

BENTHAM NEWS

September 2026 Issue 479

Price £1



SNOW WHITE

11th & 12th September

Sue Halsall – Person of Bentham

Sue is a well known figure in Bentham: she drives the Age Concern bus, plays in a local band, takes part in our pantomimes and amateur dramatics, including some notably funny performances in the early 2000s. She has in the past written an excellent nature page for Bentham News, plays pickle ball, volunteers at a nature reserve and much else. She lives in Bentham with her partner, John Vendy, and has two children; Emily, who is a veterinary nurse, and James, an engineer.

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

My family lived in Leeds but they all moved to Birmingham where I was born and I spent most of my childhood there. I'm one of three siblings. I always disliked living in a city so, when it came time to go to university, I applied to Bangor where I could be close to the mountains and the sea and did a degree in Agricultural Botany. I met my now ex-husband, Dave, there and when we graduated we moved to Blackburn for his job for a while and then to Leicester, where he worked at the university, and I did my teacher training. We were spending all our free time travelling to and exploring the Peak District, the Lakes and around the Dales. By this time we had children and I was teaching full time in a secondary school and he was at home being a full time house husband. We sat down and asked ourselves why we were living where we were and decided to take a big chance on moving to Bentham, which we picked because it was close to several schools where I might find work, and to beautiful countryside. We sold our house and bought one here. I rang round all the local schools here and immediately started supply teaching at Heysham High before finding full time work at Fulwood High School in Preston. I taught science subjects and ceramics there, until 2002. I then moved to a job with the local Education Medical Service, teaching children with medical needs until I retired in 2014. Moving to Bentham is not something I have ever regretted.

Tell us something about yourself people wouldn't normally know

People may not have known I do ceramics. I made a friend who had all the equipment in Leicester and went to her house and learnt to throw, then went to night classes at Bentham Pottery and ended up teaching a few classes when I worked at Fulwood. I also learned to canoe in our time in Leicester and in 1992 took part in the team representing Great Britain in the dragonboat racing event in Malmo, Sweden. It used to be that there were ten people paddling either side in a dragonboat with a drummer keeping time at the front and someone steering at the back. They have fewer people on them now. That was a great experience. Our team practised on the River Soar and our team was called the Soar Bottoms!

If you could travel anywhere, where would you like to go?

I love the West Coast of Scotland and have been to the Hebrides and the Orkneys including two trips to North Uist to a wonderful campsite on a bird reserve; the flowers and the birds are fabulous - there are corncrakes in springtime there. I have been to Scandinavia a lot and love it. I have a friend who lived in Finland and had a summer cottage by a lake with a jetty to swim from, a canoe, a sauna and a fire-pit. Absolute heaven! I have also travelled to other parts of Europe and in France quite a bit. I've been trekking in Iceland and would love to do that again. I'd like to visit the Shetlands and go cycling in Denmark as well.



Photo of Sue by Jon Brook of Bentham Imaging

What does a perfect day look like to you?

A sunny, spring day with the birds singing. It would involve a bike ride, some walking, a craft session, and a pickle ball session in the evening, or maybe a band practice.

Alternatively, we might be spending some time in our wood. John and I bought 3.75 acres of woodland over near Catterick a few years back. We camp there and manage the land. It provides all our firewood which is a bonus, and this ran all our heating until recently. I might just spend the day there reading a book in a hammock and then build a campfire. I love a campfire.

If you could witness any event of the past, present or future what would it be?

I'm choosing the future: the introduction of Proportional Representation so that we elect a government that has all parties working together learning to negotiate in order to achieve a fair and equal society that cares about the environment.

Are there any world events that you particularly remember from when you were growing up?

I remember the moon landing but don't remember particularly being bothered about it. Live Aid, which occurred in my early 20s, did really impress me and stays in my mind.

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

I would say my parents. My dad worked for the Post Office and we never had much money but they were steady and calm and unconditionally loving and present. Most years we spent our holidays in a friend's caravan on the Welsh coast, very rural with a beach and rock pools. My mum taught me the names of flowers and about wildlife and

how to sew and knit, which I still do, and my dad taught me woodwork, how to paint and decorate, how to mend punctures, all the practical stuff. My grandparents moved to Dorset after going on a holiday to Weymouth and we had some holidays there too. I remember the wonder of being able to swim in the rivers, not a possibility in Birmingham in those days. I feel very lucky to have had such a happy childhood and so little trauma in my life.

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

I would build and run a leisure centre with a small pool, squash, badminton and pickleball courts and a small gym. I would also pay for some kind of environmental worker to ensure the river was tested and kept clean and who would encourage the development of larger wild areas and verges.

What's the worst job you've ever had?

Working in a pie shop during our brief time living in Blackburn. It was just boring

What's your most treasured possession?

My guitar first springs to mind. I bought it when I was part of a band formed by the science department at the school in Preston. I'd had some back pay and that's what I spent it on. However, I'm also very attached to my electric bike, my canoe, my camper van and, of course, our lovely bit of woodland, all of which give me enormous pleasure.

How do you relax?

Playing the guitar and harmonica in the band, drumming in a salsa band, lying in the wood, pottering around in nature reserves, particularly the one I volunteer at, RSPB Leighton Moss. I love music nights in the pub, jamming. They have one at the Punchbowl in Burton now.

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

A scientist ever since I was small and more so at secondary school. I wanted to be in a lab doing experiments and that's what I was doing with the children while teaching. I've always been intensely curious about the natural world.

Is there a book, film or live event that you've particularly enjoyed recently?

The Observant Walker by John Wright, given to me by a friend. I realised that's just what I am! Also our latest gig with our band '523', a five piece cover band, in the Black Bull.

Photo credits:-

***Front cover design by Claire Proctor -
Photos by Jon Brook of Bentham
Imaging (Panto article see page 11)***

***Photo opposite of John Dawson -
Peasant farmer of Bleak Bank - by Jon
Brook***




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Open Days for “Public to Meet Real Live Peasant Farmers”

By John Dawson

Recently we hosted two open days on consecutive days at Twisleton Hall which is on part of the waterfalls walk near Ingleton. This is something we have done for several years and came about because when we were shearing our sheep, walkers were stopping to watch and chat. It seemed logical to make it an event that was more user-friendly. Nowadays, it is effectively a pop-up farm information centre for those two days. The more adventurous visitors are invited to shear a sheep which is a real challenge (especially for the sheep and the teacher) but it does help to give a better understanding of the technique required. They can also have a go at various wool crafts, such as spinning and have the opportunity to buy clothing made from locally produced wool, via Glencroft (Google them).

To help with these epic two days we had our rather well-to-do neighbour, John Metcalfe, and Carol from the Yorkshire Dales Farmer Network (another Google), which, like ‘Bleak Bank’, is a not-for-profit organisation, the difference being that ‘Bleak Bank’ does not set out to be not-for-profit.

The open days are an opportunity for members of the public to meet real live peasant farmers who can try and explain some of what they do regarding animal welfare, food production and making a home for nature. Sheep shearing is a good introduction for visitors who may never have the opportunity to see such a thing close up. It is also an opportunity for children to hear words they may not have heard before and for parents to explain the context of those words as well as their meaning; they are words often heard if a sheep gets up and leaves before the shearing is complete.

I have a theory that everyone secretly would like to be a farmer, but the opportunities are not always forthcoming. For some, visiting a farm, chatting to a real live peasant and seeing a tiny part of what they do might be as close as they get.

Some of the conversations are very meaningful, for instance, you may find it difficult to believe, but not everyone knows that every time a cow drops a heap of dung on the grass, that dung becomes a tiny rainforest of life which can support up to 250 species of organisms. Everything from dung beetles and earthworms to fungi call a cowpat home.

While busy breaking down the cowpat these creatures are part of the food chain for those further up such as birds and hedgehogs. While the humble cow is unwittingly helping to provide a working habitat for creepy crawlies, she is also turning grass into food; quite remarkable.

