

BENTHAM NEWS

December 2024 Issue 458 Recommended price £1



Seasonal Greetings from
Bentham News!

Photography by Jon Brook of Bentham Imaging

Person of Bentham – Sarah Malkinson

Sarah is a well-known and popular resident of Bentham. She is the proprietor of 'Total Wellbeing' on Station Road where she specialises in sports massages, various beauty treatments and has a sunbed. She radiates energy and purposefulness and has run her own business for the last twenty-one years. She is now forty-one and the salon has a faithful clientele continuing to thrive with Sarah at the helm.

How long have you lived in Bentham and what brought you here?

I was born in Austwick and went to primary school there, then went on to Settle High. At sixteen I went to study Sports Therapy at Lancaster and Morecambe College and, at seventeen, moved in with my boyfriend of the time, who lived in Bentham. All my friends were here and my brother James, (otherwise known as Malki), so it made sense. I passed my course with distinction, and they took me on at the college's Fitness Suite when I finished, so I worked there for a couple of years. Then I started at the salon here, which then belonged to a lady from Long Preston. When she decided to move on, I took over the business, initially with help from my parents, and the rest is history. My mum and dad ran the greengrocers in Settle, Sandersons, which was where the 'Naked Man Café' is now.

Tell us something about yourself people wouldn't normally know.

When I worked for the college, I used to go into prisons and hospitals and give the staff massages, half price, as part of a programme to help them with stress. We also provided the physio for Morecambe football team and, on one occasion, a visiting Russian rugby team. I shall never forget the size of their thighs!

If you could travel anywhere, where would you go?

On-line I have seen an island in the South Pacific called Bora Bora, which looks amazing and really appeals to me, turquoise seas and long white beaches, palm trees etc. Trouble is it costs £6,000 for a flight to get there, so I won't be going any time soon! I have managed to travel a fair amount though. I went to stay with a school friend's family in Canada as a teenager and went to Virginia with a family I used to babysit for. I've been twice to Australia where I travelled about in a campervan with friends from round here. I've been to Spain, the Canary Islands, Bali, for a cruise in the Caribbean and various city breaks in Europe. I try and have a break from the business every three months or so if I can. My first holiday abroad was with my mum and dad to Disneyland when my dad retired. Before that we used to go to Butlins with my mum and my Nana.

What does a perfect day look like to you?

I love a hike and have done ever since I got my first dog, Boycie. My brother got me into doing the Wainwright walks with him and I've done about eighty so far. So, a perfect day would be nice and crisp and sunny, and we'd do a hike with the dog and follow that with a pub lunch and a pint. Recently a friend and I have bought a camper van, so I'm hoping there will be some perfect days involving adventures using that.

Are there any world events of the past, present or future you particularly remember from when you were growing up?

The destruction of the Twin Towers in 2001. I was at a friend's house having a brew and the TV was on. I thought it must be a fictional film at first, I couldn't believe it was really happening.



Photo by Jon Brook of Bentham Imaging

Is there anyone (e.g. a teacher) who has had a great influence on your life?

David Edge, my college tutor, who was the physio for the Morecambe football team. He got me involved working with them and with the prison and hospital work. He always said I had the hands to do massage. He was such an inspiration to me.

Also, my mum, Iris. James and I had an older sister, Carol, who died of a rare form of cancer in 1999, after months of illness. She was only twenty-three and I was sixteen. Then, in 2005, my dad had a fall and broke his neck. Then he was diagnosed with lung cancer. Mum cared for him and for my Nana who was becoming frailer. Our house felt like a hospital during my teenage years and that had a big impact on me. Mum dealt with everything and never broke. She has raised around £80,000 for cancer charities over the years since, much of it from selling her home- made jams. This year we lost my good friend Mark Whitehead and that hit me hard. I didn't think I was coming out of that dark hole. I suppose my mum's attitude has shown me how to keep going, you must keep putting one foot in front of the other. She also lives in Bentham, and we do literally go for a walk together every day. She is an unstoppable force and an inspiration.

If you had an unlimited budget, what investment would you make in Bentham?

I like Bentham just as it is, but I suppose I would smarten up the Main Street. I'm glad to hear that seems to be going to happen anyway. I would do something about the roads and pavements and, given the 'unlimited budget', I would magically widen the Main Street, moving the shops back six feet so people could park, and the traffic could still move along freely.

...../continued on page 4

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What is the worst job you've ever done?

I've been working since I was thirteen, washing hair at a salon in Settle to start with, probably completely illegally. My mum's fault - I was getting under her feet! I've been a waitress and worked in pubs and then run my own business. I've enjoyed it all really, so don't think there really has been a 'worst job'.

What's your most treasured possession?

A gold ball on a chain that was my Nana's. She was called Florrie and when I was little, she looked after me all the time at her house in Settle, as my mum and dad were busy running the shop fulltime. We were close and I wear the necklace nearly every day.

How do you relax?

I'm always tired in the evenings after work, when I might have done maybe eight massages, so I curl up on the settee and watch box sets of dramas etc. I'm watching 'Brassic' just now and I also like a good drama.

What did you want to be when you were growing up?

An occupational therapist but, when my sister was ill, I seemed to be hospital visiting a lot and so I didn't revise and didn't get the grades. However, it's all worked out well in the end. I love what I do and am better at the hands-on stuff anyway.

Is there a book, film or live event you have particularly enjoyed recently?

I watched 'The Gentleman' recently and really enjoyed that. Over the years I have seen Peter Kay in Manchester, 'Florence and the Machine', 'The Prodigy', Alanis Morissette and the 'Wu-Tang Clan' at Leeds Festival. I was at the last concert 'Oasis' ever did in Stafford in 2009. I must say I do miss a good old rave. I had a great time partying to the music of local DJs the 'Twisted Pigs' (Rhys, Ricky and Joe) at various places round here in my twenties!

**Please note the earlier deadline
for the January edition
is 8th December**

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BAM

SEASONS Greetings

Jane Preston would like to pass on her Christmas Greetings to all her family, friends and neighbours. Jane isn't sending cards this year, she is donating to The Bentham News what it would have cost in stamps and cards.

We wish all our dear friends Christmas Blessings 'Love, Peace, Joy'
Remember 'Wise men seek him still' God Bless, with love **Frank and Kay Piper**

A Happy Christmas and a
Peaceful New Year
to all our lovely customers.
Thank you for your continued
support. With love and best
wishes from all of us at

G&Mo's xxx

Joe Morphet would like to wish
all family, friends and neighbours
a Merry Christmas and
Happy Healthy New Year!

Sending heartfelt wishes to the entire
town of Bentham. May this Christmas
bring joy, peace, and warmth to all -
especially to our wonderful family in
England. Let's celebrate the spirit of
togetherness and kindness that makes
Bentham such a special place.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!

Warm regards,

Kym Carthew

(Isabel Carr's Granddaughter),

Jamie, Sharn and Sacha (from Australia)

Margaret Wilson sends Christmas Greetings to all
family, friends and neighbours and a Happy New Year!

Business of Bentham – Sole to Soul

BN's third local business to come under the spotlight in the 'Business of Bentham' feature, is 'Sole to Soul', and our interview is with founder, Marie Rooke. BN will be featuring just twelve local businesses, and if you want yours to be one of them, please don't hesitate, contact Councillor Mark Paige (mark.paige@benthamtowncouncil.co.uk)

How did you come to set up this business?

I have been in business since 2000, originally in Station Road, High Bentham, but since 2009 in my own purpose-built premises. I trained and qualified as a Chiropodist 1973, initially working in the NHS and working alongside my dad in his private practice in Leyland. Ill health forced me to take a career break. I moved to Bentham, regained my health, applied for a part time job at Bentham Post Office where David Alder was sub postmaster and worked there for 4 years. After a 'Eureka!' moment I decided to open my own practice where I could combine the profession of Chiropody/Podiatry with techniques and therapies I had used and trained in during my journey back to health. From there, 'my dream' expanded from combining foot care and the wellbeing techniques I had also learned to offer different therapies to enable people to find answers to the questions in their lives – a "one stop shop for health and wellbeing".

My Holistic Wellness Clinic is built on the site of the old Legion Hut, which some Bentham people will remember. It had been empty for several years when I bought it. I used a local builder, John Armstrong, to create this clinic, with a welcoming reception area, several treatment rooms and a larger room upstairs for meetings, workshops, courses and classes.

I had a bumpy start as the financial crash in 2008 made clients extremely cautious about where to spend their money, but I rode the storm and have gradually built the thriving business that is 'Sole to Soul' today.

Why are you based in Bentham?

In 1990 I was diagnosed with ME and couldn't work for the next 7 years. I moved here in 1995 when my first marriage ended, and I found Bentham to be a place I could heal and recover. It's the only area I've lived in that feels like home. I wanted to share my life-changing experiences to help others improve the quality of their lives, and there is no better place to live and work and to do this than in Bentham.

