

Issue 82 / SPRING 2026

Whitworth

VALLEY NEWS



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Whitworth
Town Council

Coming in 2026!

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MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Dear Whitworth Residents and Friends,

Well, what a wonderfully busy and memorable year it has been. I've had the privilege of representing you all at a whole host of formal and community events, hosting fundraising activities, and - perhaps most impressively - managing to stay silent for a full eight hours! Along the way I've met so many lovely people who remind me just how special our community truly is.

I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported me throughout the year. My heartfelt thanks go to my fantastic consorts, Derek and Karin, to Rachel and Abbie in the Council Office for their tireless hard work, and to my friends who have done their very best to keep me organised - no small task, as they'll happily tell you! Their efforts have been nothing short of amazing, especially when it comes to our fundraising events. With a bit of luck, we'll have raised a significant amount for our local community groups, and I look forward to handing out the cheques at the Parish meeting in May.



As you read this, we'll have just two more events left to enjoy together: a band concert at Hallfold Church on Sunday 29th March and an 80s Day Disco at the Ashcroft on 25th April.

The band concert features the amazing Whitworth Vale and Healey Band, and tickets are just £10 each and are selling fast. Please phone me on 07884 795201 to reserve your place. My final fundraising event is the 80s Day Disco. So, if you fancy reliving the days when we could dance all night but still be home by 10pm, grab your tickets and come along. It promises to be a brilliant celebration of what many would argue is the greatest era of pop music ever!

It has been an honour and a joy to serve as your Mayor. I've cherished every moment, and I will be sad to hand over the chains to Cllr Louise Burton in May 2026. However, I know Louise will guide us through the next 12 months with dedication and enthusiasm.

Thank you all for a truly unforgettable year.

Cllr Janet Whitehead,
Mayor of Whitworth

**PLEASE COME ALONG TO
WHITWORTH'S ANNUAL
PARISH MEETING
THURSDAY 14TH MAY 2026 7:30PM
AT THE ASHCROFT (CIVIC HALL)**



WHITWORTH

TOURISM & LEISURE COMMITTEE

It was a very busy festive period for the hard-working volunteers who make up Whitworth's Tourism and Leisure Committee.

CHRISTMAS LIGHT SWITCH ON EVENT

Back by popular demand! Thanks so much to everyone who attended the Christmas Light Switch On event to kick off Whitworth's Christmas events. Santa was fully booked and got to see lots of Whitworth children in his incredible grotto. The TLC can't thank his elves, Dawn and Martin, enough for their phenomenal grotto-decorating skills and resources.

The Mayor of Whitworth was overwhelmed with the responses to her Christmas card competition. Well done to Anya-Rose, Martha and Jack for their beautiful creations and thank you for helping to turn on our Christmas Lights. Thanks also go out to all who submitted an entry and our local primary schools for their support. We really are truly blessed with some amazing artists in the town, and the Mayor had a particularly difficult time choosing the winners.



CHRISTMAS CRAFT EXTRAVAGANZA

This year the TLC had a record breaking 68 attendees for their wreath making, Christmas cracker making and Ukrainian egg decorating workshops! A lovely day of festive fun was had by all who attended, and the Committee enjoyed seeing the smiles on the faces of all who came. With Christmas music playing in the background and complimentary refreshments, it was the perfect start to December. The Committee would like to give a special thanks to Lindsay Fairhurst and Janis Rielly for their additional help on the day.

CHRISTMAS TREES ON BRACKETS

This year the Committee sold 85 Christmas trees which were installed the length and breadth of Whitworth. Once again, thanks to everyone who ordered one-you really did help to make Whitworth such a welcoming, festive place to be! A special thank you to Les Hirst, Steve Parker and their helper elves who work so hard to make this event work.

SANTA EXPRESS

The second of Santa's visits to Whitworth this year came via the Santa Express. Thanks to everyone who attended, and the Committee hopes you all enjoyed this wonderfully fun event in the Committee's calendar. It was lovely to have the Deputy Mayor of Whitworth wave off Santa on the Saturday night and thanks so much to Santa for taking time out from his busy December schedule to come and visit Whitworth.

