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# **The Haltwhistle Herald**

**FEBRUARY 2026**





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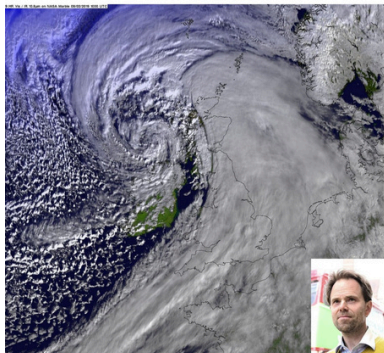
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# What's on in February

- 6th/7th** Cornhole Competitions, see p42
- 11th** History Group - Victorian Afternoon Tea talk by Steve Gibbon, Hospital Community Room, 10:30am
- 14th** Half Term Week - Children's Craft Corner in the Library, free all day for children
- 14th** ZigZag Exhibition of models of local historic homes opens, see p28
- 15th** Free Talk - Facing the Oncoming Storm - Strategic Adaptation for Emergency Resilience, Prof Rupert Reed, Community Room, 6pm
- 18th** Frugal Lunches, Methodist Hall, see p25
- 19th** Women in the Bible, Room 2, Haltwhistle Library, 2-3:30pm, see p25
- 24th** What Makes and Shapes the Church? - Discussion Group, Henshaw Church Room, 7pm
- 25th** Frugal Lunches, Methodist Hall, see p25
- 26th** Women in the Bible, Room 2, Haltwhistle Library, 2-3:30pm, see p25

Facing the oncoming storm  
Strategic Adaptation For Emergency Resilience



**Prof. Rupert Read**  
**Sun 15 Feb 6pm**  
**Haltwhistle Hospital**  
**Community Room**  
Free event. No booking required



## **Haltwhistle Library - Free Help with understanding your computer or digital device**

Do you need help with your digital device?  
Did you get a new phone or tablet for Christmas?

Need help with setting up an email account?  
Haltwhistle Library run one to one free sessions, on Saturday mornings.

Please contact the library to book on 01434 321863 or call in - our opening hours are  
Mon, Tue, Thurs and Fri 10am – 1pm, 1.30pm - 4.30pm. Wed 10am- 1pm, 1.30pm - 6pm  
Saturday 10am to 1pm



# Regular Events

**Churches Together - Praying Together:** Every Monday, 10:30am, Holy Cross

**Haltwhistle Memory Café:** First Monday of the month, 2-4pm, Community Room

**Greenhead Art Club:** Every Monday, 1:30-3pm, Village Hall

**Greenhead W.I.:** Every second Monday 7pm, Greenhead Village Hall

**Henshaw W.I.:** Every Monday 11-3, All Hallows Church Room

**Older People's Project:** Every Tuesday, 10am-12noon, Drop In, Methodist Church Hall

**Greenhead Craft Group:** Alternate Tuesdays, 2pm, Greenhead Village Hall

**Family Cafe:** First Tuesday, 2-3pm, Drop-In, free refreshments, Family Hub

**Warhammer Club:** Every Tuesday, 5-7pm, Bonnie's Cafe

**Mothers' Union:** Every second Tuesday, 2:15pm, Holy Cross

**Bardon Mill Film Night:** Every third Tuesday, 4pm in the church room.

**Community Gardeners:** Every Wednesday, 9.45am-12.30pm, meet behind Pillar Box Cafe

**Knit & Natter:** Every Wednesday, 2pm, Haltwhistle Library

**Craft & Chat:** Every Wednesday, 2pm, Holy Cross

**Haltwhistle Friendship Group:** Every Wednesday, 1-3pm, Community Room

**Haltwhistle W.I.:** Every 1st Thursday 7:15pm, Comrades Club

**Armchair Warriors** exercise classes, every Thursday 10-11am, Haltwhistle Library Hub

**Calico Hinnies:** Every 4th Thursday, 10:00-2.30pm, Greenhead Village Hall

**Badminton For All:** Every Friday, 10am-12noon, Haltwhistle Leisure Centre

**Stay and Play:** Term Time Fridays, 10.00am-11.30am (drop in), 0-5yrs, Family Hub

**ZigZag Days:** Alternate Fridays, from 10am, for info call Sue 07935 259 416

**New Hadrian Singers:** Every Friday, 7pm, Hospital Community Room

**Greenhead Dominos Night:** Every Friday, 7pm, Greenhead Village Hall

**Haltwhistle Art Club:** Every Friday, 10.30-2:30pm, Methodist Church Hall

**Breakfast Club:** Last Sunday of the Month, bacon butties, tea and coffee, 9am-1pm, Greenhead Village Hall

# From The Editorial Team

Welcome to February's edition of the Haltwhistle Herald. Writing this from the Herald HQ the sun is shining and the fields are looking green. Maybe we can start to think about Spring around the corner? At least we have been lucky so far to avoid the heavy snow seen in other parts of the UK, even if it is very cold.