To sort out some confusion, what is the difference between a Podiatrist and a Chiropodist?

There is no difference. When I did my training, we were all Chiropodists. The name changed to Podiatrist in the mid 1970s, but the terms are interchangeable. They are both protected titles and to use them the practitioner must have completed a recognised training course and be registered with the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC).

How many employees do you have?

I employ Janet, our receptionist, and Alan, a Podiatrist/Chiropodist. Janet is the voice at the end of the phone and it's her friendly face that will greet you when you arrive. But we are a team of 8 as the other 5 are self-employed therapists.

What range of treatments/therapies are there at 'Sole to Soul'?

Both Alan and I offer Podiatry/Chiropody, treating foot pain, corns, calluses, thickened toenails, ingrown toenails, infections and we can prescribe and measure for



Photo by Jon Brook of Bentham Imaging

Left to right: Rebecca, Suzie, Alan, Marie, Genevieve, Janet, Sarah and Katie

custom-made orthotics. In addition, I offer reflexology, massage and energy work. Although Podiatry/Chiropody is the lynchpin of this centre, there are a wide range of other therapies available.

Genevieve: offers acupuncture, which can alleviate pain and reduce stress. It can be used to treat sciatica, chronic fatigue, and to help with conception and IVF support.

Rebecca: offers Weleda facials as well as mindfulness and meditation classes which can help to relieve stress.

Sarah: offers light touch massage, which can, for example, treat headaches and jaw pain. Light touch massage is ideal if deep tissue massage is contraindicated or too painful. She also offers scar work following surgery and Reflexology Lymphatic Drainage (RLD) which is helpful for relieving secondary lymphoedema following surgery.

Katie: offers deep tissue massage incorporating a range of techniques including sports massage, warm bamboo and hot stone therapies, depending on her client's needs.

Suzie: offers hypnotherapy and life coaching to help people struggling with negative patterns of behaviour, such as addictions.

If one therapist feels that a client's needs would be better served by another therapist, we can easily cross-refer within the clinic.

Can you sum up your business ethos in a few words?

Client-centred (the client is the most important person and the focus of each session)

Confidential. Peaceful. Harmonious. Welcoming. Healing.

...../Continued on page 8

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What are your future plans for your business?

I have no plans to retire. In fact, I'm embarking on further training, in fascial manipulation Stecco Method TM. I know this will be helpful for my clients. I'm looking forward to continuing my training and expanding what is on offer to Bentham and beyond.

It is unusual to have a multidisciplinary treatment centre in such a small town, and I feel fortunate to have been able to develop and grow this here. We will go on doing what we do (and more!) for the foreseeable future.

Contact details:

Address: Sole to Soul,
Grasmere Drive, Bentham, LA2 7JP
Tel: 015242-63067
Mobile: 07973-481461
Email: janet@sole-to-soul.net

**Please note the earlier
deadline for the January
edition is 8th December**

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Continuing BN's policy of updating our readers on the current situation about the presence of PFAS in Bentham, here is a summary of the latest update on 1st November 2024 from Paul Williams, Managing Director of Angus Fire, presented to the November meeting of Bentham Town Council (see page 13). The full text can be seen on our website: www.thebenthamnews.co.uk.

On 9th October, Angus Fire held a meeting with the Environment Agency (EA) and Ramboll & Geosyntec environmental consultancies when test results were discussed (see www.derbs.co.uk). At the request of the EA, Ramboll are undertaking monthly PFAS sampling on storm water over a 12-month period. It was agreed that Angus need to have a PFAS treatment facility on site to process the 2-million litres of stored storm water. Geosyntec explained that the most effective solution for Bentham would be a 'treatment train' which utilises two technologies in series to optimise the amount of PFAS removed from storm water. Angus have ordered the 'treatment train' to be shipped from USA to Bentham at significant cost.

Additional soil sampling will take place on Angus-owned land to help determine any levels of remediation required. This programme of work is going to take several years as decades old legacy issues need to be addressed with sensitivity and care to protect those impacted. Samples have been taken from the River Wenning and will be discussed at a meeting with the EA on 25th November.

Julian Smith, MP, visited the site on 1st November so that Angus could explain what they are doing about the situation.

Cleaner Bentham Group joins Friends of the Earth Network

By Jan@cleaner-bentham.co.uk

The Cleaner Bentham group is delighted to have been accepted to join the Friends of the Earth Network. This means that Cleaner Bentham is now part of the world's largest environmental campaigning organisation, with 5,000 local activist groups worldwide, 70+ national groups spanning every continent, 200+ neighbourhood groups across the UK, and 30 national groups in Europe with over 200 million members and supporters globally. That makes us part of the largest grassroots environmental campaigning community in the UK. The network of local action groups is made up of people in communities who are passionate about tackling the climate and ecological crises and fighting for a fairer, greener world for everyone.

Being a member means:

- we will be supported by Friends of the Earth, with a suite of resources, training and guidance.
- we can leverage the power of Friends of the Earth as a national organisation, with its large supporter base and the expertise of its policy, research, campaigning, media and communication teams.
- as part of the network, we can advocate for national policy change.

Through the network we can be better supported and continue to build momentum, which means we can be stronger and more impactful.

The Cleaner Bentham group are looking for additional Steering Committee members and volunteers to help. If you are concerned about possible PFAS contamination in Bentham, then please contact us at groupinfo@cleaner-bentham.co.uk or you can apply to be a Steering Committee member via our online application form www.cleaner-bentham.co.uk/steering-committee-application

Settle College Celebrating Community

By Claire Bibby, Headteacher's PA, c.bibby@settlecollege.n-yorks.sch.uk, or 01729-822451

Celebrating Community and Progress

At Settle College, community is at the centre of everything we do. Our commitment to fostering a strong sense of community extends both within our school and beyond. A noteworthy part of this is our journey with defibrillators. Back in 2015, a Sixth Form student embarked on an extended project qualification which resulted in the installation of a permanent defibrillator at our school. Fast forward nine years, we proudly have four defibrillators across the site, and all Year 10 students receive annual training in the autumn term through the 'Restart a Heart' programme, led by the community of NHS support.

Engaging Educational Experiences

In addition, we provide enriching educational experiences for our students. Last half term, our Year 7 students had the opportunity to immerse themselves in the environment with a visit to the awe-inspiring Norber Erratics in Austwick. This was complemented by a superb visit to Dry Rigg Quarry with a guided tour from Tarmac quarry staff. One Year 7 student commented that "no trip could ever beat this one". Challenge accepted - many more exciting visits ahead!



We are really pleased to have developed such a wonderful relationship with the quarry over recent years and are very grateful for their continued support. This includes many Geography trips as well as a variety of activities in school such as Science Club and the European Space Agency CanSat competition last year.

Would You Like To Get Involved?

As we continue to build a thriving community, the governors and staff at Settle College are striving to explore further engagement opportunities. We invite you to join us in this endeavour. If you're interested in partnering with us, working with the young people who represent our future, please reach out to me at the college at your earliest convenience. Whether you have suggestions or would like to volunteer your time, your input is invaluable to us. Together, we can continue to create an enriching environment for our students and community members alike. We look forward to the exciting opportunities that lie ahead and more updates for you as readers ahead.

Photo, top, a superb visit to Dry Rigg Quarry with a guided tour from Tarmac quarry staff.

Photo, right, the footpath on the way to the awe-inspiring Norber Erratics in Austwick.



News from Bentham Hub: Moving Forward

By Lesley Barker

Bentham Hub is now a Community Interest Company (CIC) and is registered with Companies House. The decision to become a company was taken so that we can donate to smaller groups in our community and if we were a charity this would not have been possible. The downside is that we now must pay Corporation Tax and VAT. Together with the rents for **Hub 1** and **Hub Too**, the insurance and utilities on all three properties amounts to a significant amount every month. On the upside, all the volunteers and people who work tirelessly behind the scenes do not get paid, so that is a great saving, and we are grateful to all 48 of you!

The purchase of the Old Quaker Meeting House for the Bentham community was completed in February 2024 and is **Hub 3**. As this is a listed building, we have not been able to do anything, apart from immediate repairs, without the planner's consent. Our plans for renovations and alterations were submitted and permission granted in October, so now we can move forward. We have been painting the building and have scaffolding on the outside of **Hub 3** in readiness for roof repairs and sorting out gutters and leaks and after that we can start on the inside. We even have a new front door!

This is a huge task and is costing money. The £10,000 which YDMT (the Yorkshire Dales Millenium Trust) gave for the roof fund, and the grant from Yorkshire Housing, together with what we can save from the income from the three Hub shops after donations, will all go towards this until the job is done. Then the building will be fit for the next 100 years and more.

In October we were nominated as the **Co-op Local Community Cause**. All you have to do is nominate us as your choice of local good cause and then a percentage of any money you spend in the Co-op, using your Co-op card, will come to us for a whole year.