I have few aims in life, things such as bathing more often, avoiding bankruptcy as long as possible and not travelling by air, are my favourites, but the one I currently spend most time on is persuading people to take as much care and pride in the food they buy, eat and feed their families with as I do in producing it. I overheard lots of families leaving our open day discussing the merits of cow muck and many children determined to go and find the nearest cowpat to investigate further.

“That fell on fertile ground” thought I.



Bentham Pottery Produces a Souvenir Mug for the British Museum Bayeux Tapestry Exhibition

By Lee Cartledge www.benthampottery.com

Earlier this year, Bentham Pottery was contacted by the British Museum and invited to produce a souvenir mug for its forthcoming Bayeux Tapestry exhibition.

Ordinarily, we would have declined such an order, as pottery and parcel couriers are not always the happiest of companions. We generally concentrate our business in the North West, where we can deliver work ourselves whenever possible. However, this felt like a unique opportunity. Not only was it a prestigious commission, but it would also raise the profile of the pottery. I also felt a personal connection with the Bayeux Tapestry, having visited it on a school trip from Ingleton Middle School many years ago.

Determined to win the commission, I produced a series of prototype mugs and sent photographs to the British Museum. They must have liked what they saw because members of the museum's purchasing team travelled to Bentham to visit the pottery, inspect our workshop and take sample mugs back to London. Around Easter, we received confirmation that we had secured an initial order for 200 mugs, with delivery scheduled for July.

The mugs will be sold throughout the Bayeux Tapestry exhibition, which runs for ten months from September.

Once the mugs were finished, the next challenge was getting them safely to London. After several disastrous experiences with courier companies over the years, I wasn't prepared to trust them with such an important order. Instead, we decided to deliver the mugs ourselves and turn the trip into a short break.

We stopped off in Congleton to visit my mother-in-law before continuing to a hotel in North London. From there, I had arranged a taxi to collect us and our eight vegetable boxes packed full of mugs and take us directly to the British Museum's delivery entrance.

The taxi driver looked slightly bemused when he saw the unusual cargo, but he soon embraced the mission. We arrived within our allocated delivery slot, and the museum porters carefully received all 200 mugs without incident.

With the business side successfully completed, we were able to enjoy everything London had to offer. We spent time exploring the British Museum, met up with our son who lives in the capital, enjoyed a tour of Buckingham Palace, ate in Soho and rounded off the evening by seeing Moulin Rouge! The Musical.

The following day we made the journey back to Yorkshire, with another visit to my mother-in-law for good measure.





Looking back, it was a memorable few days and proof that, every now and then, it's possible to combine business with pleasure.

Given the public interest around the tapestry and the fact it sold out within 24 hours of going on line (for the first 3 months). I suspect further orders are imminent!

Kathy above and Lee below with their 200 mugs



Bentham Hub Celebrates 4th Birthday

By Lesley Barker

June 2026 was our 4th Birthday. From the kind people who donate goods, to the wonderful customers who come and buy from us, it has taken a very special kind of community to make The Bentham Hub the success it is. This has enabled us to donate over £117,000 to local good causes and to buy and renovate the Youth Club.

Mick Reid and I are the directors of what has now become Bentham Hub CIC. You will see the many faces of volunteers in the four shops that turn up week in week out, regardless of weather or the mountain of donations that they face - but turn up they do, and we couldn't run the four shops without them.

There are also however, important unseen volunteers behind the scenes.

We have: -

- Bob, Bernie, Brian and Jason, our PAT testers, and trainee Kevin
- Bob who repairs anything that needs mending, from tables and chairs to electrical items, and is that smiling face at Hub 3
- Manda, Sheila, Karen, Chloe, Julie and Poppy her dog, our intrepid clothes sorters
- Dawn and Tony who collect and wash all our teddies and return them to us all bagged, priced and ready to go to their new home
- Dawn also washes, sizes and packs all the donated children's clothes and school uniforms, which makes a huge saving for young families. She also sorts out our Christmas donations and sells items that have not sold on our rails on Vinted, she says "I like to keep busy"
- Richard who checks, tunes and prices all our musical instruments
- Jonathan, our bike servicer, who checks over donated bikes
- June collects all children's games and puzzles and makes sure they are all complete to avoid disappointment
- Audrey takes home unsellable cotton clothes and cuts them up for rags that go to local garages
- David calls twice a week and collects all our scrap metal and excess and duplicated books which go on to other uses
- Simon researches vintage toys and sells them on eBay for us
- Justin identifies, values and prices rare items and takes them to auction for us
- Our intrepid Movers and Shifters, John, Jason, Brian, Daniel and Kevin are our go to guys when we need muscles for collections, deliveries and to do tip runs
- Emma, our inhouse bookkeeper keeps all the finances in order
- Sue keeps her eye on the Petty Cash
- Dean our contractor does all the work on our shops and doubles up as a shop assistant, delivery and pickup driver
- Alix our Hub 3 co-ordinator shows off all our goods to their best
- Lastly and NOT least Jo, our trusty rota co-ordinator who against all odds makes sure that there are at least two people, sometimes more, in the shops at all times

That's 28 people behind the scenes. Bentham people really have come out and supported The Hub Dream, "For the Community by the Community" - apologies to anyone I have missed.

PS.... a gentleman came in recently and told us that he volunteers at a Barnoldswick charity - cleaning, sharpening and making good, tools and gardening tools to make them more sellable. I wondered if anyone with a couple of hours to spare would like to join our merry band in Bentham armed with WD40 and some elbow grease. We will provide the WD40, we just need your elbow grease. Call in and ask!!

The opening hours for The Hubs are: -

Hubs 1, 2 and 3 are open 9.30am to 4pm Monday to Saturday

Hub 4 the craft shop is open 10am to 4pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday and 10am to 1pm on Saturday.

We are always looking for more volunteers so call in and ask!!

***Don't forget the BN deadline
date is 12th September
for the October edition***



In Loving Memory: Shelagh Warren (1934 – 2026)

Sent to Benthams News by Richard Norris, Shelagh's son

Shelagh Warren passed away peacefully at home recently, marking the end of a long, vibrant and mainly happy life. Though she only moved to Benthams in July 2024, Shelagh made an unforgettable impact on the community in her final years. She became a familiar and recognised local fixture, often seen whizzing around town on her mobility scooter, terrorising pedestrians and bringing a spark of mischievous joy to the streets.

Shelagh's family would like to extend their deepest, most heartfelt thanks to all the wonderful local people who helped her settle in and enjoy her time up here. Your warmth made Benthams feel like home immediately. The family wishes to send particular, but by no means exclusive, gratitude to the dedicated staff at Bowland View and the Benthams Medical Practice for their exceptional care. Equal thanks go to the friendly teams at the Post Office, the Co-op, and the Spar, as well as everyone at Benthams Older People Together, for their constant kindness and support during her outings.

While a large and irreplaceable chapter from our family book is now missing, Shelagh's vibrant story and legendary spirit will undoubtedly live on in the hearts of everyone who knew her. In typical Shelagh fashion, she strictly did not want a traditional, sombre funeral. Instead, she authorised a lively 'Celebration of Life'. This final send-off was recently held in her honour at her beloved Blundellsands Sailing Club, surrounded by the laughter, stories and affection she inspired throughout her incredible journey.



Snow White, a Children's Panto in Summer -

"oh yes there is "

By Heather Knowles

Please come and support this fantastic production.

All proceeds are going to Bentham Playing Fields which is now going from strength to strength with its new plans - watch this space.

The children have been working hard throughout their summer break which has been a challenge because of family breaks away, but I think you will love the finished product.