There are a number of talks and discussions happening around the town in February to stimulate those 'little grey cells' and wake up our brains after the winter slumber! There is a talk about the etiquette, remedies and recipes of a Victorian afternoon tea at the History Group. If ecology and climate are your thing then Professor Read will be giving a free talk on 'Facing the oncoming storm'. Both of these will be in the Community Room at the hospital, see What's on page for more details.

Revd Keith Teasdale will lead a Lent discussion group on 'What makes and shapes a church' on Tuesday evenings at 7pm in Henshaw Church Room, starting on the 24<sup>th</sup> February.

We wanted to say a big Thank You to Colophon, our printers who do such a wonderful job for us. Every month, without fuss, they provide a professional looking magazine for the town, delivered on time. They have been with us from the start and support us by keeping the cost as low as possible and paying for an advert. In recognition of which we have put their advert on this page, front and central! Thank you.



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Our next edition will be March so contributions need to be with us by the **20th March** at the very latest please, maximum 250 words with a couple of pictures. To send contributions or to contact us email [haltwhistleherald@gmail.com](mailto:haltwhistleherald@gmail.com)

# Haltwhistle Partnership

After a well-deserved Christmas and New Year break, it's business as usual for the Haltwhistle Partnership and all of our projects. The Community Shops are back open and buzzing, and our project teams are busy planning a wide range of activities for the months ahead.

## Community Shops Fund

The Spring round of the Community Shops Fund opens on 23rd February and runs until 5th April, giving community groups a fresh opportunity to turn great ideas into reality. If you missed out on the last round, this is your chance to submit an application and be part of the positive change happening across our area.

The fund is designed to support projects that make a real difference for local residents, as well as initiatives that help local young people develop new skills, build confidence, or access experiences that may otherwise be out of reach. Whether your project focuses on learning, wellbeing, creativity, or bringing people together, we'd love to hear from you.

## Volunteering Opportunities – It's not too late to make your New Year's Resolution!

Looking for a positive and meaningful way to start 2026? Volunteering is a wonderful opportunity to meet new people, gain confidence, learn new skills, and be part of something that truly matters in your local community. Whether you have time for a regular commitment or can offer just a few hours now and then, every contribution makes a real difference.

**JOIN OUR VOLUNTEER TEAMS**

Could you spare half a day each week?  
We're looking for volunteers to join our fun & friendly Community Shops teams.  
No experience is necessary — training and support will be provided.

Pop into the Community Shop or Community Bookshop to find out more!

# Haltwhistle Partnership

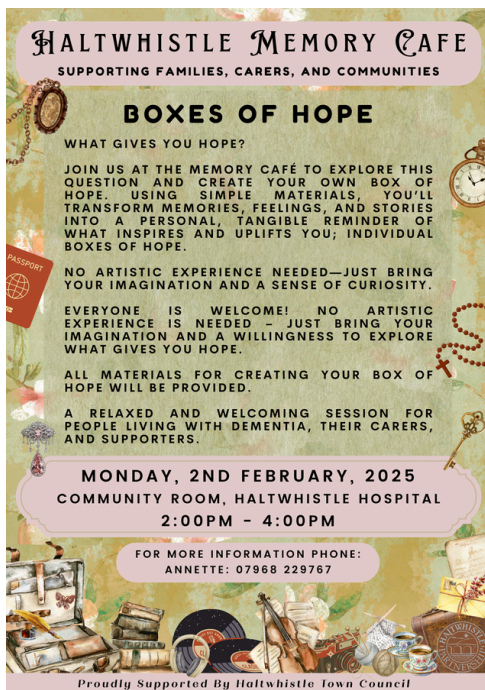
The Haltwhistle Partnership is always delighted to welcome new volunteers across all of its projects. The Community Shops are looking for friendly faces to help greet customers, sort donations, and support day-to-day activities — all while being part of a welcoming and supportive team.

The Older People's Project, including the Drop-In, Lunch Club, and Memory Café, offers a chance to build meaningful connections by providing companionship and practical support to older residents in the community. If you enjoy conversation, listening, and helping others feel valued, this could be a great fit.

For those who love fresh air and being active, Haltwhistle Growing Together and the Community Gardeners provide rewarding opportunities to care for green spaces, grow food, and help keep the town vibrant and thriving.

No matter your interests, volunteering with the Haltwhistle Partnership is a fulfilling way to give back while also enriching your own life. To find out more or to get involved, contact the Haltwhistle Partnership today and make 2026 a year of connection, purpose, and positive impact.

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# Town Council

## Tribute to John Clark and Lawrence Thompson

Haltwhistle has recently said farewell to two figures whose lives of service helped shape the town and the surrounding area for generations. John Clark and Lawrence Thompson gave decades of commitment, leaving legacies deeply rooted in civic life, community facilities and opportunities for young people.

John Clark was one of Haltwhistle's most recognisable and influential public servants. He was made a Freeman of Haltwhistle two years ago, in recognition of 50 years' service to the town. First elected in 1973, John served on Haltwhistle Town Council for half a century, becoming one of its longest-serving councillors and a constant presence in local decision-making. He also represented the area on Tynedale District Council for 18 years, where he chaired major committees and worked hard to ensure local people were prioritised for housing and services.