In **October** we donated to **The Bentham Bonfire and Lowgill Sports and Sheepdog Trials**. We are spreading our tentacles wider in **November** as our donors and customers come from far and wide, so in November the recipients are: **Stepping Stones Baby and Toddler Group, Burton-in-Lonsdale Village Hall and St Oswald's Church Thornton-in-Lonsdale**.

If you would like to apply for funding, please call at The Hub, and ask me or Mick for an application form. We can give you guidance on filling it out.

Photo by Jon Brook of Bentham Imaging of the stunning Remembrance Day installation at Hub 3. Phil Cressey and Alix Barker made the installation, with Phil making the crosses and Alix putting all the names on them.



Bentham Town Council Meeting Monday 4th November

Report by Pam Woof

This is a general report of the matters discussed at the meeting. The official minutes will be posted on the BTC website in due course.

Present: Councillors Adams, Paige, Marshall, Stannard, and Taylor plus Claire Burrow, Town Clerk and several members of the public. County Councillor David Ireton, two police officers and a Bentham News reporter were also in attendance.

Apologies: Councillors Ryan and Burton. Councillor Hill has tendered his resignation because he has moved to a new house which is not in Bentham. Councillor Adams was not sure that he has to resign and will check into the matter.

Comments from the public:

- Peter Lennard spoke about a petition with 1,043 signatures that has been sent to North Yorkshire Council asking for a 20mph speed limit through High and Low Bentham. North Yorkshire will debate the matter at their Skipton and Ripon area meeting in Skipton on 12th December. The public may attend and anyone who would like to travel by train to the meeting in Skipton should arrive at Bentham Station about 10am. The matter will not be discussed until later in the meeting after Bentham residents have arrived (*see letter on page 22*).
- A question was raised about the town hall clock not working properly. The clerk explained that one of the parts is worn. When the electricity goes off it stops. A clock repairer has taken a faulty part away for refurbishment. For the moment it is set at 11o'clock because of Remembrance Day on 11th November.

Police report: PCSO Jayne Grace gave the report for October (*See page 43*). She will request information for the Town Council of current speeds recorded along Bentham and Burton main streets.

County Councillor Report: County Councillor David Ireton reported that a boundary review of the county divisions was being made. Austwick and Lawkland will probably be moved into Settle division and one County Councillor will be lost in the process. The increase in national insurance payments announced by the government will affect NYC significantly as they employ over 15,000 staff. He hoped that government will protect public bodies as promised because currently NYC pays out over 8 million pounds.

- Councillor Marshall asked if anything could be done by NYC to prevent vehicles persistently parking in the restricted areas on Main Street outside Richard Turner's offices. The Town Council has reported this problem to NYC, but nothing has been done so far. Bollards were mentioned as a possible option. Councillor Ireton will investigate the matter.

Cemetery Expansion: The graveyard will be full within 2 to 3 years and the memorial wall is almost full now. The Town Council would like to extend into the adjacent land that is already owned by the Council. This will take some time to organise, but it was agreed to go ahead with the project.

Letter from Settle College: A letter from Gareth Whittaker, Headmaster of Settle College, has been received. The good news is that all children from Ingleton, Bentham and Burton-in-Lonsdale that are starting at the school in September 2025 will have free bus transport to and from the school funded by Settle College. This is guaranteed for these students for 5 years. (*see letter on page 22*)

Street Lighting: Two faulty streetlights on Wenning Avenue will be repaired. The light on Cross Lane, Low Bentham will also be repaired as soon as possible.

Other Matters Requested by Councillors:

- Christmas lights will be put up again this year around the town. Electricity supply from the Town Hall, bus shelter and streetlights was agreed.
- The reopening of the toilet block on Cleveland Square was considered. Councillors agreed to let the open spaces committee investigate the costings and report back.
- Correspondence:
- An update from Angus Fire was read out in full. Councillors welcomed the news that Angus Fire were working hard to address the problem and are doing everything that they said they would do to improve the situation. (*See page 9*)
- A letter has been received from 'Unite North Yorkshire' about anti-social speeding in the county.
- The Bentham to Hornby 582 bus is now running on Wednesday and Thursdays.
- The road surface on Mount Pleasant is on the provisional list to be resurfaced in 2025/26.

Bentham Boost Update: (*see below*)

All the offers of money for refurbishment to business premises on the Main Street and Station Road have been taken up. A mural is planned for the blank wall between the Bentham Club and the Hub bookshop. Permission has been given to put some artwork inside the empty shop on Station Road.

A workshop will be held at the Golf Club that will deal with IT training, Facebook, Snapchat and AI etc. Lots of businesses have shown an interest in the Bentham Boost project.

Date of next Full Town Council Meeting:

Monday 2nd December at 7.30pm, the public are invited to attend.

Bentham Business Boost Programme – Update

By Laura Farthing - Senior Economic Development Officer (South & West)

Email: laura.farthing@northyorks.gov.uk

As part of the Bentham Business Boost programme, a shop front improvement grant scheme was launched in September. A shop front improvement grant is designed to support local businesses, by providing financial assistance to enhance the appearance of their shop fronts. In total, nine Bentham businesses have been approved for grants. The grants will fund a variety of works including new signage, painting, woodwork and render repairs.

Another initiative in development is a free training and workshop programme for local businesses. Further information will be available soon. There is also still time to book on to the free online webinar '[‘Grow your business brand’ delivered by Google Digital Garage](#)'. This is taking place on Wednesday 4th December, 12-1pm.

The Bentham Business Boost programme has received £20,000 from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, administered through North Yorkshire Council. Thank you to the businesses who have participated in the Business of Bentham case studies published in Bentham News so far.

Wow what a night at Bentham Bonfire and Fireworks 2024!

By Helen Cullen-Williams and the (no longer new) Bentham Bonfire Organising Committee

As our first year 'in office' as your bonfire night organisers, this year was all about getting to grips with things, but we've been bowled over by the positive response to the event. Attendee numbers were also up on previous years.

Thanks so much to everyone who attended - we enjoyed your fun, humour and enthusiasm, which made it a pleasure to organise it all for you.

We couldn't have done it without help from the Bentham community and beyond... There's so many we need to thank so we hope we remember everyone but, in no particular order...

♥ All our volunteers who helped with the fire building, stewarding on the night and the clear up afterwards; ♥ Everyone who contributed wood for the bonfire; ♥ 'Walk the Plank' for a fantastic firework display; ♥ James and his magic bucket, together with Brian and Ed for their practical and equipment help; ♥ Bentham Primary School for making 'Pedro' the guy who crowned the proceedings beautifully; ♥ Regular sponsors Angus Fire, Bentham Town Council and the Auction Mart for financial and practical support; ♥ The Bentham Hub for your additional grant; ♥ The Black Pig for donating quiz night proceeds; ♥ Big Bear's Pizza, Bowland Meats, The Yorkshire Pud Bakery and Bentham Playing Fields for the delicious food and drink; ♥ All at Taylors Funfairs and Jon Lord for the entertainment; ♥ Bentham Fire Station for engine entertainment as well as being on hand 'just in case'; ♥ ESG medical for emergency support backup; ♥ Myers Building Supplies for some supplies; ♥ Hoggs'n'Heifers for use of the toilets; ♥ Riverside Caravan Park, Flowerfields /Post Office, Temptations and The Black Bull for selling wristbands; ♥ And finally... The outgoing committee who answered all our questions as we went along - you'll be off the hook now as we 'should' know what we're doing!

We're hoping for some new things for next year if we get the funding and support we need, along with extra food trucks, so watch this space! Follow us on Facebook to keep up to date with all plans/first notice of the date: facebook.com/BenthamBonfire





'Echoes of the Lune Valley': a new book by local historian David Kenyon is raising money for St John's Hospice in Lancaster

By Jon Brook

'Echoes of the Lune Valley' is a photographic history of the people and places in and around this Lancashire valley. Included in the fourteen chapters are such fascinating stories as Claughton Hall being moved, stone by stone, to its present location by C M Slinger and Sons of High Bentham. Other topics include the discovery of an unexploded bomb during the Second World War and articles about local industry and farming.

The book also features contributions from Michael Winstanley, who reflects on the restoration of St. James the Less Church in Tatham by the Foster family; Susan Bull, who explores the rich history of Hornby Castle; and Colin Miller, who shares his recollections of farming and schooling during the 1940s. Complementing the text are over one hundred quality photographs that really bring to life the people and places described.

'Echoes of the Lune Valley' is available from Bentham Post Office for £15.

BENTHAM PANTRY CLUB

Wednesdays 11.00am - 12.30pm & 3.30pm - 4.30pm



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Includes first shop

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Standard £3
- 8 items

Weekly Fee
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At 90, Issy Finally Meets Her Granddaughter

By Shirley Brown

Back in the July 2021 edition of Bentham News, we reported the firstly heart-wrenching and then finally heart-warming story of Issy Carr. I encourage BN readers to check out the story in our archives, just go to www.thebenthamnews.co.uk and click on 'archive' to find July 2021.