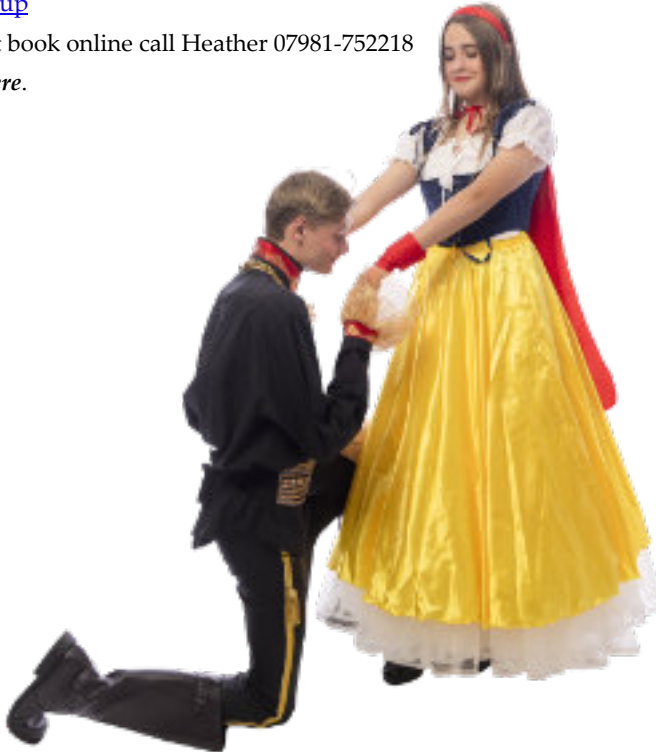
There are: -

- Some surprises !! and lots of amazing special effects, especially the transformation scene.
- Songs, some original and written by the kids themselves
- Two live bands - yes two!
- Great choreography for the dances and medieval court acts - also done by the kids
- Brilliant costumes chosen for themselves with a few militant animals refusing to wear furry hats - and they aren't even vegans!
- The age range of the child actors is from 3 years to 16 years old.

Tickets are available (if any left by now) from www.ticketsource.co.uk/bentham-theatre-group

If you can't book online call Heather 07981-752218

See you there.



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Your Garden or Allotment in September

Words and Photo by Joyce Knapp

As we move into September, we may notice that some of our flowering plants are beginning to fade, but there is one that is guaranteed to brighten up any garden in the early autumn and that is the Japanese



Anemone, as seen in the picture. This is a hardy perennial which puts on a stunning display of tall, single, often pink flowers that can reach up to 4' in height and can be grown either towards the back of a border or between shrubs. The one in the picture sits at the foot of a large-leaved privet where it enjoys a little shade and some support for its flowering stems. The privet, which is now well over 7' in height, is used to shelter a nearby apple tree from fierce east winds during the winter months. It started life as a stem planted from the remains of a bunch of flowers given to my mum when dad died, so it has sentimental value as well as a practical use. It is easy on the eye and its clusters of small, white, highly scented flowers attract a wide range of butterflies and other insects, which in turn help to feed the nearby bird population.

We may find in September that other perennials are starting to look a bit straggly and would benefit from a trim and we can also remove seed heads from prolific plants such as Ladies Mantle which, if left to their own devices, would no doubt over-populate our gardens.

Moving over into the allotment or vegetable garden, September will hopefully see us reaping the rewards of our labours earlier in the year, as we continue to dig up and collect a range of vegetables, from the basics such as carrots, beetroot and lettuce to the more unusual ones such as sweet corn and courgettes. Any surplus crops, such as onions, can be stored for winter use and they can initially be left on the soil surface to ripen before being brought into a shed where they will happily continue to dry especially if laid on racks.

By September we will hopefully have a little time to spare to search out any weeds that may be lurking amongst our garden plants and it is prudent to remove as many as possible now because, as the old adage goes, "one year's weed – seven years' seed". Another way of reducing the weed population, especially in the vegetable garden, is to sow a variety of green manure and this can be as simple as agricultural mustard or maybe grazing rye. The mustard will grow quite rapidly but dies off after the first hard frost, leaving a mesh of fibres on the soil surface that can be raked away in spring, whereas the grazing rye will need to be dug in/ composted.

Town Council Meeting and HARP Presentation 3rd August

By Anne Preston

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

Preceding this month's meeting was a presentation by representatives of the companies involved in the Haweswater Aqueduct Resilience Programme (HARP) in relation to the impact it will have locally. This is a precis of that presentation.

The Haweswater to Bury Aqueduct is a pipeline built between 1933 and 1955 which transports 570 million litres of drinking water to 2.5 million people in Cumbria, Lancashire and Greater Manchester. 50 km of the pipeline is through tunnels and 100 km through steel pipes. It takes the water 25 hours to make the journey which is entirely gravity fed. Unsurprisingly, the tunnels are beginning to show the first indications of ageing and it is essential that they are renewed before wear and tear takes its toll. There are five stretches of tunnel 2.5 metres in diameter to be replaced, the longest section running from west of Wray to Newton-in-Bowland. The tunnelling will be done deep in the ground by machines such as were used for building the Channel Tunnel, out of sight and sound of the general population. At either end of the tunnel there will be some activity and traffic, more at the Newton end where the waste will hopefully be disposed of in an old quarry, than at the Wray end. A compound will be built near Wray for staff and for the storage of machinery. Staff will be transported to site by a park and ride system. Passing places and temporary bridges will be built to enable the passage of the traffic involved and every effort will be made to avoid village streets, rush hours and school pick up times. All work will be kept between 7 am and 7 pm. The tunnelling apparatus will cause one day of major disruption as it is brought to site. Everything will be reinstated after completion and green issues are at the forefront of the construction companies' consciousness. All this is currently in the planning and design stage for this section and probably will be for the next year, though other sections further south are in more advanced stages. So, work should begin in about 12 months and take about 2 years. The intention is to employ 30% of all staff locally, to have an apprenticeship programme, for workers to volunteer on local projects, and to have a fund to support local good causes. It is a massive and impressive project and the companies involved appear to be considering every eventuality and aim to mitigate any disruption as far as is possible.

The Town Council meeting proper then followed on....

Present: Councillors Adams, Marshall, MacEley-Young and Wittet, the Town Clerk, Claire Burrow, a police officer and two members of the public.

Apologies: Councillors Stannard, Taylor and Burton.

Resignation: Councillor Burton has tendered his resignation from the council. Councillor Adams, as Chair, thanked him for all the work he has put in during his years in office.

Comments and Concerns from the public: A member of the public has received a letter from Yorkshire Highways about a possible crossing on Robin Lane from Bowland View. All Highways have offered is a dropped kerb and change of pavement surface at the point of crossing. The member of the public feels that this is wholly inadequate and has replied to Highways to this effect.

Police report: This was read out in full and appears on page 33 of this issue.

Financial Matters: The Council's current account stands at £43,452, its Public Sector deposit account at £85,000 and the Virgin current account at £31,419.17.

New Planning Applications:

26/03542/ADV Advertisement for No.2 externally illuminated fascia signs, Benthams Community Primary School, Low Benthams Road, High Benthams, LA2 7BP. The portal was not working so the council had not seen illustrations of the proposed signs and therefore could not comment.

TPO no. 60/2026 (CRA) beech tree TPO on the site of Moulterbeck House, Slaidburn Road, High Benthams LA2 7LT. This has been applied. Cllr. Marshall commented on this having happened with no prior communication with the landowner.

To receive information on ongoing issues and decide further action where necessary:

The Clerk's report, detailing many actions taken over the last month, is available on the TC website.

The road works at the junction of Station Road were postponed, as doubtless all residents are aware! This means that the permits issued by NYC to do the work have now lapsed and NYC have declined to renew them until an agreed programme of remedial works has been completed and reviewed.

Playground Equipment at Phillip Harvey Playing Fields and Goodenber Play Area:

Quotes are in the process of being gathered and should be available by the end of the summer. There will be a meeting on September 24th to discuss what can sensibly be achieved.