His commitment extended far beyond council chambers. John served for more than 30 years on the Swimming and Leisure Centre Committee and was a councillor when the outdoor swimming pool opened in 1975. He was proud that the pool was created through local fundraising, often recalling how residents contributed week by week to make it possible. The gift of land from his family behind the Black Bull, now Coronation Park, stands as another lasting contribution to the town's fabric.



# Town Council

John was also a tireless champion of sport and young people. Through cricket, rugby and junior leagues, he gave decades of voluntary service, often personally transporting players and supporting teams financially. At Featherstone Castle, he opened his home and grounds to community life, hosting matches and gatherings that strengthened local bonds.

Lawrence Thompson, who died in December aged 87, was another pillar of Haltwhistle life. A lifelong resident, he devoted decades to public service as a teacher, councillor, magistrate and community advocate. Returning to Haltwhistle as a teacher in 1965, he later became Head of English and Deputy Head, remembered by generations of pupils as fair, exacting and supportive.

Elected as a councillor in 1967, Lawrence served Haltwhistle for more than 30 years, sharing John Clark's belief that local representation should be visible, approachable and grounded in the community. In addition, he served for many years as a magistrate on the Hexham bench, bringing the same integrity and measured judgement to public service beyond the town.

Among the causes closest to Lawrence's heart was the Haltwhistle swimming pool, which he helped establish and supported for over 50 years. He also played a key role in setting up local youth clubs and gave long-standing support to Young and Sweet, ensuring opportunities for young people well beyond the classroom. He was made a Freeman of Haltwhistle in 2024, recognising a lifetime of dedication.

Together, John Clark and Lawrence Thompson represent the very best of public service. Their work continues to shape Haltwhistle's civic life, facilities and community spirit, and the town remains richer for all they gave.





# Chamber of Trade

The Christmas lights are packed away, our town tree has gone to compost and festive decorations have disappeared from Main Street, but what a wonderful show we put on at the end of last year. Once again, our Christmas lights display attracted visitors from across the area, proving that even a modest town can create something truly special.

The Chamber of Trade's annual Best Dressed Window competition showcased the enthusiasm and creativity of local traders, who transformed the town centre into a festive delight. First prize was awarded to Jethro's for its meticulously designed mechanical Christmas village, which captivated all ages. Second and third prizes went to I Save, for its fun and detailed Grinch and Gremlins display, and Seaside Travel, whose jolly elf theme impressed the judges. A special commendation was presented to JGT Barbers for a handcrafted nativity scene and a nostalgic montage celebrating Haltwhistle's past.

Looking ahead, we plan to build on last year's successes, including repeating the Easter "Design Your Town's Christmas Light" competition with Haltwhistle Academy and launching a Young Entrepreneur project. We will also continue working with local partners to promote shopping locally and pride in our heritage.

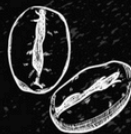
Finally, we are producing a redesigned Visitor Information leaflet to promote Haltwhistle locally and at the Visit Northumberland Trade Exhibition in March, helping showcase our town to an even wider audience.





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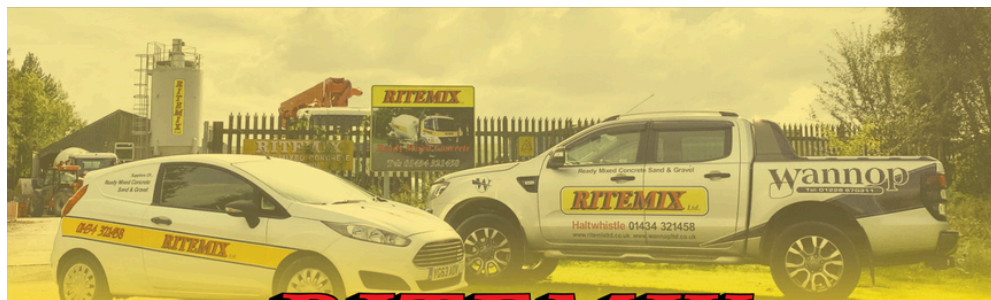


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# Local Hero

## Alan Sharp

Chair of Haltwhistle Town Council  
and Estate manager for Galbraith.

Alan is a local lad having been born and brought up in Haltwhistle.

*Alan what made you enter politics and become a councillor?*

I wanted to make a difference to the town and give something back to the community which I love. I enjoy getting things done.

*How long have you been a Councillor?*

I have served as councillor since 1987 when I was elected at the age of 22, and I'm still a Councillor after over 38 years' service. I'm also serving on Tynedale District council and was made Alderman. I've also been Chair of Haltwhistle Town Council since 1999, over 25 years in the role. I was elected to the County Council in 2008.