There we told how in 1955, as an unmarried young woman, Isabel Staveley, had a baby son who she was coerced into handing over for adoption, told to get on with her life and that she would soon forget him. How wrong they were – Isabel, now called Issy, never forgot about her son, and always wanted to find out about him, where he was and whether he had had a happy life.

Various friends and family tried to trace Issy's son over the years using adoption records, with no success. That is until Christmas 2018 when family members Janet and Andrew Staveley decided to search using DNA. At about the same time, in November 2019, Kym, a 43-year-old woman living in Perth Australia also put her DNA into an ancestry database trying to find her biological father. And amazingly in January 2021 a close match was found between the DNA of Kym and Issy.

By various means (you'll have to read the original story to find out exactly how!) it was discovered that Kym was Issy's granddaughter, and that Issy's son was Kym's dad, now called Keith Garrahy, and that he was living in Perth.

The BN article in July 2021 ended with the words, "The story continues!"

And so, it did, as for Issy's 90th birthday in October 2024, Kym travelled across the globe to Bentham with her husband Jamie and two grown-up sons, Sacha and Sharn, to finally meet her grandmother. They spent many happy days together catching up on a lifetime of news, and the visit culminated in a grand party at Bentham Golf Club where 70+ guests were able to witness the happy family reunion. G&Mo's provided a sumptuous buffet, a stunning cake was cut and shared and 'Amazing Grace' was sung. I spoke to Kym who said how much she enjoyed her time in Bentham, that it "felt like home" and that she "couldn't wait to come back again" to be in this beautiful countryside. Meeting her grandmother had been "awesome," that all the people she met were very friendly, and that she and her family had enjoyed a very warm welcome. Issy's son, Keith, was not there but says he is saving money for the trip and hopes to visit soon.

The photo, taken at the party by Jon Brook of Bentham Imaging, shows the striking likeness between Issy and Kym – and their happy smiles say it all.



outside it is beautiful on the Bentham Line



By Rod Tickner (oiib.org.uk)

outside it is beautiful is a brand-new community-focused audio stories project about nature and local history set on the Bentham Line which runs between Leeds and Morecambe.

Curated by a writer/journalist, a photographer and a filmmaker, *outside is beautiful* aims to connect rail passengers with stories inspired and written by local people and places via an audio app that can be accessed by travellers on the Bentham Line.

Between 1st and 7th October our team met local groups on and around the Bentham Line, as well as running a series of free arts activities sessions. The Bentham session took place at Pioneer Projects with the people living with dementia group and the well-being group. They listened to archive tapes about memories of cooking food on trains in the days of steam and took part in sensory activities including painting on pebbles and writing poems inspired by nature.



The recordings evoked memories of family members who had worked on the line for one of the participants.

There was also an evening workshop with SELFA children in the Bentham Methodist Church in which local wildlife and domestic animals were discussed and some acting out by the children of happy engagements with nature took place. As well as talking to passengers along the route, the team also met with Settle Stories, the Forest of Bowland National Landscape and the North Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to discuss creative ways to collaborate on the project, peat restoration and the Landmark Trees Project.

This phase of the project will end with an audio piece which will be based on the Bentham Line. It will be showcased on Settle Stories the Listening Gallery, The Bentham Line website and our own website oiib.org.uk in November.

Fun and Festivities at Bentham Station

By Rod Tickner

Bentham Station was the scene of a happy event recently when over thirty people came together to celebrate two anniversaries. It was the 13th anniversary of the founding of Friends of Bentham Station (FOBS) and the 8th anniversary of their twinning with another station group from Mytholmroyd in the Calder Valley. As well as being a social occasion it also provided an opportunity to share best practice and provided for a wealth



of ideas and developments to be exchanged between the members of both groups. Gerald Townson, chairman of the Bentham Line (Leeds-Morecambe Community Rail Partnership) said, "This is now an established idea capable of being picked up by other groups throughout the country." *Photo of the happy throng at Bentham Station, above.*

Reviewing Your Gardening Year

By Joyce Knapp

As we move into December it is easy to think that the gardening year is at an end and we can 'down tools' for the winter, but there are still tasks suited to this quiet time of the year.

If we take time now to review the previous growing season's results, then we can make any adjustments deemed necessary when the weather allows. One such adjustment I need to make is regarding the raspberry bed which became waterlogged to such an extent that the canes produced no fruit and gradually died off. I have decided to buy new, certified canes and have sourced them from a northern nursery in the hope that they cope better with our local, rather wet conditions. I will also plant them in a new bed and by adding well-rotted farmyard manure or garden compost and quite a lot of sharp sand to the soil, I hope to improve the drainage considerably. I may also try a technique I came across recently in a book whereby the canes are set on the soil surface, spreading out the roots, then additional soil is added to create a mound around the raspberry stems, to the depth of 10cm/3"-4", thereby ensuring the best possible drainage. Once these canes are planted it is advisable to cut them back to 10"-12" as this will encourage new growth in the spring (note summer-fruited raspberries will not produce fruit in their first year).

Continuing the review theme, I noticed that this year although my eating apple tree produced a very heavy crop, the apples were small and badly affected by scab. Regarding the size of the fruit, I think next year I must seriously consider thinning out the fruit just after their 'June drop', keeping just two apples per cluster. I can, however, act much sooner regarding the incidence of scab, as I can plant clumps of chives around the base of the tree, and this is reputed to greatly reduce the problem.

I have, so far, been focusing on outdoor tasks so now we can move indoors and start to look at tools and equipment. Any tools that have wooden handles will benefit from having the dry soil removed with a stiff brush, then we can give them a rub down with a little linseed oil on a rag as this will help preserve the wood and give it a longer life. We can also go through smaller tools, cleaning and sharpening secateurs, loppers, sheers, pruning saws and it is even possible to sharpen the end of a spade, making it glide through the earth more easily when we need to use it again.



Memories of Bentham's Pioneering Picture House

By Lindsay Young

Eric Guy was recently featured in Bentham News (October 2024) receiving an award from Angus Fire, where he worked for most of his life, to mark his 90th birthday. We were delighted to receive a message from his granddaughter, Josie, that Eric would love to tell us more about the old Bentham Picture House - where he had worked as a young projectionist after the second World War.

This pioneering cinema, situated in Robin Lane (from before 1934 until 1958) was also mentioned in BN recently. It figured in 'Anna's Story' about her arrival in Bentham as a war refugee from Poland. She settled in Bentham, eventually marrying local man, Donald Hebblethwaite. Their first date had been at the Picture House!

I went to visit Eric, now living in Caton, where I was welcomed, with tea and home-made biscuits by his wife Vera, and heard some fascinating anecdotes about Bentham in the 1940s and 50s.

Eric's destiny with the new-fangled cinema began with him seated in the classroom in Bentham Primary School - looking out across the road to where the Picture House stood. Films of Abbott and Costello and cartoons were shown there and later the landmark 'Mrs Miniver' - a film that Eric mentions often. Produced in 1942 (with Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon in the cast) the film has been credited with helping persuade the Americans to join the war effort. Churchill said the film was "worth 50 battleships and 50 destroyers" in the subtle but deep effect of its propaganda. Plus, with a strange parallel tale, the plot was reflected in Bentham's own history! In the film a German paratrooper lands in a rural English village called Belham.

Bentham acquired its own German ex-prisoner of war, named Alf Kabach. He had been interned near Milnthorpe and later came to work in Bentham at Angus Fire. Eric describes him as a great character and well-liked. It was moving to hear that Alf, the German, became good friends with Polish Anna, at the factory where they both worked.

But how did Eric go from classroom dreamer to become a projectionist?

His first job on leaving school was bottle washing at the Bentham Dairy, owned by Gilbert Thornborough. He had a couple of years before being conscripted into the army in 1952.



When that time came, Eric passed his job onto his friend Bernard Dawber. Meanwhile, Stanley Wilkinson, who owned the Picture House, (the middle one of three generations of Stanleys all involved in varying ways with the Picture House) often visited his good friend Gilbert at the dairy.

Eric remembers being tapped on the shoulder one day by Mr Wilkinson who offered him a job working evenings training to be a projectionist. It was a 'good job' earning him the princely sum of '2s 6d' a night. Eric says it was not a technically difficult job though one suspects he was recruited due to some aptitude or trustworthy attitude spotted in him.

So, Eric was trained in this exciting new business of cinema, which flourished for a while before new competition crept in and took over. That was television! Bit by bit the shops in Bentham began selling TV sets. In Station Road the Electric Shop left the TV running in its window and a small crowd would gather outside to watch. Even Stanley Wilkinson, despite his pioneering passion for cinema, sold up in 1958 and began selling and installing TV sets instead.

The Picture House lay empty and unused. Then it was sold to Decorous Garments for the 'rag trade'; later becoming a residential nursing home, Burndale House, which closed in 2007. In 2012 the building was demolished and the 299 seat Picture House with its 30ft proscenium became just a beloved memory. Luckily, we have people like Eric to keep that alive; and films continue to be shown locally in one form or another.

