday April 26th we are planning to have lunch at the Coulson Restaurant in Lancaster and Morecambe College where catering students have the chance to practise their skills with paying customers. Anybody interested in joining us is welcome to get in touch.

Our next meeting and the beginning of the programme for the next 12 months will be on Thursday April 6th, when Lynn Massey will be talking about her work with textile crafts. A reminder to all members and prospective members that the annual subs of £46 will be payable in April, when the programme for the next 12 months will be printed and ready to hand out to members. On Saturday April 15th we will be having a coffee morning in the Town Hall. Members are reminded to start looking out for any books, plants, items for the tombola and raffle prizes to contribute either on the day of the coffee morning or at the WI meeting on April 6th.



Tatham Fells

By Mary Taylor

Helen Wilkinson had her audience enthralled as she showed slides and told of two long voyages on an enormous ship, The Iver Stream, with her husband Ian who was Chief Mate, entitled Travels by Tanker at Tatham Fells Women's Institute in the Old School on Tuesday March 14th. Helen said that the voyages took place more than thirty years ago, and that the ship didn't carry oil; most of the time it carried various chemicals in the many tanks incorporated into the hull, there could be different chemicals in different tanks, and the vessel was designed to bend in rough seas. On one of the voyages the cargo was molasses, which had to be kept warm all the way. The tanks were cleaned between each cargo with fresh water steam, and Helen said that some of the harbour officials were very pernickety, forcing them to be cleaned several times. There were slides of many of the ports, and Helen had time to go into some of the

towns. She was able to stay a few days with relatives in New Zealand; from there the crossing the ocean south of Australia was very rough, as was crossing the Atlantic on the other voyage. Slides of the Panama Canal were beautiful; also, those of a long Fiord in Canada where they had to negotiate round many small islands. Helen had helped on the voyages by taking notes and painting the vessel and concluded by saying that she had sailed almost round the world. She was thanked by Olive Beard.

President Ruth Garstang conducted the business informing members of forthcoming events.

The competition for a nautical item was won by Kath Coats with Jenny Herd second and Kath Dickinson third. The evening concluded with refreshments provided by Olive Beard and Sue Broadbent. The next meeting on April 11th will be 'Why Does Your House Look Like This?' by Sue Dawson.



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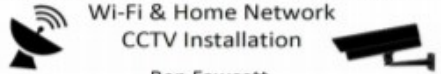
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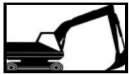


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News from the Fells of Loaves and Fishes, a Quiz and Bird Life

By Helen Wilkinson

At the end of February, we had our second Wild Church, with a theme of challenge. The children enjoyed a treasure trail around the churchyard, searching for bird boxes, animal tracks and identifying trees. They then tried building a tower with marshmallows and spaghetti, much too difficult for me so I stuck to eating the marshmallows. On 1st March a Loaves and Fishes club was held at school and Liz Whitfield told the story of Zacchaeus and then the children made a collage of a tree and made a prayer tree; these will be on display in church. They also made daffodils and loaves of bread.

Eleven teams filled the old school for the Village Society quiz night. The winning team were the Lineker's Replacements - David Ibbotson, John Lee and Roger and Ruth Holden. Our thanks go to Martin Knowles and Raymond Lowis for setting the questions, to all those who provided refreshments and to Anne Dawson for organising our village society events.

As winter leaves with a final flurry of snow the sparrows are busy gathering material to rebuild nests and we have a pair of Mallards visiting our new pond. The oystercatchers are back on Ivah allotments and on the stony banks of the Hindburn. Although the nest sites change over the years as the river moves its path across the valley and a pebble beach reverts to field they can always be found in the same area. I have often sat and tried to spot the eggs hidden amongst the stones, but they are well hidden and all I have managed to see are the adult birds creeping away. The Sports committee has met to plan Lowgill Sports; as usual this will be on the second Saturday in June (10th) and this year there will also be a Sheepdog Trial.



Traffic jam (right) on 15 March in Bentham. See the shopper cowering against the Black Bull wall.

Bentham News now has 48 pages of colour in which we can print colour photographs by local people of local events. So don't forget to send them in and let us know what your club, team, or group is doing!

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Fairtrade Quiz Answers

By Timothy Fox Tel: 015242-62575

There were 7 questions on page 19 of the March Bentham News. Here are the answers to 6 of them:

- “Neutral” is the name of the ethical clothing company which produced green-coloured masks made from Fairtrade cotton.
- “Divine Chocolate” is the company that works with the cocoa growing cooperative, Kuapa Kokoo.
- Whoops! Where did I find this question about a company that splits their Fairtrade chocolate bars into uneven chunks? I cannot find the answer.
- “Clipper” tea produces a range of Fairtrade hot drinks and their tea bags are plastic-free.
- “Y.O.U.” underwear produces underwear using 100% Fairtrade and organic cotton. Their advertising uses a variety of models of all ages, shapes and sizes.
- Andrew Lawrence ran in the 2016 London marathon dressed as a banana in the world record time of 2 hours 47 minutes.
- “Mongozo” means “Cheers!” and is a Belgian brewers funded by Henriques Kabiz who came from Angola as a refugee in the early 1900s.



Footnote: I am told you can buy Fairtrade flowers in some supermarkets as well as the usual coffee, tea, chocolate, etc.

Fancy Fishing Locally?

By Iain Crossley (email: ingletonanglers32@gmail.com)

Is your old fly rod languishing in the back of the shed – why not dust it off and try wild brown trout fishing on our local streams? Better still – introduce your children and grandchildren to the joys of fishing. With just sheep as company, the curlew and lapwing calling across time, it's an idyllic way to spend a warm spring day or beautiful summer's evening.