*What would you say are your greatest successes in the role?*

In 2001 getting the grant from Sport England to build new swimming pool and facilities in Haltwhistle. The refurbishment of the public toilets and the purchase of the cricket field were highlights. Setting up the Haltwhistle Partnership board since 1999. I helped with setting up Bardon Mill Village Hall.

*In your busy life do you have time for hobbies?*

Sport is a major interest and reading about local history. I enjoy socialising with friends.

In summary I feel Haltwhistle is a lovely community with a generous and supportive spirit. Displayed in supporting local causes, the litter picking and being there for one another.





# Hospitable Haltwhistle

## Christmas Day Event

Once again Ellen Walton and her three Santa helpers Linda, Ruth and Teresa did us all proud by organising the now annual Christmas Day Special in the Haltwhistle Methodist hall. Invitations were issued to everyone, not just elderly people on their own but also families, therefore the 'day' would be opened up to all. The objective was to make a difference to people for a variety of reasons.

And so - from the doors opening at 10a.m. until after the Kings Speech there were a lively number of guests from three months old to 90+ years. Guests were greeted with the usual morning beverage including hot chocolate/mince pies/biscuits.



For the second year running Rev. Marie Beard Methodist Minister and her family led the singing of Christmas carols and appropriate readings, before entertaining the audience with inflatable lit dinosaurs and Father Christmas on a polar bear. A group from the Abdul'l-Baha community added to the occasion with Celtic music. As more joined the hall a full Christmas Dinner was available (see photo) including soup/turkey/beef/roast potatoes/trifle/Christmas pudding. The tables were decorated lovingly with festive decorations.

It was a free and easy day for all; spending a short time popping into the hall or staying all day depending on the mood. Councillor Allan Sharp and the Vicar Canon Steve Wright were among those who 'just popped in'. The large TV on stage was a prompter that the day would culminate with the Kings Speech and After Eight Chocolate.

As the guests departed, each with an individual present, some of those attending could be heard anticipating next year's invitation. Ellen would like to extend her gratitude to local organisations, businesses and individuals who supported this annual event.

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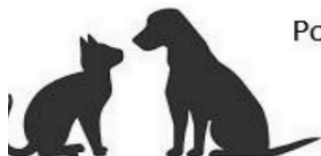


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# Holy Cross, Haltwhistle

Everything happens for a reason. Sometimes the reason is you're stupid and make bad decisions. The church exists for and is made up of people who know that and get on with trying to love and build up one another even so. This month containing Valentine's Day is a month to proclaim your love to your sweetheart of course, but for all those who already did that, it might be a reminder of the love you started with and want to keep going. You might keep your love going by doing something romantic on the 14th February each year. We encourage you to use the day to remember your relationships.

If you were married at Holy Cross Haltwhistle, you could visit the church that day and relive your wedding day, perhaps walking down the aisle together, remembering how lovely you each were (and hopefully still are!). You could hold hands together in the place you exchanged rings (while your children upload you to Instagram or whatever), pray a prayer, perhaps lighting a candle there together, and then go out for a meal or something. The church will be open 10am until 2pm in case you'd like to visit that day 😊.

Just because the ones you love accept you as you are doesn't mean they've abandoned hope you'll improve, and the season of Lent is a time to try and do that. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, 18th Feb. We invite you to mark the day by coming to church for the Ash Wednesday service – Henshaw 10am and Holy Cross 7pm. It's a time to remember that although we are sometimes stupid or make bad decisions, we are mortal, and the time to start putting things right is now. Come and be ashed. If you're intrigued and want to just come and see, all are welcome at our church services at any time. Here in Haltwhistle is usually 9.30am Sunday mornings, and in Henshaw and Greenhead at 11am.



From the Registers:  
 Funerals – Richard Humphries, John  
 Clark, Lawrence Thompson  
*May they rest in peace and rise in glory*



# St Cuthberts, Greenhead

At the start of this new year it seemed that one person after another was catching an awful flu bug, out of action for three weeks or so. We're not used to this!

Last October an article was published linking health benefits with going to church – it was reporting from two surveys carried out by YouGov, who heard from tens of thousands of adults across England and Wales. It found that churchgoers – particularly young women – are less likely to report frequently feeling anxious or depressed. That life mostly feels meaningful and hopeful to churchgoers was something we definitely feel and our congregation is a cheerful lot.



Being hopeful of course is a good attitude to have at the beginning of a year and we see that humans thrive better when living in community. The Bible also encourages us not to neglect meeting with one another, so we turn up each week at 11am to sing and to pray. It's not like a one off miracle pill though, but more like a course of antibiotics, so it's good to do it several times to get the full benefit. Or perhaps it's less like medicine and more like food - you need it on a long term, life time prescription to feel it's full benefit 😊

A surprise for the survey takers but not to us, was that churchgoers feel more connected to their local areas, especially among 18-34 year olds. It is rare we have any of that age group in our church on a Sunday but we always give them a very hearty welcome when they do. We would like the spiritual boost of church and the social support that comes with it to bless you this coming year. Come on a Sunday, or to any of our events at Greenhead, and lift your spirits with a good bit of churchgoing. I'm sure by the time you get this, all of us will be hale and hearty again with nothing but good to pass on to you 😊.