Photo of Lindsay and Eric at his home in Caton



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Letters/People Page Messages/ Thanks/Notices

Important Good News about free Bus Transport for Settle College

Dear Bentham News

I am writing to share some good news that we believe will have a positive impact on our local community and the future of our students starting in September 2025.

In collaboration with the governors of Settle College, we are delighted to announce that we will be offering **free bus transport** to children from pick up points in Burton, Bentham and Ingletton who choose to attend Settle College and begin their studies with us in September 2025. This free transport will be available for the **full five years** that these students spend at Settle College ensuring that they have reliable and cost-free access to their education throughout their time in secondary education.

This decision comes as a response to North Yorkshire Council's recent announcement to stop providing bus transport from Bentham and Ingletton to Settle College for most children in these areas, even though these towns are within our catchment area and Settle College remains the closest Yorkshire school.

We understand the concerns that this raised for many families, and we are committed to ensuring that children from Burton, Bentham and Ingletton continue to have the opportunity to attend Settle College without additional financial or logistical burdens. At Settle College we truly value the contributions and presence of students from these communities. We believe that offering free transport will enable parents to confidently choose Settle College for their children's secondary education, knowing that they will have the support that they need to succeed.

We realise some parents may have already submitted their child's school admission application. However, if our offer of **free bus transport** changes your decision, you are still able to submit a change using the website:

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-admissions/making-changes-and-late-applications>.

We look forward to welcoming new students from Burton, Bentham and Ingletton and are proud to take this step to support local families. If you have any questions or would like further information, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. I can be reached on g.whitaker@settlecollege.northyorks.sch.uk or **01729-822451**. Thank you for your continued trust and support.

Warm regards

*Gareth Whitaker,
Headteacher, Settle College*

Dear BN

People may be interested to know that the petition for a 20mph speed limit in High and Low Bentham received overwhelming support and gained a remarkable 1,043 signatures. This means that North Yorkshire Council's Skipton & Ripon Area Committee will have to debate the matter, which they will do at their meeting on **Thursday 12th December between about 11.15 and 13.00 at the council offices at 1 Belle Vue Square, Broughton Road, Skipton, BD23 1FJ**. Officers will have prepared a report on the matter with their recommendations to the councillors by 4th December which we'll have a copy of.

Kevin Watt will be attending the meeting and speaking - supporters of a petition are given a total of 5 minutes to speak. As with any matter, it makes a huge difference if a number of people turn up to show support, so if anyone has the time, please meet up at Bentham station at 10am for the 10.11 train to Skipton. The first train back is at 12.58, but if our subject is not discussed until close to the end of the meeting, then the next train back is at 14.58.

Peter Lennard, Low Bentham



BN - NEW BANK DETAILS

Co-op Business Bank

Account Name Bentham News CIC
Account Number 67367249
Sort Code 08-92-99



The Bentham branch of the NSPCC would like to say a big thank you to those who supported the Coffee Morning, in any way, on November 9th, which raised **£940.70 for NSPCC funds.**

Sheila Brown

The coffee morning on **26th October** raised **£573.77 for BDDFC.** Thank you so much to Hannah and all the team for your sterling efforts.

Jonathan Scott, Bentham Medical Practice

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CHRISTMAS BOOKINGS

Up at 1922 Bar & Kitchen we will be hosting:

**A Christmas party night on
 Saturday 14th December**

**A Christmas carvery on
 Sunday 22nd December**

All these events must be pre booked by
 calling 015242 62455

**Festive afternoon teas
 on Monday 23rd December**
 - Contact me direct for this.

Please note: we are no longer serving a menu over the weekends @ 1922 Bar & Kitchen until next year's season begins in March, but we do serve soup, paninis, coffee & cake daily.

We will also be serving Sunday lunch at least once a month.

We are still available for function bookings, larger table bookings of 20 or more, don't hesitate to ask.

Please check my facebook page for updates
 Contact Mandy on 07795 172511
www.facebook.com/simplydeliciousbentham



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Bentham Youth Club is for young people around the Bentham area. We run weekly sessions, where young people can be with and make friends, enjoy a warm safe environment and most of all have fun doing lots of different activities.

**IF YOU ARE
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CONTACT KATIE HALL ON 07534697572/
BENTHAMYOUTHCLUB@GMAIL.COM/ OR FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM
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Bentham of Yesterday

1981 Mayhem on Main Street

Comments and Observations by Allan Hartley

The latter end of 1981 witnessed two events in close succession that woke Benthamers up from their Autumn slumbers and give them something to talk about.

And here we are reminiscing about events 40 years ago that will also give our BN readers something to talk about?

Collapse of Kersey's Garage Showroom Shop Front 9 October 1981 (above)

There was a bang, the clatter of breaking glass, then as the dust settled a pile of bricks and other debris scattered across the road and Main Street pavement.

What happened we don't know, perhaps building works? As there are clearly building props on the lefthand side of the first floor. Fortunately no-one was injured.

Mr Kersey moved his garage and showroom after this to the site currently occupied by Huws Gray Builders Merchants.

As for his showroom on Main Street? That's now the Spar Convenience Store.

Fire at the Horse and Farrier December 1981 (above and right)

Wendy Dowbiggin recalls sitting in her front room at the time when she noticed what looked like steam coming out of the Farrier roof, with the steam being quickly replaced by flames and lots of black smoke.

The fire was attended by our local Fire Brigade with Fire Chief, Benthamer Tom Guy, directing operations.

The Farrier landlord at the time was Stanley Telford aided by his business partner Vivian, apologies as we do not know her surname.

Needless to say the pub was closed for a while.



Both photographs are credited to Mary Ireland.

Mary and her husband Brian arrived in Bentham in July 1976. Mary had an interest in photography, while Brian's interest was in local history. With their combined interests and skill they recorded many local events between 1979 and 1985. Sadly Brian died in 1991, but Mary stayed in Bentham along with her camera before relocating to Cambridge in 2002.

Before leaving, Mary gave her archive of photographs to David Johnson who in turn has passed that archive, along with his own archive, into the safe keeping of Bentham Community Library. There is lots more to come!




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Events in December



Town Hall

Monday Indoor Bowling 1-4pm (not 23rd/30th)

Tuesday Blue Moose Dance 9.30am-12noon LH. (Not 24th/31st)

Craft Club 10am - 12noon, WR (Not 24th/31st)

Suzie Metcalfe Yoga 7pm LH. (Not 24th/31st)

Wednesday Stepping Stones 10 - 11:30am, BR. (Party Father Christmas 11.30 18th. Not 25th)

Pilates with Sally Horn 9.30am - 10.30am, LH (not 18th/25th)

Town Hall - Meetings

Monday 2nd 7.30pm, LH

Full Town Council Meeting (pages 12/13)

Thursday 5th High Bentham WI, 7.30pm LH

Monday 9th Cemetery extension task group, 7.30pm LH.

Prostate Cancer Support Group Meeting

Thursday 12th 7.30pm LH Prostate & Cancer Support Group (Tim Stannard)

E-mail - bayprostategroup@pm.me

Sunday 15th Bentham Theatre Group - (Panto), 3pm BR, LH

Friday 20th Bentham Youth Club Xmas party seniors 5pm BR

Saturday 21st Bentham Youth Club Xmas party juniors with families 11am BR

Sunday 29th Bentham Theatre Group - (Panto), 3pm BR, LH

Town Hall - Coffee Mornings

Saturday 10am - 12noon

7th - St John the Baptist Church

14th - Twinning Group



Bentham Golf Club (see page 35)

Every Friday 11am - 2pm, Age Concern

Bentham Friday Lunch Club

6th & 13th December (back on 3rd January)

WI (see pages 40/41)

High Bentham - Thurs 5th, Xmas dinner, members only

Tatham Fells - Tuesday 10th, Old School, Xmas party.

Low Bentham and District - Xmas lunch, Thurs 12th.



Footpath (see page 45)

For December walks meet first at Lairgill for 9.30am except for the 3rd where we meet for 9am.

Tuesday 3rd, Kate Rowe, 51402, Skipton to Gargrave, 5.5 miles.

Thursday 12th, Peter Leonard, 07474-120898, Coppelstone Gate, 7.6 miles.

Wednesday 18th, Alison Kinder and Colin Stroud, 07854-789311, Bracewell, 6.25 miles.

Saturday 28th, Valerie Eccles and Mary Pickstone, 07979-607191, short local Christmas walk with lunch.

Bentham Pantry Club (see page 15)

Wednesday 11am - 12.30pm and 3.30 - 4.30pm

Free refreshments available. Entry at side door of the Methodist Church on Station Road. Our volunteer team look forward to welcoming you. Find us on facebook.

Please note we will be closed on 25th Dec and 1st Jan BUT additional opening to normal on Mon 23rd Dec 11am - 12.30pm only.