Ingleton Angling Association are a small local club based in Ingleton, Bentham and Clapham with a passion for wild trout fishing on upland streams. We have fishing on the rivers Twiss and Doe, which meander across Kingsdale and Chapel-le-Dale and down Ingleton Waterfalls before forming the river Greta below Ingleton. We now also look after the upper part of the river Wenning from above the railway viaduct to the confluence with Clapham and Austwick Becks. This was run for many years by Settle Anglers although fell into disuse during Covid and now the stiles and fences need attention; this will be done over the summer.

New members are always welcome and fishing permits are available for a modest sum either online at <https://ingletonanglingassociation.co.uk/> or the Tourist Information in Ingleton Community Centre.

Top photo shows River Greta between Ingleton and Burton-in-Lonsdale.

Bottom photo shows the River Twiss in Kingsdale above Ingleton Waterfalls.





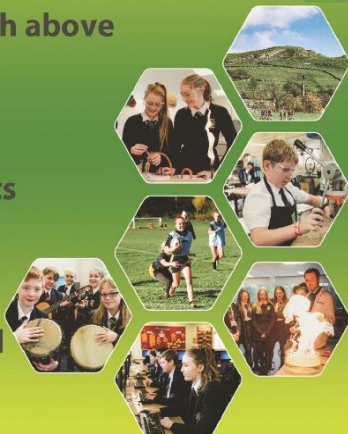
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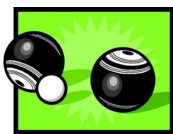
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Springfield Bowling Club New Season 2023

By Helen Cross – Club Secretary



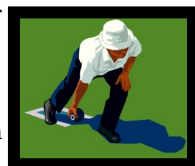
Would you like to learn how to play Crown Green Bowls? Are you already a bowler who hasn't played for a while and would like to play again? We welcome new members. Don't worry if you do not have any bowls, as we have some that you can borrow!

Springfield Bowling Club is a friendly thriving club that is celebrating its 70th Anniversary this year. It is situated on the main road at the end of the town, just before Pye Busk.

We hold a club session every Wednesday afternoon. This takes the form of a friendly "Round Robin competition" starting at 1.30pm. There is also an evening session most Wednesdays. This is the best way to start to get to know how to play and meet club members.

The club also plays friendly matches most weekends against other local clubs such as Ingleborough and Burton-in-Lonsdale. We have teams in two different weekly leagues plus we have our own club competitions.

If you would like more information please phone Helen on 015242-80079. We will be very pleased to see you.



#PeatFreeApril - Leave Peat Where it Belongs

By Victoria Benn (victoria.benn@friendsofthedaes.org.uk)

94% of our UK peatlands are in a decimated state, an environmental catastrophe resulting from more than 70 years of inappropriate farming policy and ongoing commercial extraction for the amateur and professional horticulture sector.

The encouraging news is that peat for the amateur gardening sector will be banned in England from 2024 with several retailers already selling good quality, peat free composts. Yet concerningly, there is no date when peat use in the professional sector will be banned. The RHS has pledged that all its gardens, show displays and plant sales will be peat free by 2025 (its bagged compost already is), yet your consumer pressure is needed to encourage other show gardens and garden centres to do the right thing and follow suit.

Top tips for going peat free this April:

- Visit: www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-go-peat-free for a list of which retailers are – and aren't – peat free!
- Check labels on potted plants, pellets, plugs and composts and only buy those that state they are peat free. 'Environmentally friendly' does not mean peat free.
- Stand up for peatlands: If they don't stock what you want in a peat free option – ask for it and explain why.
- Experiment with ways of improving your soils naturally and organically. www.gardenorganic and www.rhs.org.uk have guidance for creating healthy soils. They also have information about how to develop your own compost, one of the most environmentally friendly ways to go peat free.
- Share the #PeatFreeApril campaign message with friends and family.

Visit www.friendsofthedaes.org.uk for further information about our Peatlands Policy and Peatlands campaign.





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What to Look for in April

By Sue Halsall

There is so much to see in April with the emergence of flowers, insects and birds nesting, it is hard to choose a few things to look out for. As I type, it is snowing outside, so I hope the sub-zero temperatures do not damage buds waiting to open.

Lady's Mantle grows in hedgerows and meadows as a wildflower but there are garden varieties too. You can see in the photo (*right*) that the flowers are not showy at all but the leaves are attractive and have a coating that makes them water repellent (hydrophobic) so rain drops collect in beads rather than wetting the leaf. These look brilliant in bright sunshine.



Grassy verges will hopefully have a variety of species appearing now and one of these is crosswort (*right*), so called because the hairy leaves are arranged in fours (a whorl) forming a cross shape. The small yellow flowers with four petals, are arranged around the stem above the leaves and the whole stem is about 15cm tall. When growing in groups, they look very bright yellowy green and are most attractive.



The weather affects when birds lay eggs but by now, most will be feeding the newly hatched chicks, so they will be busy hunting for food. Female blackbirds build the nest, lay 3-5 eggs and sit on them, but both parents feed the young and you are quite likely to see a blackbird in the garden with a beak full of worms. I noticed the blackbird flying into our wood store and set up a trail cam to watch what happens on top of the logs and it caught this great picture (*below*). Fortunately, we had more logs and didn't have to do without the fire!

The hours of daylight are much longer now, with thirteen hours at the start of April, rising to fifteen by the end of the month, so there's more time to get out there and look for wildlife.



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Email to: info@thebenthamnews.co.uk or hand in to Daisy Hair and Beauty in the Main Street or use our website www.thebenthamnews.co.uk

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Photos taken by David Channing on Tuesday morning, 7th March, of a hot air balloon landing on the playing fields between St John's and Glebe House, Low Bentham.