# All Hallows, Henshaw

Saint Valentine was priest or bishop of Terni, in central Italy, who refused to renounce his faith and was executed outside the Flaminian Gate in Rome and buried on 14 February 269AD, who has been associated with love since the Middle Ages. One legend about him is that he defied the orders of the Emperor Claudius by secretly marrying Christian couples and giving help to Christians who were being persecuted. He was arrested and imprisoned.

Legend has it that Valentine had fallen in love with the jailer's daughter while he was incarcerated, and healed her from blindness. He sent her a note signed "from your Valentine", and thereby spawned an industry of sending Valentine cards (only, from Victorian times). During the Middle Ages, it was believed that birds paired in mid February and this became associated with romance and St Valentine. Many superstitions related to birds seen by maidens on Valentine's Day developed, for example if a maiden saw a blackbird, she would marry a clergyman, if a goldfinch, then she would marry a millionaire, if a crossbill, she would marry a quarrelsome man, and if a wryneck, she would be condemned to become an old maid.

To improve their chances of finding true love, single girls could run round a church twelve times without stopping; lay bay leaves sprinkled in rosewater on their pillow; or even eat a hard boiled egg at midnight, shell and all.

If you'd like to run around our church to improve your chances of true love, do come on a Sunday and finish by 11am for the service or 12noon for coffee afterwards.

Given this desire for true love, we can do no better than remind ourselves of this famous piece from the Bible: *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIV)*



# View From The Vicarage

Canon Steve Wright

My wife keeps complaining that I never listen to her... or something like that. As I grow older it can be harder to have patience with my frailties, but those around me have patience with me, and I also have to have patience with myself. Someone told me it was a lot more fun being 20 in the 70s than 70 in the 20s. Yes, but don't moan about it, but rather be filled with thankfulness for all that has been good. Write some of those good things down to look at when you're having a difficult day. Thank you God, for this wonderful life and all that it brings!

## CHURCH SERVICES

### Church of England

First Sunday of February - 10am Group service, Henshaw.

Other Sundays of February -

- 9.30am Holy Cross, Haltwhistle
- 11am St. Cuthbert's, Greenhead
- 11am All Hallows' Henshaw

Ash Wednesday 10am Henshaw, 7pm Holy Cross, Haltwhistle

Thursdays 10am - a quiet meditative service - Holy Cross, Haltwhistle

### Roman Catholic Services

9.30am on Thursdays at St. Wilfrid's Church Haltwhistle

### Methodist Services

10.30am on Sundays at Haltwhistle Methodist Church

## CONTACTS

### Church of England

Revd Canon Steve Wright  
Holy Cross Church, Haltwhistle NE49 0AB  
01434 320215  
<https://parishesbythewall.org.uk/>

### Methodist

Revd Marie Beard  
Haltwhistle Methodist Church, Westgate, Haltwhistle  
01434 632210  
[www.tynedalemethcircuit.org/churches/haltwhistle.html](http://www.tynedalemethcircuit.org/churches/haltwhistle.html)

### Roman Catholic

Father Jeffrey Dodds  
St. Wilfred's Catholic Church, Westgate, Haltwhistle  
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Sunday 8th

**10.30am** Sandra Martin

Sunday 15th

**10.30am** Jacqui Cameron

Sunday 22nd

**10.30am** Rev Marie Beard  
(Circuit Service)

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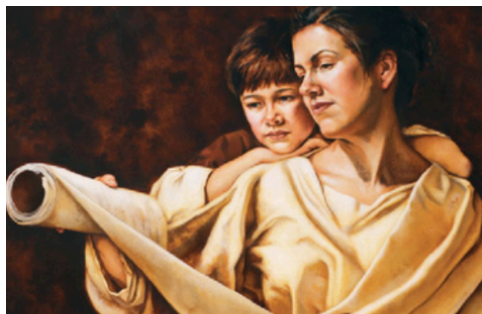
## Women in the Bible

Following on from the popularity of last year's meetings, we invite you to join us for an informal and social gathering to discuss individual Bible women and what they can say to us today.

Over 6 weeks we will be focusing on 6 women from the Old Testament, some well known, such as Eve, and others not so much. It will be a good opportunity too to meet new people and share ideas, and is open to everyone, whether interested from a social, historic or religious view.

You will find us every Thursday from 19th February for 6 weeks, at 2pm in Room 2 at the Community Hub, upstairs at the Library.

For further information or to book a place contact Annette on [annettecorble@gmail.com](mailto:annettecorble@gmail.com) or 07753 911730





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# Out & About

## Diaries Out - It's the 2026 Haltwhistle Walking Festival!

Time to lace up those boots and prepare for the 2026 Haltwhistle Walking Festival. What better way to enjoy our amazing countryside than walking in good company led by experienced and knowledgeable volunteers?