Bentham Fire Station

Bentham & District Dementia Friendly Community Breakfast Club

Thursday 5th & 19th (Xmas party - singing, games and lunch) at 10am.

Bentham Youth Club (see page 23)

Tuesdays 3rd, 10th & 17th (back 14th Jan)

Methodist Church

Juniors age 7 - 11 (Yr6) - 3.45pm to 5.45pm

Seniors 11+ (Yr7) - 6.15pm to 8.15pm.

benthamyouthclub@gmail.com see Facebook

20th December 6pm to 8pm Xmas Party for seniors (11+, new senior members welcome)

21st December Juniors and FAMILIES Xmas Party 12pm - 2.30pm

2nd Jan Juniors Xmas Activity Session at Settle Pool. **3rd Jan Seniors Xmas Activity Session at Settle Pool** These all require booking and tickets. Contact us (see above) for tickets.

Please note the earlier deadline for the January edition is 8th December

Victoria Institute

Every Monday

9am-12.30pm Office open Enquiries/Bookings
10-11am Womens Yoga for all
11.30am-2pm Community Link Cafe
Light lunches and Activities

Every Tuesday

4-9.30pm Helen Howard school of dance
Term time

Every Wednesday

7-8am Mixed Rise and Shine Yoga
9am-12.30pm Office open Enquiries/Bookings
10am-12pm Post Office Services
12-2pm Community Link Lunch
4-7.15pm Helen Howard school of dance
Term time

Thursdays 12th & 19th December

6-7pm Mens Foundation Yoga
7-8pm Mixed Yoga for all

Thursday December 12th

Low Bentham WI Xmas lunch 12.30-4.30pm

Every Friday

10am-12noon Post Office Services

Every Sunday

11am-12.30pm Cornerstone Church Services

Friday December 6th Hip Joint 12.30pm

Due to the recent refurbishment the new Public Toilet is now open. Entrance through the wooden gate and 50p payable by debit card.

Burton Film Group

are next showing 'The Holdovers,' which will be in the village hall as usual. Please note all future films will be on Thursday evenings & this next one is on Thursday 12th of December. Free tea & coffee will be available from 7pm with a 7.30pm start. As previously, tickets costing £5 will be available on the door.

Methodist Church Toddle-In

Monday 2nd, 9th & 16th 10 - 11.30am
For parents/carers of children from birth to school age. £2 per family includes drinks and refreshments.

Austwick Field and Local History Society

evening talks, held in the village hall at 7.30pm. On **December 11th** David Johnson will talk about **lime kilns** £3. Annual individual membership is £10.

Pioneer Projects - Looking Well Studios

(unless otherwise stated)

Every Monday (except 23rd & 30th)
Meet Lairgill carpark 9:20am Health Walks for Women

Every Monday (except 23rd & 30th) 10:30am to 12:30pm, Making Connections Dementia Group

Every Tuesday (except 24rd & 31st) 10:30am to 12:30pm, Creative Community Hub

Every Tuesday (except 24rd & 31st) 11:45am to 1pm, Creative Writing Group, Bentham Library and Zoom

Tuesday 10th December 2 - 4pm, Book Group in the library

Every Wed (except 25th) 10am to 12noon, Sing Along to Every Song – face to face and Zoom

Every Wed (except 25th) 2-4pm, Art for All
Every Wed (except 25th) 9:30am to 4:30 pm, Barclays Bank

Every Wed (except 25th) 3:45-4.45pm Lego Club, Bentham Library

Every Thursday (except 26th) 12:30-3:30pm, Community Art Shed

Every Friday (except 27th) 10am to 12:30pm, Mental Health & Wellbeing Hub

Every Friday (except 27th) 9:30am to 4:30pm, Barclays Bank

The Looking Well Studios close for the Christmas break from Monday 23rd December. We re-open on Monday 6th January 2025. We would like to wish everyone a Happy and Healthy Christmas time.



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

Facebook and Instagram - Pioneer Projects – Celebratory Arts Ltd

Bentham Community Library

Library Telephone: 01609 534533

Email: library@pioneerprojects.org.uk



Monday	2:30pm - 5:00pm
Wednesday	10:00am - 2:00pm
Friday	2:30pm - 4.20pm
Saturday	10:00am -12:noon

The library will be closed from Mon 23rd Dec and re-open 6th Jan. Christmas wishes to all library volunteers and customers



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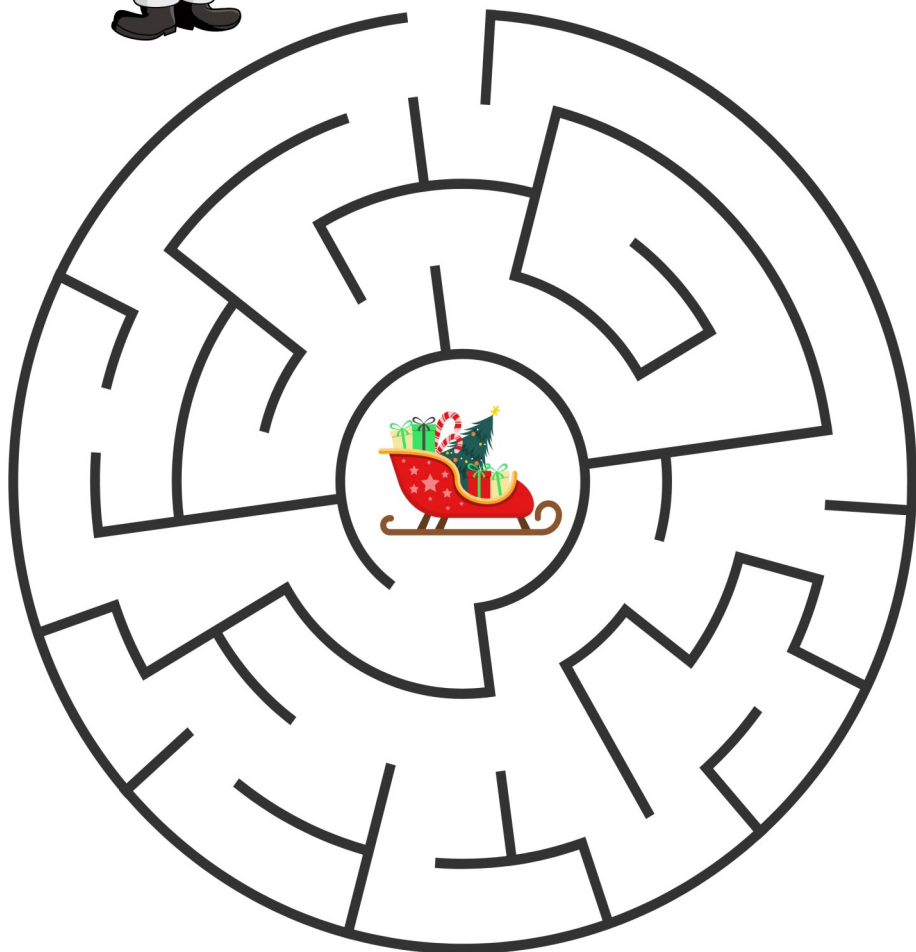
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News from the Fells of a Church Mouse Trail, Christmas Events and Traffic Lights(!)

By Helen Wilkinson

There's a mouse in the house! Can you find our mouse? In October the Church Mouse Trail was launched and one of the mice is hiding in The Church of the Good Shepherd. Created by Lucie Lunn, vicar of Hornby, the trail is a way of exploring the churches of the Lune Valley. Visit eleven churches and one village hall to discover the names of the felted mice and one rat. There are also some fun questions to answer and ladybirds to find. Leaflets are available in all the churches.

The school children are busy preparing for their Christmas events, creating craft items and devising games for their Christmas Fair on 5th December. They are learning lines for their nativity, 'The Biggest Gift', which will take place in church on December 12th at 6pm. 'Friends of Tatham Fells' will be serving mulled wine and running some fun games and a raffle at 'Christmas in the Mart' so come along and see us. They have also organised a 'Bags to School' collection for 4th December, which is a chance to clear out the wardrobe before Christmas and bring along your bags of unwanted clothes. Tatham History Society held their first talk of the winter series on 9th November, when John Wilson spoke about Robert Hall and the Cansfield family. The AGM and final talk will be on 7th December in the Old School. Our church Christmas Fair will be on the morning of the same day with lots of cakes and gifts to buy and a chance to eat too many mince pies.

After the brief surprise of having some traffic lights in Lowgill, the road near to Stockbridge has been repaired, at least it has a lovely smooth patch.