Community Asset Transfers: The Council hopes to go ahead and take over the Rose Garden in Low Benthams and is proceeding to investigate ways forward. As regards Cleveland Square and the Grasmere Public Toilet Building, the situation remains financially and legally complex and further enquiries need to be made.

Car parking on Low Benthams Road near Benthams Primary School: The police were informed and the situation has somewhat improved.

Graffiti: The police are aware but no culprit identified as yet.

Correspondence received:

Environment Agency: A letter was received from the Environment Agency in response to the council's request to see the minutes of the Angus Fire multi-agency group meetings regarding PFAs and the Angus' site, which are held fortnightly. The agency replied that minutes were not kept of these meetings so they could not be supplied. The council were taken aback by this response. They are to have a meeting with representatives of the Environment Agency on Wednesday, 5th August and resolved to raise this issue directly on that occasion.

Angus Fire: There was an update from Angus Fire which is available in full on the website. Deep drilling for further soil investigations has been completed and further investigations into deep groundwater have now commenced. These samples should be available to send for analysis by the middle of August. All results will be available to the EA and other regulatory bodies in due course.

Double yellow lines: It is proposed these be put down at the entrance to the Auction

Mart opposite the junction with Robin Lane in the interests of safety and ease of passage for cattle wagons etc.

Single yellow lines are already present and the council felt that as these are constantly ignored by the parking public, the problem lies in a lack of enforcement rather than a lack of signage.

Bentham Boost Report: Another successful Clean Up happened on Saturday, July 18th and was well received by the public. The new flags representing local organisations are in production. New bins and planters are on their way. A bistro night is planned for early November and the council have kindly given them a 50% reduction on the rent of the Town Hall for this occasion.

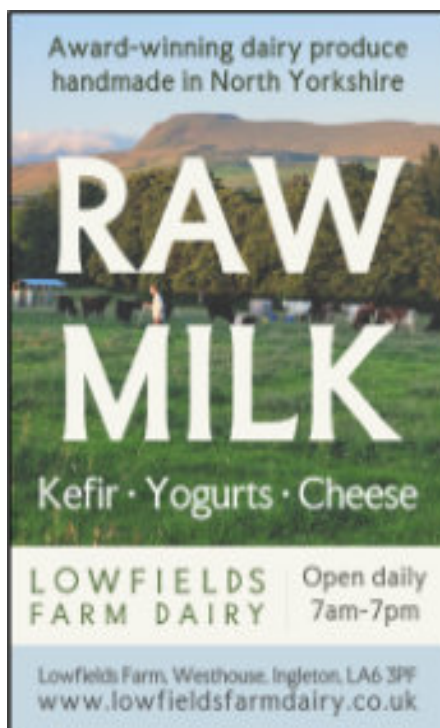
Future Meetings:

Full Council Meeting -

Monday, 7th September at 7.30pm

Council meeting with the Environment Agency -

Wednesday, 5th August



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Letters

Dear Bentham News

Does anyone know how, or why, a medium sized rock is now in situ on the riverbank just below Shaky Bridge? Is it an additional diabolical deposit to join the Great Stone family, or do the recent mechanical handling marks on its surface and what look like bulldozer tracks nearby suggest a more human agency? A section of the nearby field fence has obviously been removed and replaced with new, which suggests the stone was moved across the field.

Regards

Steve Bennett, High Bentham



Editor's comment: It's been dragged out of the Wenning because it was causing the river to erode the bank holding up the railway. It looks like the big stone has had a calf. See photo above.....

Dear Bentham News

I have just re-read the Bentham News and wish to say how much I enjoy reading it. Thank you.

I live in Bolton and have been a regular reader for many years – so many I've lost count! I really want to congratulate you on your 40th anniversary.

Well done.

Best wishes

Betty Longmate

Thanks

Raymond Jennings Murray

5th February 1950 – 21st June 2026

Sandra and family would like to thank everyone who attended Raymond's funeral, sent cards, flowers, messages and donations for St John's Hospice and Parkinson's UK. Special thanks to Canon Peter Greenwood, Jimmy and Tara from B&W Funerals and Mandy and all the staff at Bentham Golf Club.

Sam Bargh

19th August 1942 - 12th July 2026

Janet, Linda, David and families would like to say thank for the kind words, cards and thoughts following Sam's death on the 12th of July.

We would especially like to say thank you to B&W Funerals (Jimmy and Tara) for helping us through a difficult time, the Reverend Stephen Rathbone for a lovely service at St Mary's in Ingleton and also to Home Barn Foods for an excellent funeral tea.

Over £700.00 has been raised in Sam's memory which will be split between the **Oncology ward at RLI and St John's Hospice.**

Ian Taylor

28th July 1947 - 18th July 2026

A massive thank you from Kathleen, Paul, Mark and all the family to all who cared for Ian and to those who supported the family at his passing with messages, cards, letters, flowers and donations to **St. John's Hospice** and the **Brain Tumour Charity.**

Special thanks to Rev. Peter Greenwood, Jimmy, Tara and the team at B&W funerals and Mandy and staff at Bentham Golf Club for their professionalism in providing Ian with a fitting farewell too.

Messages

I would like to thank the extremely kind people who helped me when I fell flat on my face in the High Street on Friday 14th, including dashing to the surgery to collect a wheelchair. I asked their names and immediately forgot them! Also to the team at the surgery, caring and helpful as always, who patched me up and sent me to RLI A&E. Three days on, I am now home following surgery over the weekend to my broken elbow. I have no doubt the

clothes rail I was carrying found its way to the Hub!

Kath, Low Bentham.





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A Challenging September Hike to the Top of Blencathra

By Don Cartledge - benthamfootpathgroup.co.uk



This month's itinerary includes a strenuous climb up Blencathra (historically known as Saddleback). This mountain dominates the view as you approach the Northern Lakes from Penrith. The walk itself gains 2,300 feet - but the stunning views from the top make the effort well worthwhile.

For the walks on the **3rd** and **18th**, meet first at Lairgill for 9.30am, for that on the **8th** it's 9.00am and 2.15pm on the **26th**.

Thursday 3rd is our first ramble which covers 7 miles around Rusland Pool and is led by Muriel Clarke (07340-821022). Parking is on the Rusland Pool lay-by off the A590 (up to 1974 the pool was in Lancashire but now it's in Cumbria). We head first for Roundsea Wood then on to Clock Tower to eventually reach Backbarrow. It's then a regular return to Rusland Pool via Abbots Reading.

Tuesday 8th sees the 7.5-mile Blencathra hike led by Rick Clapham (07792-935564). Blencathra is a fabulous mountain ridge and the walk starts from the Blencathra field studies centre (CA12 4SG). We start by climbing Blease Fell and after 1.5 miles we're on the ridge that leads to Hansfell Top - the highest point at 2848 feet. There's then a descent down the eastern flank and a detour to the dramatic glacial corrie of Scales Tarn. We continue to Scales village and follow the old A66 road along the foothills back to the start.

Friday 18th has Mary and Kate Taylor (015242-61672) leading a 6.5-mile ramble round the strangely named "Singing Ringing Tree" at Burnley. (I just had to look this up and discovered it's a 3 metre tall wind powered musical sculpture which makes an eerie humming sound when the wind blows through it). The start point is the Towneley Hall café which we pass and travel uphill to reach the Burnley Way footpath. Following the path northwest then south we arrive at Timber Hill Farm and then New Copy Farm to reach a road. Here we turn left then follow a path past the Singing Ringing Tree and continue past Dixon Hill, returning to the start via Cliviger Mill Bridge.