Now in its 23rd year, preparations for the 2026 Haltwhistle Walking Festival are well advanced and if you want to take part then you'd better be prepared too! Get your diary out and make a note that bookings will open on March 1st via our website [www.haltwhistlewalkingfestival.org](http://www.haltwhistlewalkingfestival.org), where you can already see a listing of what's planned for this year.

There's a number of new walks on this year's schedule, including a chance to take a tour around Featherstone Castle, a walk around a nature reserve and an opportunity to sample an arboretum of exotic trees - Giant Redwoods in Northumberland! Who knew? All these are in addition to our ever-popular geology walk with Ian Jackson and a chance to understand our mosses and lichens with Gordon Beakes, and don't forget the tea walk (how could you?).



Following its successful introduction, there's another 20 mile 'Leg Stretcher' and our ever-popular three way linear walk, following Hadrian's Wall across Northumberland, between the borders with Tyne and Wear and Cumbria, as well as plenty more.

The Festival runs from April 25th through the Mayday Bank Holiday, ending on May 4th. Last year's Festival was one of the most successful yet and we're expecting similar interest this year, so get ready...



# Out & About

## **Historic Homes - exhibition of models at The Sill from 14th February**

Zigzag Days have spent the last year, generously supported by the Community Shops Fund and English Heritage, visiting and making models of local homes.

Some homes were lived in, others in ruins. We met with archaeologists, historians, ecologists and current inhabitants of modern or renovated houses. We learnt about the lives and times of the original occupiers; barrack dwelling Roman soldiers guarding the edge of the empire, the Thirlwalls in their status-defining castle ready to repel a Scottish army, and the yeoman farmer's bastle house secure against bands of marauding reivers. In calmer times, we discovered, rural homes in this area were built specifically for workers producing nationally important commodities for an industrial society; clean water, coal and timber.

Our model making was supported by Haltwhistle Film Project's expertise and facilities. We all had a go. Several models are the results of individual endeavours others were collaborative efforts.

After completing six models some makers declared 'I never want to see another piece of foam board!' Others were hooked and, through the winter months, honed their measuring, cutting, gluing and painting skills, creating another four models of local homes.

Here is an 'in progress' pictures of our models, Haltwhistle Station House and Shepherd Terrace flats.



You'll need to visit the exhibition at The Sill between Sat, 14th Feb, and Easter to see how these two models, and the others, turned out. Pretty amazingly I'd say! Free entry (parking charges apply). Open daily 10am to 5pm.

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# Out & About

## **Government announces major uplift to Inheritance Tax Threshold**

Emma Pringle, Senior Associate Solicitor at **Cartmell Shepherd Solicitors** provides an update on the government's inheritance tax (IHT) reforms and their impact on succession planning for farmers.

After 14 months of campaigning and protests across the country, the government has watered down its proposals to tax inherited farmland. The new £1 million threshold on IHT relief will be increased to £2.5 million when the changes come into force in April 2026.

Given the allowance will be transferrable between spouses, most family farms will now be able to pass on assets worth up to £5 million without paying IHT.

The announcement was welcomed by many in the farming community. However, concerns remain for the owners of larger farms.

### **Background to the reforms**

Currently, farms are almost entirely protected from IHT by two policies: Agricultural Property Relief (APR) and Business Property Relief (BPR).

However, at the Autumn Budget 2024, the Government introduced a cap of £1 million on APR/BPR. Above this threshold, relief would be reduced to 50% resulting in an IHT charge of 20% on the excess.

The changes were widely criticised as unfair and damaging, with many farming organisations urging the government to change its course.

Two days before Christmas 2025, the government finally yielded, announcing a significant uplift in the planned APR/BPR threshold, to the relief of many farmers and business owners.

### **How do the changes impact succession planning?**

For many, this announcement alleviates much of the threat posed by the October 2024 changes. The £5 million allowance available to married couples will cover the value of many farmers' estates, meaning their assets can pass tax free to the next generation.

Widows and widowers also benefit from the full £5 million relief, as the transferrable £2.5 million allowance applies to people who are widowed before April 2026.

# Out & About

However, many farmers possess enough assets to push them past the £5 million threshold. For them, the changes to IHT remain a major concern, as despite being asset rich their profit margins are often slim, meaning a large IHT bill could severely affect their businesses.

It's also important to note that the full £5 million relief is only available to individuals who are married or in civil partnerships; single or divorced farmers are limited to just £2.5 million.

## How should farmers prepare?

With unlimited APR/BPR coming to an end in April, it's vital that farmers understand the value of their assets and put plans in place to ensure they leave a thriving legacy for future generations.

For farmers whose estates are likely to incur IHT, there a number of options available, such as making lifetime gifts (ideally coupled with life insurance); the use of trusts (although they are not suitable in every case); and building any potential tax liability into your business plan.



## We're here to help

Cartmell Shepherd's leading Wills, Probate and Inheritance team advises on all aspects of estate planning and has a specialist knowledge of agricultural estates, working closely with the firm's specialist Agriculture team.