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Bonfire Night, Remembrance, School Work and Outdoor Activities at Bentham Primary School

By Mrs C Pearson (Exec Headteacher)

Back in classrooms after a very quick half-term break, children are settling back into learning. The school was invited to craft a guy to put on top of Bentham's Bonfire, a wonderful community event. We were very grateful for this opportunity, which also supported children's learning about **Bonfire Night**. We are also looking forward to taking part in a community **Lantern Procession**, with children in Rabbit, Badger, Fox and Owl Class all busy over the past couple of weeks making their own lanterns from willow and paper. Thank you to 'Pioneer Projects' for inviting us to take part in this activity and helping children to create their own magnificent lanterns. In **Butterfly Class** part of children's thinking about Bonfire Night involved how to keep safe. As part of the celebrations, they enjoyed making their own chocolate sparklers – rumour has it they enjoyed eating them even more!

In **Hedgehog Class** children created some beautiful artwork inspired by Bonfire Night and have also been busy learning about body parts. In Science they carried out a 'pattern seeking investigation'; does the person with the biggest feet, also have the biggest hands? They discovered that this theory was not true. Good work Hedgehogs.

Children in **Rabbit Class** have been looking at a new class book 'Leon and the Place Between'. Linked to this lovely book, they created their own persuasive posters encouraging readers to visit a circus.

In History, **Badger Class** have started discussing prehistoric life from Stone Age to Iron Age which linked nicely into the visit of Rabbit and Badger Class to Herd Farm. In **Fox Class** children have been scientifically investigating light. Finally, in Maths, our **Owl Class** have been embedding their knowledge around capacity and volume. In English they have been looking at themes in text and writing a response to an open-ended question. On 11th November, Owl Class had the privilege of representing the school at the **Remembrance Service** on School Hill in Bentham.

At the time of writing, I am away on a **residential at How Stean Gorge** with a group of children from Year 4. The sun has been shining, all our children have been smiling, and everyone, including the staff accompanying children, have, so far, really enjoyed getting involved with outdoor activities, including Ghyll Scrambling, Caving, Orienteering and much more.

As a school we very much prioritise the safety of our children and the wider school community. Behind the scenes staff have regular **safeguarding** updates ensuring everyone is kept as safe as possible. Mrs Chapman is the school's Designated Safeguard Lead and is always busy supporting child safety. Mrs Chapman has recently put together a school 'Safety Squad', an opportunity for children across the school to work together, experience leadership and work alongside staff looking at all things involved in keeping everyone safe.

The **run up to Christmas** is underway and over the coming weeks we have lots of activities and opportunities planned for children. These include an evening of festive themed crafting, Nativity Performances, a visit to the Panto, a whole school Christmas Dinner, a FOBS fundraising Christmas Fair on the evening of 29th November, as well as Carol Singing at both Bentham Institute and the Auction Mart.

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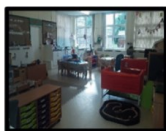
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It would involve about 2 hours in the morning, from 10am–12noon and approximately an hour in the afternoon from 2pm. There is a rota, so you would only be called upon about once a month, and even this is very flexible.

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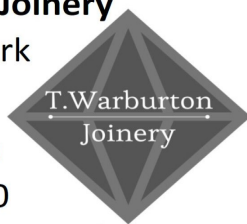
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Helping Birds This Winter is Really Important – Here's How

By Jill Franklin

It's time to think of the wildlife in our gardens and how to support them through the coldest months. Hopefully, hedgehogs are hibernating, by now and butterflies, bees and other insects are safely snuggled away in all the dead foliage you left in your outdoor spaces. However, winter is challenging for our feathered friends. Put out bird food and water on a regular basis as the days get colder. In severe weather, you may find you need to feed twice daily. Birds need high-energy, high-fat foods during cold weather and your contributions can be lifesaving for garden birds.



You may know about the nuts, seeds and suet balls you can buy, but you can equally feed birds on things you have at home. They love cut-up apples, grapes, pears, sunflower seeds, plain chopped nuts and oats. Please don't put out anything that has flavourings, salt, vegetable oil or any other extras added. Plain is best. And, if not eaten, remove food that can go soggy and mouldy. Also clean out your bird feeders with hot soapy water regularly.

If you want to help keep the birds as healthy as possible, here are some tips on what **not** to feed them:

- No milk — milk causes sickness leading to dehydration
- No old bird seed — the bird seed must be fresh, not spoiled, sprouting or stuck together
- No salted or dry roasted peanuts — peanuts for human consumption contain high levels of salt, which birds can't process.
- No chocolate — it's toxic to birds.
- No decaying food — it contains harmful bacteria and mould.
- No leftovers — the food might have been cooked using things which are harmful to birds, like salt, spices or garlic.
- A minimal amount of bread — bread has little value for birds, filling them up but giving them very little nutrition in return.

Almost half of all our bird species are in decline with farmland and woodland birds being particularly hard hit due to the loss of pastureland and hedges, increased use of farm chemicals and a shortage of food and nesting sites in many areas. Helping birds this winter is really important if we want to continue to see them in our gardens.



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Come and Celebrate Christmas at Bentham St John's Parish Church

By Libby Wheildon



Come and celebrate Christmas with us at Bentham St John's Parish Church. We have a wonderful assortment of special services and events to really get you in the spirit of Christmas. Our celebrations start with a **Coffee Morning at the Town Hall on Saturday 7th December** where you'll find a host of festive stalls, games and a raffle, and where you'll be able to enjoy a warm mince pie with your coffee.

Our second Messy Church is a **Messy Christingle** and takes place on **Saturday 14th December at 4pm** in church. This very popular event with children and families, involves Christmas craft activities, and the making of a Christingle. There is also a delicious, cooked meal for everyone and some Christmas stories and carols. Everyone is welcome, please join us with your children for some festive fun!

Our **Candlelit Carol Service is on Sunday 22nd December at 4pm** and on **Christmas Eve** we have our magical **Crib Service** where we re-enact the Christmas Story with the children choosing their costumes and the characters they want to be. Join us to be reminded of the true meaning of Christmas, and to have your heart warmed by the sight of the children dressed-up and full of excitement to tell you about the birth of Baby Jesus.

Our **Midnight Mass Service** is at **11.30pm on Christmas Eve** followed by our **Christmas Day Communion Service at 10.30am**.

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High Bentham

By Jan Stuiver

On Thursday 7th November, 11 members of High Bentham WI and 2 visitors gathered in the Lower Town Hall for a fascinating presentation by 3 members of the River Wenning Group. We learned about the work they do, collecting 6 water samples from above and below 3 sewage works on the River Wenning every month. The samples are sent to a lab at a cost of over £500 each month. As well as water samples they also regularly collect samples of the invertebrates that live on the bed of the river, make a record of what they find and then release the creatures back into the river. The range and quantity of the invertebrates is another way to measure the ecological health of the river. Members enjoyed hearing reminiscences of a lifetime of fishing the River Wenning and the way the fish stocks have declined in recent years. As an aside, members also enjoyed finding out about the work of a local lady who volunteers to look after tiny bats that have fallen out of a roost before being big enough to survive on their own. We must thank the River Wenning Group for the wonderful work they are doing to try and improve the state of the river for all of us. We would also like to thank all the people who attended our coffee morning on 19th October and all the members who worked so hard to make it a success.

Our next meeting will be our Christmas dinner meeting on Thursday 5th December. This meeting is only open to members, but we would be happy to welcome visitors to our first meeting in 2025 on Thursday 2nd January when we will be playing board and tabletop games, both new and traditional.



Tatham Fells

By Mary Taylor

Members of Tatham Fells Women's Institute had great fun at a Craft Evening in the Old School on Tuesday 12th November making Christmas tree ornaments. Member Andrea Ball with her sister Pamela demonstrated. Among lots of talk and laughter everyone tried their hand; half beginning with small Christmas trees made with

coloured buttons, while the others made a Father Christmas and an angel, using a Ferrero Rocher chocolate as the body; they changed over halfway through and everyone went home with four decorations. President, Linda Kirkby, welcomed everyone and thanked Andrea and Pamela. A ceramic poppy from the display at the Tower of London was in



prominence on the President's table as she conducted the business. Six members are to attend the meeting at Wray on 13th November. The walk in October was in Chapel-le-Dale; the next one on 19th November will start from the Old School. A request has been received for spectacles to go to third world countries. Plans were finalised for the Christmas party to be held in the Old School on 10th December and it was agreed for each to give £5 for St. John's Hospice instead of exchanging presents. Parish Councillor, Bronwen Osborne, announced that the disruption to local roads with the planned Haweswater Aqueduct will be discussed at the Parish Council meeting on 19th November at St. James the Less church. The evening concluded with refreshments provided by the committee.