Saturday 26th provides a pleasant afternoon walk to Sunderland Point led by Alison Kinder and Colin Stroud (07854-789311). It covers 4.5 miles and starts from Potts Corner - access via Middleton. We backtrack on the minor road and soon turn right along a path to Trumley Farm. Field paths lead on to Sunderland Point where we can explore the hamlet and then continue to the other side of the promontory to visit Sambo's Grave. It's then a right turn along the coastal path and back to the cars.

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Help Shape Bentham's New Public Artwork

By Rachel Thornton
rachthorns@gmail.com

A new permanent artwork is coming to the Ruposhi Ginnel in Bentham, and local people are invited to help shape its design. The project has been commissioned by **Bentham Boost** and is being delivered in partnership with **Street Space** as part of their ongoing work to celebrate and enhance the town.



The commission has been awarded to local artist and printmaker **Rachel Thornton (Harrison)**, whose work explores memory, place and the stories held within everyday objects and landscapes. Rachel wants the final design to be shaped by the people who know Bentham best.

What makes Bentham, Bentham?

What would you want someone to know about this place in 100 years' time? - whether it's a favourite view, a family photograph, an old map, a memory, a story, a local tradition or simply somewhere that means something to you, your contribution could help shape the final artwork.

Contributions can include photographs, maps, written memories, drawings or anything else that captures the spirit of Bentham. Sometimes it's the everyday places, objects and memories that tell the richest stories.

Please send copies or digital versions where possible, as submitted material may not be returned, and only submit material that you own or have permission to share.

The finished artwork will weave together a selection of community contributions with Rachel's own drawings, printmaking and artistic interpretation, creating a contemporary artwork inspired by Bentham and the people who call it home.

Rachel will be collecting ideas and contributions throughout her **Open Studio** during the **Lunesdale Arts Trail**, from 4–13 September, at **Studio42, Unit 2A, Bentham Business Park, Bentham LA2 7NB**.

Please send your contributions by **Saturday 20 September 2026** to allow time for them to be considered as the final artwork is developed.



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Emergency Food Parcels for Bentham

By Judith Johnson, Chair of CTiB



Churches Together in Bentham are pleased to say that although The Pantry has now closed we are to continue to work with Skipton Food Bank to deliver help to those most in need of support.

Skipton Foodbank provides emergency food parcels to individuals and families throughout the former Craven area who are struggling to feed themselves and their families for whatever reason.

If you are struggling to feed yourself or your family do ask for a referral from any one of their local partners (see below), or get in touch directly with Skipton Food Bank (tel. 07856 080194) who will be able to suggest how you can get some help.

Citizens Advice Bureau	0808 2787900
Bentham Surgery/Social Prescriber	015242 61202
Any professional or charity helping you or your family	Mental Health Worker Social Worker School/College Housing Support Worker North Yorkshire Horizons
Help Through Hardship Helpline	0808 2082138

A New Season for Settle Orchestra

By Jill Gates - further details and tickets: <https://www.settleorchestra.org.uk/>

Settle Orchestra begins an exciting new chapter this autumn as Colombian conductor Juan José Muñoz Borja takes up the baton for the orchestra's 2026–27 season. He is currently studying for a Master's degree in Orchestral Conducting at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester and has worked with professional and youth orchestras in Colombia and internationally. His first concerts with Settle Orchestra take place at Settle Parish Church on Saturday 14 November and Christ Church, Skipton on Saturday 21 November, both at 3.30pm.

The programme features Mozart's Ballet Music from Idomeneo, Beethoven's lively Symphony No. 8 and a particularly special performance from one of the orchestra's youngest members. At just 17 years old, bassoonist Harris Birch achieved a Distinction in his Bassoon Diploma earlier this year with an outstanding 48 marks out of 50. This autumn he steps forward as soloist with his fellow orchestra members in Jacobi's Introduction and Polonaise for Bassoon and Orchestra.

Tickets are £15, or £7.50 for students and benefit claimants, while everyone aged 18 and under can attend free. Essential carers also attend free, and the orchestra's Buy One Donate One scheme provides further opportunities to enjoy live music locally.

Saturday 14 November, 3.30pm — Settle Parish Church

Saturday 21 November, 3.30pm — Christ Church, Skipton

Events in September



Town Hall

Every Tuesday

Blue Moose Dance 9.45am-10.45am Mature Movers and 11am-12pm Ballet BR (not 1st)
Craft Club 10am-12noon WR

Every Wednesday

Stepping Stones 10-11.30am BR (not 2/9)
Pilates with Sally Horn 9.30-10.30am LH (not 16th)

Every Thursday

Men's Pilates 7-8pm BR

Town Hall - Meetings and Events

Thursday 3rd 7.30pm LH High Bentham WI
Friday 4th 3pm BR afternoon tea Breast Cancer

Monday 7th 7.30pm LH Full town council meeting

Thursday 10th 7.30pm LH Prostate Cancer Support Group (Tim Stannard) Email - bayprostategroup@pm.me

Panto dress rehearsal Sat (2pm?) 6th/Sun 7th

Performance times Fri 11th 7pm Sat 12th 4pm

Town Hall - Coffee Mornings

Saturdays 10am - 12 noon BR

5th September - Church of the Good Shepherd
26th September - Tatham Fell School

WI Meetings *(see pages 40/41)*

High Bentham - Thurs 3rd, 7.30pm LH
Low Bentham - Thurs 17th, 7pm, Victoria Institute, Low Bentham

Tatham Fells - Tuesday 8th, 7.30pm,
Old School Room

Footpath *(see page 19)*

For September 3rd and 18th walks meet first at Lairgill for 9.30am, for the walk on the 8th it's for 9.00am and for the 26th it's 2.15pm.

Thursday 3rd, Muriel Clarke, 07340-821022, Backbarrow, 7 miles.

Tuesday 8th, Rick Clapham, 07792-935564, Blencathra, 7.5 miles.

Friday 18th, Mary and Kate Taylor, 61672, Burnley, 6.5 miles.

Saturday 26th, Alison Kinder, 07854-789311, Sunderland Point, 4.5 miles.

Victoria Institute

Every Monday

9.00 - 12.30 Office Open

11.30 - 2.00 Community Link Cafe

Light lunch & Activities

6.15 - 7.45 Tai-chi Qigong

Every Tuesday

4.00 - 9.30 Helen Howard School of Dance Term time

6.15 - 7.45 Kundalini Yoga & Breath

Upstairs Meeting Room

Every Wednesday

9.00 - 12.30 Office open

10.00 - 12.00 Post Office Services

11.30 - 2.00 Community Link Cafe Lunch & Activities

4.00 - 6.45 Helen Howard School of Dance Term time

Every Friday

10.00 - 12.00 Post Office Services

Every Sunday

11.00 - 12.30 Cornerstone Church

Bookings can be made on our website

www.lowbenthamvi.co.uk

Bentham & District Dementia Friendly Community Breakfast

10th & 24th August

Thursdays at 10am at Bentham Golf Club

Bentham Golf Club

Age Concern Bentham Thursday Lunch Club

Every Thursday 11am - 2pm

Bentham Methodist Church

Wednesday 2nd and 16th Brunch and Shop 10.30am to 12.30pm

Monday 14th, 21st and 28th Toddler-In 10am to 11.30am Parents/carers and pre-school children and babies welcome.

Pickleball

Mondays and Wednesdays 6-7.30pm and 7.30-9pm at Bentham Community Primary School

Bentham Medical Practice

Closed on Wednesday 16th September from 1pm for staff training

Pioneer Projects - Looking Well Studios (unless otherwise stated)

Every Monday Meet Lairgill carpark 9.20am

Health Walks for Women

Every Tuesday 9.30am to 11am, Little Notes Music session in the library.