If you require advice on succession planning or for an initial chat, contact Emma at [emma.pringle@cartmells.co.uk](mailto:emma.pringle@cartmells.co.uk) or 01434 320362. This column intends to provide information to readers; it is not intended as legal advice.





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# Culture & Arts

## The Poetry Drop-in

Sleep & Dreams, Love, Autumn, Childhood, Railways, Homes & Homelessness, Animals, The Sea, Winter, Work, Midsummer, Maytime, War & Peace ...

We seem to have covered an awful lot in the sixteen months we have been meeting for our monthly readings, in the cosy village hall in Greenhead - and even occasionally under the trees by the river.

What we do usually is read poems aloud, on a theme, but you can simply come and listen. There's a set of printed copies to get us started; some people come laden with poems they've chosen. We rarely let a poem go without comment or question, or asking for "that bit again" - many ideas are sparked - because human nature has a way of repeating it self...

In fact we were startled, at our last meeting, by a poem written in January 1795. Eleven verses, detailing the state of the nation. Here are a few of them:

*Arts and sciences bewailing;  
Commerce drooping, credit failing;  
Placemen mocking subjects loyal;  
Separations, weddings royal.*

*Authors who can't earn a dinner;  
Many a subtle rogue a winner;  
Fugitives for shelter seeking;  
Misers hoarding, tradesmen breaking.*

*Taste and talents quite deserted;  
All the laws of truth perverted;  
Arrogance o'er merit soaring;  
Merit silently deploring.*

Have we progressed an inch in the last 230 years?

We're beginning to wonder how we might share our enjoyment with more people - we got so excited over poems about Railways, we thought of doing a recital on a train.







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# Hidden History

Preserving the History of Featherstone Park POW Camp 18: Call for Testimonies and Materials

The captivity of German prisoners of war after 1945 was a defining European experience. In Britain, one of the largest POW sites was "Camp" 18 in Featherstone Park, Haltwhistle (Northumberland), where thousands of German soldiers were detained between 1945 and 1948.

As part of a major European museum project on German captivity after the Second World War, the W. J. Kennedy Foundation is launching a documentation campaign focused on Camp 18.

We are seeking:

- Personal documents (letters, diaries, photographs, objects) linked to Camp 18
- Oral or written testimonies from former prisoners who remained in Britain, their descendants, or local residents and families who lived or worked alongside them.

Eighty years after the end of the war, this initiative aims to preserve the memory of captivity as a transformative experience that shaped lives, fostered reconciliation, and contributed to Europe's post-war peace.

If you have materials or memories to share, please contact us. Every contribution matters. Our team will follow up with discretion.

More information: [www.museum-dascamp.eu](http://www.museum-dascamp.eu)

Contact: Dr. Fabien Théofilakis  
Sorbonne University, Paris / Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin  
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*Aerial view of the camp in 1946*

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# Health Matters

## Haltwhistle Medical Group - Care Navigation

Why does your Reception Team ask the reason you need an appointment? This is so you are directed to the most appropriate healthcare service.

Health Care Services navigated from Haltwhistle Medical Group are:

- 111\* Telephone number if you're worried about a symptom or need a prescription when your GP is closed
- 999\* Telephone number for life-threatening emergencies.
- Accident and Emergency\* For serious and life-threatening emergencies.
- General Practitioner\* Comprehensive medical support for acute and chronic conditions, diagnose and treat health issues.
- Practice Nurses Long term condition reviews and immunisations.
- Healthcare Assistant\* Take blood, ECGs, blood pressure and health checks.
- District Nurses Nursing for housebound patients.
- Living Well Co-ordinator\* Non-medical issues such as loneliness, housing or finance.
- First Contact Practitioner\* Musculoskeletal concerns back pain or joint issues.
- Mental Health Practitioner Support with low mood and anxiety.
- Community Paramedic Home visits to vulnerable patients who require urgent care.
- Practice Pharmacist Team Medication reviews, prescription queries and medical guidance.
- Care co-ordinator Care plans to vulnerable patients or patients with long-term conditions.
- Stop Smoking Service\* Support to help you quit smoking.
- Health Trainer\* Help you get healthier.
- Masta Travel Clinic\* Primary Care Network travel vaccination service.
- Midwife\* Care and advice to pregnant mothers and their partners.
- Health Visitor\* Information and guidance to promote healthy choices
- Haltwhistle Hospital\* Treatment of cuts, grazes, insect bites, minor injuries and burns.
- Pharmacy First\* Treat and prescribe medicines for... *(see next page)*

# Health Matters

## Assessing Pharmacy First Services

The following table shows the 7 conditions pharmacists can manage across various ranges:

Clinical pathway	Age range
Acute otitis media*	1 to 17 years
Impetigo	1 year and over
Infected insect bites	1 year and over
Shingles	18 years and over
Sinusitis	12 years and over
Sore throat	5 years and over
Uncomplicated urinary tract infections	Women 16-64 years

\* Distance selling pharmacies will not complete consultations for acute otitis media.

\*distance selling pharmacies will not complete consultations for acute otitis media.