Ewecross Historical Society Hears About Lost Chapels

By Mary Taylor

Edward Huddleston, vice-chair of Ewecross Historical Society welcomed Dr Sarah Rose to the meeting held in Bentham Methodist church on Monday 28th October. Dr Rose gave an illustrated lecture entitled 'The Lost Chapels of Lonsdale Ward', showing a map of the buildings in about a dozen different locations. She said that there is evidence of places of worship before the Viking age, with many situated at Holy Wells. A Charter of 1094 showed the connection of these Chapels with St Mary's Abbey in York. Documents refer to St Columba's at Casterton, which can be located by field names, as in Hutton Roof the word spittle refers to a hospital attached to the place of worship. Local landowners had a Chapel built as a Chantry where a Priest prayed for the souls of the departed; St Mary's Abbey had the right to appoint Priests until the Reformation when, in 1547, Chantries were closed by the King and this right was given to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Not all these places of worship have gone; some have been rebuilt several times and have become chapels of ease to their main church. Disputes arose between the parishes, as at Killington and Firbank, the people of Firbank stole the chapel in the night and rebuilt it at Foxes Pulpit where the churchyard can still be visited. Dr Rose said that after many years researching documents it is still difficult to find their exact locations in the fields.



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27 incidents were reported between 11th October and 12th November 2024.

These included: Road Related offence – tree down on Bentham Moor Road, concern for welfare/safety, anti-social nuisance parking offence, a crime involving violence, anti-social behaviour involving littering, two 2-vehicle road traffic collisions in High and Low Bentham, tractor and van in ditch on Mewith Lane, fire, fraud involved in the theft of sheep, domestic dispute, and check of a suspect vehicle in Wennington.

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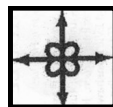
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Four December Walks with Bentham Footpath Group

By Don Cartledge (benthamfootpathgroup.co.uk)



The date in our calendar that marks the first day of winter usually refers to the astronomical seasons which are a result of the Earth's axis and orbit around the sun. That means for 2024, winter starts on 21st December, which also means that three of our four December walks take place in Autumn! Footpath Group members won't be too bothered what the season is, but they will know for certain that December rambles can always carry the risk of walking in the cold, mud, rain or snow - all part of the fun!

We meet at Lairgill for 9am for the walk on December 3rd and 9.30am for those on the 12th and 18th. The traditional Christmas Walk with lunch is on the 28th, meet for 9.30am at Lairgill.

Our first walk on **Tuesday 3rd** is a gentle 5.5-mile stroll along the canal towpath from Skipton to Gargrave led by Kate Rowe and Kate Butcher (015242-51402). Leaving Gargrave car park we head down West Street to the A65 to catch the 09.55am bus to Skipton Bus Station (bus passes or £2 fare). The walk follows the canal back to Gargrave. Kate says this is a level walk with little mud whatever the weather.

Peter Lennard (07474-120898) leads a 7.6 mile walk through lovely Wharfedale on **Thursday 12th**. After parking by the bridge in Conistone, there's a choice of two routes up the valley, with everyone meeting at the top. Firstly, the footpath up through 'The Dib' has a couple of rocky sections where you need two hands to help you up a few steps through a narrow gap, or, those with walking poles may prefer the road route up Scot Gate Lane. It's then along the Bycliffe Road as far as the Conistone Turf Road where we head on to Conistone Moor and Coppelstone Gate. Finally, its downhill to the Dales Way which we follow back to Conistone Pie, returning to Conistone Village via Scot Gate Lane.

On **Wednesday 18th**, there is a 6.25 mile ramble to Bracewell from Gisburn led by Alison Kinder and Colin Stroud (07854-789311). The walk starts in Gisburn (anyone travelling directly there should park on the roadside in the village centre and meet outside the church). Firstly, we walk down Mill Lane to the Ribble and turn right before the bridge to go through Gisburne Park as far as Hellifield Road. We continue across pasture to the railway underpass and on to Painley Farm and Horton. Crossing the A59 we travel on to Stock and Bracewell (good views of Weets and Pendle Hills). Passing the old St. Michael's Church, we walk through a series of fields returning to Gisburn.

Finally, on **Saturday 28th**, Mary Pickstone and Valerie Eccles (07979-607191) have arranged a short local mystery walk to include a lunch. No further details are known at time of writing but keep your eye on the website nearer the time.



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Standing Ovation for Standup!

By Shirley Brown

For 2 nights in November Bentham Town Hall became a high-spirited and lively nightclub as each night almost 100 local people sat around tables, chatting and sharing drinks with friends waiting for the start of *Standup!*, a play about the nature of comedy. It started with the beautiful singing of Caroline McCarthy in a sparkly cocktail dress getting everyone in the nightclub mood with Richard Norris on keyboards catching the vibe and setting the tone for what was to come.

I'm not sure we were all ready for what was to come, but we had been warned before buying tickets that the evening's entertainment would be provocative and not to everyone's taste. This was an extremely original theatrical production that took risks. During rehearsals the cast were never quite sure how it would be received, so staging it took courage, and in Bentham, for 2 nights in November, it paid off brilliantly.

Dave Pearce, who devised, wrote and directed the play along with his daughter Cara Foley and other cast members, explained in the programme notes that this play was inspired by 'Comedians', a TV play by Trevor Griffiths that he saw 50 years ago. The play asks whether comedy can make a positive contribution to society or, on the other hand, simply provide cheap laughs, sometimes at the expense of others. This question is acted out by the four prospective standup comedians (Samantha Haslope, Kevin McSherry, Jack Sankey and Lauren Hopkins) as they perform their routines in an audition with a smarmy London talent scout (Ralph Sullivan).

Their routines were received with rapturous applause by the audience. Strong, hard-hitting themes were covered, such as our response to people unlike ourselves such as

asylum seekers, whether women can be funny, why some men denigrate women, the behaviour of same sex couples, fat people and domestic violence. Pathos was added by Angela Howarth as the mother of one of the contestants who was showing early signs of dementia. The mood was lightened by 'The Three Sisters' who owned the nightclub, Heather Knowles, Anne Preston and Lizzie Star, and with James Clapham on lighting and Gareth Adams on sound, the whole production achieved a professional standard.

In Benthams these community events are such a treat. They bring together a diverse mix of people, all joined for just a few hours by what they are experiencing together. We love that our community contains such a mixture of individuals who can share their talents with us. Of course, our reactions are not all the same, but there's plenty to talk about, wonder at and laugh about. And I, for one, will never look at my Hoover hose in quite the same way again! Sorry if you weren't there and don't know what I'm talking about, but that's what happens with live entertainment – you have to be there to share.

Photos by Jon Brook of Benthams Imaging





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Bentham Beagles Running Club Celebrate Their Ironman Ed

By Diane Armstrong

With the New Year approaching, the 'Bentham Beagles' would like to share an account from one of our members, Ed Evans, who back in September completed his first Ironman challenge. This consists of a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bicycle ride and 26.2-mile run (marathon).

Ed writes:

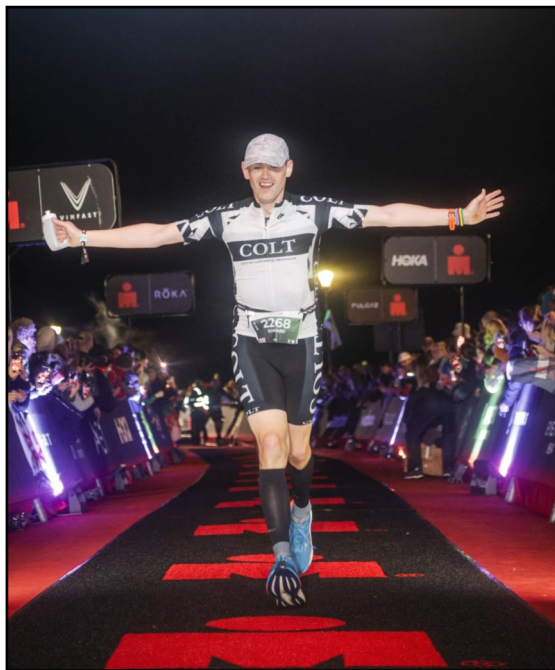
September 22nd, 2024 will forever remain a very special day in my life. It was the day I completed my first ever Ironman at the picturesque coastal town of Tenby in South Wales. This is regarded as one of the hardest Ironman competitions in the world. This journey to becoming an Ironman has been over 8 years in the making. It all started over a very enjoyable dinner with my family, when my brother-in-law spoke about his recent success at completing an Ironman and his involvement in the beautiful sport of triathlon. At the time it was inspirational, but I wasn't anywhere near contemplating signing up to the ridiculous task of training and attempting to achieve an Ironman. However, a little-known sprint event in the Staffordshire countryside was where I began my journey, and there the seed was sown. I was addicted and was fully engrossed in anything that involved swimming, cycling, and running.

Over 8 years later, I was celebrating the fruits of my labour with the very dearest members of my family on the red and black carpet in a time of 14:40:53. Becoming a lifelong member of the Ironman club was my proudest ever moment. Anything is achievable with a focused mind, dedication, determination not to give up and being passionate about something you absolutely love.

If you feel inspired by Ed's challenge and achievement, please visit our website www.benthambeagles.co.uk for information on our club nights. We have lots of exciting plans for 2025 including hosting 'New Member Events'.

We would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Photo of Ed completing the Ironman challenge



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