Every Tuesday 10.30am to 12.30pm, Creative Community Hub

Every Tuesday 11.30am to 1pm, Creative Writing Group in the Library

Tuesday 8th September 2pm to 3.30 pm, Book Group in the library

Every Wednesday 10am to 12noon, Sing Along to Every Song

Every Wednesday 2pm to 4pm, Art for All

Every Wednesday 10am to 1pm NYC Living Well Smokefree (by appointment, Tel 01609 797 272 for details)

Every Thursday 12.30pm to 3pm, Community Art Shed (please note the new finishing time)

Every Friday 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

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 - 4.30pm

Saturday - 10:00am -12:noon.

152nd Bentham Show

Saturday 5th September, Bentham Auction Mart

Lunesdale Arts

Lunesdale Arts Open Studio Trail: 4th-6th and 11th-13th September 11am-5pm

Ewecross Historical Society

28th September at 7.30pm in High Bentham Methodist Church: Rob David: *Muncaster Castle's Wartime Secret: Protecting the Tate Gallery collection during the Second World War.* Visitors welcome: £3.

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Raymond Jennings Murray: 'Razz'

5 February 1950 - 21 June 2026

Razz was born in Ingleton Working Men's Club on 5 February 1950, the second of six boys born to Iris (née Thistlethwaite) and Edward Murray. He grew up in Burnmoor Crescent, Ingleton. Iris sadly died whilst Razz was a teenager. He went to school in Ingleton and started work at Low Bentham Silk Mill and then went on to work at Angus Fire and British Rail, before returning to Angus Fire where he worked until he retired.

During nights out in Bentham, Razz met and courted Sandra Segger and when he was 21 years old, they married at St Margaret's Church on Station Road. Their wedding reception was held at The Black Bull (which Alison's fiancé now co-owns!). They honeymooned in Blackpool which became a regular venue for family holidays with their three children Alison, Sarah and Richard.

In his younger days Razz was heavily involved in local football, cricket, darts and snooker. Over the years he played football for both Bentham and Ingleton and went on to be one of the most successful football managers of Ingleton FC. He played cricket for Bentham and always got involved in the local gala, helping to run the coconut shy. He collected many trophies for darts and snooker over the years. Later in life he enjoyed playing bowls and touring local pubs with bowling greens and sampling the beer with friends. Then in his 40s, when Richard took up golf, he took little persuading to join Bentham Golf Club, and this was something they enjoyed playing together until earlier this year. Razz was extremely proud of his grandchildren, Heidi and Rory, and spent many valuable hours with them, taking them to school and playing with them in the park. They loved each other dearly.

From an early age Razz was known as a wind-up merchant, and this is something he was known for throughout his life; I am sure many of you reading this will have a story to share! He was a regular on Bentham's social scene and loved being out at the pub with friends, having a joke and a laugh. We are extremely lucky in Bentham to still have many pubs and clubs and Razz supported them all and would always turn up to watch the live music on offer. It has been reported that he would also share his thoughts on them with the landlords/ladies!

Razz was a valued member of the Bentham community and would talk to anyone and everyone. This is something that has shone through from all the tributes the family have received. Whether he was a friendly face in the shop, someone with a smile in the street or a joke and a laugh in the pub, please know that he carries love with him, just as we carry his memory in our hearts. Bentham was so lucky to have him, and the warmth he brought to our community will never be forgotten, RIP Razz.



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TOWN COUNCILLORS VISIT ANGUS FIRE ARMOUR

A month ago, that motley crew, otherwise known as the Town Council, accepted an invitation to a posh lunch at Angus's factory. The price for this culinary spread was to spend a morning being taken on a conducted tour of the site (they'd have had us there all day if milking and muck spreading hadn't called your representative away).

Why invite this bunch, and not any other eleven Benthamites in need of a good nosh, gin and tonics thrown in? Well, all blue chip companies (no it doesn't mean they've got pornographic potatoes) know that cash used on public relations is money well spent. This is Angus's equivalent to high powered television commercials sweeping in over lakeland fells to land us on the doormat of British Nuclear Fuels at Sellafield. Or triumphant music accompanying an advertisement which celebrates how ICI have wrapped stair carpeting right round the globe!

The Town Council's visit to Angus's wasn't quite on this scale, but the message was the same. Friendly and enthusiastic managers let us know how much money (was it £3 million?) Angus's pumps into the local economy each year. We heard about efforts to control pollution and smells, and limit the nuisance of test and demonstration fires. They didn't need to worry very much. The Councillors' questions (at least when I was there) could have been a little more searching, but as they are largely business people themselves, they understand the need to achieve a balance between financial and environmental considerations!

Joking apart, as one of the Councillors on the tour, I found the visit fascinating. It was a pleasure to see lots of friends at work, and it was clear that we should be proud of the high level of skill that exists amongst the local workforce, and the revolutionary advances in the fire fighting business that have been developed in Bentham.

Dear Editors,

I note with concern that one of the larger shops in Bentham has extended its services to include hiring out pornographic videos. Do we really wish to be confronted with titles such as 'Famous Tits and Arses' as we queue to pay for our food? And is the appropriate place to display this material right beside the children's toys? I for one am saddened by this latest drop in standards from a shop which I had previously viewed as providing a useful service to the community.

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Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year

Dear Editor,

Two things concern me about the youth of the area: drinking and driving. Not both together but separately. On several occasions over the last few months when there have been discos in town, I have seen children wandering the streets drinking the sort of British Sherry that I usually associate with urban winos. Who is selling them this? Notices about under-age drinking are useless without action.

My other concern is about the boy racers who are using our streets to practice for their next Grand Prix. Motorcyclists do not appear to be a problem in Bentham; it is the adolescents who are driving cars with go-faster goodies.

I believe that an accident is inevitable from one or other of these activities unless we adults rapidly take responsibility for our children's behaviour and make certain that alcohol sales are not made to juveniles.

In 'All Our Yesterdays' we are celebrating BN's 40th anniversary year by reproducing some items from early editions.

Left page September & December 1988. This page September 2000.

WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW DOCTORS

By Shirley Brown

Bentham News would like to warmly welcome Dr Mairi McKirdy and Dr Nick Howlett, who have recently joined the Bentham Practice. We thought our readers would like to know more about them, and they each kindly agreed to be photographed and to tell us a little about themselves.

Dr. Mairi McKirdy



Mairi was born in Glasgow in 1969. When she was 10 years old her family moved to Cardiff, where her father worked as a GP. Following in her father's footsteps, she has always wanted to be a doctor. She did her training at the medical school in Southampton from 1987 to 1992, and after house jobs in Cardiff and Bath she started a surgical rotation in Nottingham in 1993. However she soon realised that surgery was not what she really wanted to do, and so then spent 2 years doing anaesthetics, where she grew to really miss contact with awake patients!

She then spent 6 months in general practice training in Nottingham before, 2 years ago, moving up to Cumbria with her then fiancé's job. She spent 6 months as a registrar at Bentham, which she thoroughly

enjoyed and so she was delighted when a job came up here, and is very happy working in Bentham.

She met her husband, Geoff, on a mountain biking weekend, and they married a year ago. He's a chartered mineral surveyor based at Carnforth. Together they enjoy hill walking, cinema, entertaining, cooking and good food. Although currently living in Beetham, near Milnthorpe, they are moving to Cold Cotes in September.

Dr. Nick Howlett



Though originally a southerner, Nick has been based in the north west of England for the last 8 years. He went to the Sheffield Medical School and did his GP training in Lancaster and Kendal. He has done a lot of travelling and has worked in four continents, including jobs in Nepal, Chile and Tasmania.

His interests outside work are basically anything outdoors. His main sport is orienteering, for which he runs for one of the Lake District clubs, but he also enjoys fell running, mountain marathons, climbing and sea kayaking (when he finds the time!).

His family consists of his partner, Sarah, and Noah, who has just had his second birthday. They have recently moved to Burton-in-Lonsdale.