Patients will be able to access the 7 clinical pathways element via referrals from referring organisations including general practice, urgent and emergency care settings, and NHS 111 (online and via telephone). In addition, for the 7 common conditions clinical pathway consultations only, patients can access the service by attending or contacting the pharmacy directly without the need for referral.

\* accept bookings/referrals directly from patients.



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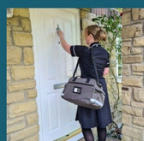
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# Next Generation

## Young & Sweet

The year ended with the very unexpected and sad news that Lawrence Thompson had passed away on 21st December. In 2011 Northumberland County Council were making various cuts to young people's services, and I wanted to create an organisation that would serve young people in Haltwhistle without relying on government funding. I was fortunate enough that Lawrence, who was always an advocate for young people, recognised the potential of a 21-year-old trying to create change and he volunteered to be my chairperson.

Alongside Graham Ridley and Alan Sharp, we now had our board of trustees, and we registered with the Charity Commission in 2012. Lawrence has been dedicated and steadfast, rarely ever missing a meeting for the 14 years that he served as chairperson to Young and Sweet and he has seen the organisation thrive. He was a very skilled chairperson, as he could bring a meeting back together with a little cough or a ruffle of some papers, yet he was always fair and has allowed trustees and myself to flourish under his guidance, although we would often joke that he was still using his red pen to correct my spelling and grammar 10 years later.



Lawrence was a selfless man who gave up many hours of his time throughout his life to make Haltwhistle a better place by supporting all kinds of community groups and doing so without looking for praise. I will be forever grateful for the support that he has given me and his fellow board members and will remember him for being the Haltwhistle legend that he was.

*Lawrence with Ayesha Jackson and  
Sheila Cadge*



# Sports

## Cornhole comes to Halwhistle

As of 9th January, 19 people have already signed up for the 7pm to 9pm Friday 6th Feb Cornhole Blind Draw Doubles and 45 people have signed up for the 9am to 7pm Saturday 7th Feb UKCL Singles event (minimum 6 games), we expect about 60 people for this one!! See attached flyers. Anyone can enter either or both competitions which will be played at Haltwhistle Swimming and Leisure Centre. Also anyone can come along to watch and see for yourself how the game is played.

If anyone fancies entering these events but needs a practice session or two we play every Wed Evening 7pm to 9pm at Featherstone Village Hall all welcome and tuition given!! Its easy to pick up the game, which involves throwing 6 inch square Cornhole (Bean) Bags about 9 yards onto 4ftx2ft Cornhole Boards with a 6inch hole near the top, What could be easier!!

This is a first for Haltwhistle to be included as a UK venue for a qualifier and if it gets plenty of support it could become an annual UK Cornhole League venue.

Prior to this the furthest North these events have come is Manchester!! This season the UK Cornhole League also has qualifying events in the Midlands, London and Portsmouth.

If any other Village/School Leisure Centre halls fancy having a session organised or wants to borrow boards and bags please let me know and we can organise something

Richard Macdonald, Featherstone Flyers Cornhole Club  
Tel 074848 00632  
[macasrich9@gmail.com](mailto:macasrich9@gmail.com)



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**T: 01228 670311**

**M: 07747 897166**

**E: [info@wannopltd.co.uk](mailto:info@wannopltd.co.uk)**

**Address: Esk Quarry, Sandpit Number 2, Faugh, Carlisle, England, CA8 9EG**

# Directory

## HEALTH

Hexham General Hospital	01434 606161
War Memorial Hospital	01434 362200
Haltwhistle Health Centre	01434 320077
Cumbria Infirmary	01228 523444
Haltwhistle Dental Health	01434 322300
Geoff Steven and Sons Opticians	01434 322217
Anne Watson Podiatrist	01434 322723

## SERVICES

Police	0345 6043043
Library & Tourist Information	01434 321863
Capontree Veterinary Centre	01434 320705
Co-op Funeral Director	01434 321755
Ian Blair Funeral Director	01434 322400
Northumberland Communities Together	01670 620015
Haltwhistle Family Hub	01434 321761
Cartmell Shepherd Solicitors	01434 320362

## SCHOOLS

Haltwhistle Academy	01434 320467
Haydon Bridge High School	01434 684422
Henshaw C of E Primary	01434 344324
Greenhead C of E Primary	01697 747347
Gilsland C of E Primary	01697 747302

## LEISURE

Haltwhistle Golf Club	01697 747367
Haltwhistle Leisure Club	01434 320727

## HELP LINES

Victim Support	0300 3033 797
Childline Counselling	0800 11 11
Samaritan's Freephone	116 123
Farm Community Network	07002 32632
OneCall	01670 536400

# PICTURE OF THE MONTH



## ***WINTER SUN - NICK CORBLE***

Share your photo or drawing of life in or around Haltwhistle to [haltwhistleherald@gmail.com](mailto:haltwhistleherald@gmail.com), and you might be next month's Picture of the Month!

**March's theme is 'Spring is Here'**