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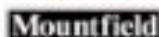
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Summer of fun at Bentham Community Library

By Debbie Johnson (Bentham Community Library Volunteer)

Holiday activities at Bentham Library are now in full swing. We've been enjoying regular visits from young readers aged 4 - 11 keen to complete the Read to the Beat Summer Reading Challenge - and there's still time to read six books of your choice and collect your medal before the challenge ends on Saturday 12th September! Our free summer activity workshops have also been lively, with Lego Club sessions making a welcome return throughout August.

2026 is the National Year of Reading, celebrating reading in all its forms. There's a huge range of audiobooks, e-books and e-magazines you can borrow through the Libby and BorrowBox apps. They are free to download - log in with your library card at any time, from wherever you happen to be. Ideal for holidays, travel and reading on the go, there's something for all ages and interests. If you need help or advice or you don't have a library card, it's easy to join, just call in and we'll take it from there. We're open 4 days a week: Monday 2.30 - 5pm, Wednesday 10am - 2pm, Friday 2.30 - 4.30pm and Saturday 10am - 12 noon.

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Bentham Police News

Your Safer Neighbourhood Team covering the Bentham, Ingleton and Settle areas is Inspector 1214 Paul Crabtree, PS 1040 Daniel Price, PS 881 Sohail Tariq, PC 188 Jane Carpenter, PC 1004 Natham Dale, PCSO 5561 Jayne Grace, PCSO 5881 Julia Runciman and PSO 9710 James Metcalfe.



Between and 12 July and 7 August 2026, there were 30 incidents reported to the police in the Bentham area.

Most were of a minor nature, whilst others included incidents of safeguarding, a violent crime, a sudden death, a domestic dispute, a suspicious incident at Grasmere carpark and 2 non-injury road traffic collisions.

'We Care' – a North Yorkshire Scheme to Support Vulnerable People

The scheme is free and is designed to support people with disabilities or those who may be vulnerable for any reason. It provides support to them if they need help at any time, whether they are out and about or in their own home. A person joining the scheme will be sent a joining pack and will be asked to provide information about their vulnerability and contact details of persons to be contacted if they need help. The police will securely record this information in case they ever need to contact the police. They will also be given a 'help me' card to carry with them and to show if they need help when not at home. The card will contain contact details of persons who should be contacted.

People of any age can join. So far, the youngest is 7 and the oldest is over 100. People who would find the scheme helpful could include people with learning or physical disabilities, neuro-diversity, dementia, Alzheimer's, sensory impairments, communication issues and mental health issues etc.

If you would like to join, you can request a membership pack at WeCare@northyorkshire.police.uk

or writing to:

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More information is available on our website

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- Email Jayne.grace@northyorkshire.police.uk for the community messaging service

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St John's Parish Church Upcoming Events

By Libby Wheildon

Celebrating 150 Years of St John's Church

On 16th September 1876, 150 years ago, the first stone was officially laid for the rebuilding of St John's Church, Low Bentham. The rebuilding took over 19 months to complete, and the church was officially reopened on 27th April 1878. So, over the next 19 months, we will be celebrating "150" in lots of different ways.

We begin with **Messy Church on Saturday 19th September from 4pm** on the theme of "Building the Church" with all the usual, exciting activities for families with young children. There will be art and craft activities, worship, including a story and a song, followed by a freshly cooked delicious meal which we will all share together. All families with children of Primary School age and younger are welcome. Just come along. We will be delighted to see you.

On **Sunday 20th September** our Area Dean, Canon Ian Greenhalgh will lead the worship at 9am and 10.30am on the theme of "Building the Church", and afterwards we'll celebrate with coffee and cake. All are very welcome.

Harvest Festival – Sunday 27th September

We welcome food gifts of fresh produce which will be donated to Low Bentham Institute and tins and dry goods which will be donated to the local Food Bank serving our area. The collection at the Service will be donated to the Farming Community Network with thanks for all they do.

St John's Thursday Lunch Club

Our next meeting will be on **Thursday 8th October at 12.30pm** in The Black Bull. All are welcome, so do come along for good food and company.





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Tea and cakes will be provided throughout the afternoon.

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Daniel Kitchen – Training for the London Marathon in Aid of the RNLI and in memory of Phil Jones

By Heidi Kitchen (heidishrimpton@yahoo.co.uk)

Daniel (22) is a born and bred Benthamer, educated at Bentham Primary School and QES, who lives with his partner, Alice. He works for Heidelberg Aggregates who have the quarry at Ingleton, having successfully completed an apprenticeship after finishing school. He is currently preparing to run the London Marathon in aid of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, the organisation which does such admirable voluntary work around our coastlines, manning beaches and saving lives on a regular basis. He is also choosing to run as a tribute to his grandfather, Phil Jones (who died when Daniel was only 11) whom he found inspirational. Phil would be very proud of what his grandson has achieved and the marathon he is planning to run.



His family are also very proud of him and wish to say a big thank you to the Bentham family/community for being what it is, saying that the phrase 'It takes a village to raise a child' could not be more apt.

Any donations to this worthy cause would be gratefully received.

[RNLI - Royal National Lifeboat Institution: Dan's London Marathon 2027](#)



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Old Railway Signal Box at Hest Bank Transformed into STEM Classroom

By Gerald Townson gerald.townson@btinternet.com

The old railway signal box at Hest Bank has been transformed into a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) classroom with displays showing train movements that the pupils can follow live. The Box was built by British Railways and opened in December 1958, helping to operate part of the West Coast Main Line for 55 years, before being decommissioned in 2013 when control was passed to the Power Box at Preston.

The 'Box on the Bay' was officially opened by Amelia Routledge, Infrastructure Maintenance Delivery Manager at Network Rail who said it is a "first-of-its-kind project". She added, 'it was really exciting to see the decommissioned signal box turn into an educational centre that communities can use and benefit from'.

The most important guests were the school children and staff from St. Peter's Church of England Primary School, Heysham who thoroughly enjoyed the first sessions and activities to be delivered at the box, on rail safety and bridge construction.

Brian Haworth from the Community Rail Partnership who helped set up this exciting new facility said the location is "just absolutely brilliant". He noted, "a core subject for bringing the children here is rail safety, part of the National Curriculum, and I can't emphasise enough that you won't find a better location for talking and learning about it."

Any school interested in joining us at the 'Box on the Bay' should contact the Leeds-Morecambe Community Rail Partnership (The Bentham Line) on 015242 98940 or email the.bentham.line@gmail.com





Activities Underway, left, School Presentation, above

Bentham Town Council Launches Community Grants for 2027



Bentham Town Council is inviting local charities, voluntary organisations and community groups to apply for funding through its Community Grants Programme for the 2027–2028 financial year. The annual grants scheme provides financial support to projects that make a positive difference to the lives of residents in the Parish of Bentham. Whether you're planning a new community initiative, purchasing equipment or delivering a one-off project, the Council would like to hear from you.

Application forms are available now on the Council website: www.benthamtowncouncil.gov.uk

Completed applications must be returned to the Town Clerk by **Friday 30th October 2026 4pm**, with funding decisions being made at the Council's Annual Precept Meeting in November.

What is new this year?

The Council has updated its Grants Policy to ensure funding is directed where it has the greatest impact. **Priority will now be given to specific community projects rather than ongoing running costs. Grants will normally be paid in arrears on receipt of appropriate invoices, receipts or written quotations. Successful organisations will be asked to provide a report explaining how the grant has benefited the local community.**

Bentham Town Council encourages all eligible organisations with ideas that will improve community life to apply.

For further information, eligibility criteria and application forms, visit the Council website or contact the Town Clerk: townclerk@benthamtowncouncil.co.uk

High Bentham WI

By Jan Stuiver

At the August meeting we enjoyed a fascinating talk by local equestrienne Andrea Bell about her journey through dressage competitions and into side saddle riding. Andrea began entering dressage competitions when she acquired her little "Pink Pony" who was too unmanageable for children to ride. With training and practice in Andrea's specialist outdoor sand school Pink Pony began to enjoy taking part in dressage competitions all round the country.



At these competitions Andrea saw the dressage competitions for side saddle riders. She found an old side saddle, then found an experienced teacher to help her learn the skills and techniques. Soon the duo was entering competitions and winning rosettes and cups. Andrea then turned her sights on the "Concours d'Élégance", where riders wear beautiful historic riding costumes. Here the sewing skills learned from her mother came into their own, because Andrea makes all her own costumes. She finds a lot of her fabrics, hats and trimmings in the Bentham Hub, the costume being altered and improved over several months. The hems are weighted so that the long skirts drape elegantly, which means the costumes are very heavy. Afterwards, Andrea joined us for refreshments, answering questions and chatting with members.

In July members of High Bentham WI were invited to an afternoon tea in the garden of the Victoria Institute by Low Bentham WI. The weather, the setting, the company and the food were all perfect and we had a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon. As a thank you we presented a rose, called the WI Centenary Rose, to the Low Bentham WI for them to plant in the garden at the Institute.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday September 3rd in the Lower Hall of Bentham Town Hall at 7.30pm. Our speaker for the evening will be Angela Emms with a talk about the great work done by St John's Hospice. Members of the public are more than welcome to join us for the evening.

Low Bentham WI

July has proved to be a month for trips and treats for Low Bentham WI!

By Sue Fitzsimmons

Our July meeting always has a garden theme and this time we enjoyed a visit to the Ashton Hall Garden Centre. As well as the varied plant displays and wonderful ideas for the garden, the store is brimming with unusual items for house and home, and fashion! A happy shopping trip, complemented by lunch in the Pear Tree Café.



We were delighted when High Bentham W.I. accepted our invitation to Afternoon Tea on a perfect summer afternoon in the garden at the Victoria Institute. Our President, Christine Jennings, welcomed the ladies. A delicious array of sandwiches and cakes was

a feast for the eyes; tea cups were magically filled, and we all enjoyed the “Afternoon Tea” quiz provided by Kath! As a thank you, President of High Bentham, Jan Stuiver, presented us with a lovely rose, which will be planted in the Victoria Institute garden.

“The Growing Well” project was our final July visit. Following an inspiring talk given by Sinead McCann, manager of Kendal team, a group of us visited the organic farm near the Low Sizergh Barn Shop and Café. We were fascinated to tour the large poly greenhouses and see the variety of produce grown throughout the site. “Growing Well” is a free mental Health Service, the activity is the therapy. www.growingwell.co.uk/join-us. We enjoyed lunch in the Low Sizergh Barn Café and came home armed with organic cucumbers!

Treats to come! Several of us will take a trip to Liverpool on August 18th and our August Lunch Club venue will be the Punch Bowl Inn, Burton-in-Lonsdale.

The speaker for our meeting on September 17th is Yessica Mestre who will tell us about the work of the Women’s Refuge in Lancaster - all are welcome to join us.

Tatham Fells WI

By Mary Taylor

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the opening of the Settle Carlisle Railway, sixteen members of Tatham Fells Women’s Institute travelled the line on Tuesday, August 11th. They boarded the train at Ribbleshead at 10.39am on a beautiful clear day with views over the moors. First stop was Dent Station, the highest in England, then on to Garsdale with the life-sized bronze statue of the famous dog Ruswarp, pronounced ‘Russup’. The dog had signed the petition to save the line with his paw in 1981, instigated by his owner Graham Nuttall. In January 1990 Graham was missing for 11 weeks in the Welsh Mountains, when he was found Ruswarp was still with him guarding the body.



The train then travelled on through stations with interesting names such as Langwathby and Kirkoswald arriving at Carlisle about noon. Some of the members went to the Castle. Built on the site of a frontier Roman Fort in this vital place on Hadrian’s Wall, this strategic site was used by the Normans and has changed hands many times between the Scots and English. The army of Robert the Bruce manned the Castle following the battle of Bannock Burn, and Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned there.

Other members visited the Cathedral, a Norman Priory Church built in 1122; it has seen many changes, being damaged by fire, rebuilt in the 14th century and restored in the early eighteen hundreds; famous for the impressive east window, magnificent ceiling and wonky Norman arches.

Some of the ladies managed to fit in a visit to a museum, most enjoyed a meal at the Cathedral Cafe before the wonderful railway journey back to Ribbleshead.

Count Nikolai Vandzhyra will speak at the next meeting in the Old School on 8th September.



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Ladies Fashion Show

By Jane Proctor

When we organised this event last May it was a great success, so we are organising another for this September. The fashion show will again be a lovely sociable and relaxed evening with fashions to suit all tastes and all pockets. 'Kitty Brown' of Carnforth will be displaying a selection of the very latest in autumn and winter clothing at affordable prices.

This event is in aid of the Ingleton and Bentham Twinning Association and there will also be a chance to find out a little more about the association. You may even want to put your name down for our visit to France in 2027.

The fashion show is on Friday 18th September at 7.30pm at Bentham Golf Club. The tickets are £5 and are available from The Hub, Bentham Post Office and The Golf Club.

There will be a bar available and a raffle, and this should be a very pleasant way to spend a September evening.



Bentham Beagles 10K Results and News of a Halloween Event

By Diane Armstrong www.benthambeagles.co.uk.

On 12 July, Bentham Beagles Running Club hosted its annual 10K race, providing a great opportunity to showcase Bentham and the surrounding area. A huge thank you to Bentham Golf Club for hosting the event and to all our marshals and volunteers whose support helped make the day such a success.

We were delighted to welcome 46 runners, with participants travelling from far and wide to take part.

Results:

1st – John Brassington (Lancaster & Morecambe AC)

2nd – Gareth Sutton (Garstang Running Club)

3rd – Mark Rogerson (Settle Harriers)

The first female finisher was Miriam Maher from Lancaster & Morecambe AC.

Our next event is Tricks, Treats and Trails on Sunday 1 November, with races starting from 4pm. This family-friendly event features 1K, 2K and 5K races, making it suitable for runners of all ages and abilities.



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News from the Fells of a Super Summer, School Leavers, a Rebuilt Wall, and Upcoming Coffee Morning and Dawn Service at Big Stone

By Helen Wilkinson

Mid-August and life is moving at a slower pace; long days of summer heat have settled into the bones of the land, the far views have disappeared in the heat haze, while overhead the sky is clear blue and buzzards seem to hang weightlessly; barely moving in the slow thermals. The Hindburn bumbles gently through the stones until the quiet is disturbed by the sudden chatter of a green woodpecker; a flash of yellow feathers across its back as it swoops through the dappled shade. Surprisingly we still have a flock of around twenty lapwings circling over the dry fell. Hay and silage have been gathered without the stress of dodging rain showers, but we have had enough rain to keep the grass growing and hopefully reduce the risk of fires on the fells. The fields are still green, and the garden is being very productive.

At our school leavers service in July, we celebrated the end of primary school for five pupils with a presentation and shared memories of their time at Tatham Fells, followed by a picnic on the school field. Pupils were able to take home some of the salads and vegetables they had grown in the school garden, and there should be lots more produce to enjoy in the autumn. Rev Jane led our annual garden service at Clearbeck House on a lovely summer evening. The old part of the church yard has been partly strimmed with some wildflowers left to be mown later and Martin Knowles has rebuilt the collapsed wall (see photo).

On 5th September, the Church of the Good Shepherd will be holding a coffee morning in Benthams Town Hall and the following weekend, as part of Blackburn Diocese Centenary celebrations, there will be a dawn service at Big Stone on Burn Moor, followed by bacon butties.

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Printed by John Mason Printers, Skipton.



On 12th August 2026, a partial solar eclipse covered more than 90% of the sun in Great Britain, and Jon Brook's photo shows what was visible in Bentham. An amazing sight.