THE WORLD-FAMOUS WHITWORTH NEW YEAR'S DAY DUCK RACE

As ever, the TLC like to kick-off the beginning of the year with their New Year's Day Duck Race. An eggs-ellent 3,000 yellow ducks were launched down the overflow from Cowm Reservoir, raising funds for future community events in Whitworth. Thanks to everyone who came out to watch on such a beautiful, bracing day! This event really does put the "fun" into "fundraising" and helps to finance the TLC's future events.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN THE COMMITTEE?

These events can only go ahead thanks to a team of incredible volunteers who come up with the ideas for, assist with the organising of, and support the events on the day. It can be hard work, but it is also a lot of fun!

If you are interested in joining the committee, then please contact Cllr Kim Blezard (Chair of the Committee) on 07931 760303 or Rachel, Town Clerk, on 01706 852018 (Mon-Fri 9.30am to 2pm).

The TLC have about 8 planning meetings a year where all the year's events are planned and discussed. 2026 events so far include a big celebration of the 50th year since the Whitworth Rushcart event returned and of course, their busy range of December events.

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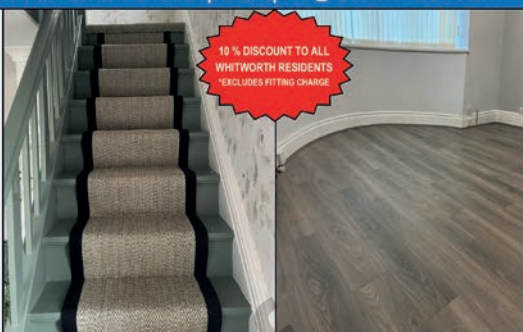
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Model shown is MY23 Yaris Cross Design 1.5 VVT-i Auto PWD £26,655 including optional Metallic paint at £615. Prices correct at time of being published. Terms and conditions apply. Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km): combined 54.6 (5.2) - 62.8 (4.5). Combined CO₂ 117-102 g/km. Hybrid electric vehicle. Figures obtained using a combination of battery power and fuel. Figures are provided for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption, CO₂ and/or equivalent all-electric range figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results. Fuel consumption, CO₂ produced, and equivalent all-electric range can vary significantly depending on a number of factors, including the accessories fitted (post-registration), driving style, conditions, speed and vehicle load. All models and grades are certified according to the World Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure (WLTP). All mpg and CO₂ figures quoted are full WLTP figures. More information can be found by visiting: www.vehicle-certification-agency.gov.uk/tcb/wltp.asp.

WHITWORTH IN BLOOM'S CEMETERY GANG

We are lucky enough to have a dedicated team of volunteers who work in all weathers to enhance the floral aspect of our wonderfully positioned cemetery. They are a knowledgeable lot who employ their gardening skills to think about the long-term sustainability of the green space and have started planting perennials which can be divided to provide year on year colour or sustenance for insect life. They either store or leave bulbs in situ and try, where possible, to re-use annuals in a variety of pots that may be donated or simply rescued!

Because they are prudent gardeners, they manage to find extra plants to decorate plots that have not been tended for years and give these graves some care and attention such as the Stott tomb in front of the chapel which burst into colour last summer.

As if their gardening activities weren't enough, they are also putting together a photo exhibition showcasing the buildings and elements of the fascinating history of the cemetery. This can be viewed at the Leisure Centre from 2nd to 24th April, then at the library from 15th May to 5th June.

The Cemetery Gang are grateful to Rossendale Borough Council, Facit Garden Centre and The Plant Dude for donated plants.



COUNCILLOR ALAN NEAL

Councillor Alan Neal has been invited to serve as President of the Lancashire Association of Local Councils (LALC), which represents around two hundred town and parish councils across the county.

Councillor Neal has been a member of the LALC Executive Committee since 1987 and has served in a number of leadership roles during that time, reflecting his long-standing commitment to local government and to the communities it serves.



His appointment as President follows many years of involvement with LALC, including time as both Vice Chair and Chair, two periods as the Lancashire Delegate to the National Association of Local Councils, and a decade as Vice President. Being invited by his peers to take on the presidency marks a significant moment in his long public service career.

Councillor Neal said: "To be invited to serve as President of LALC is both an honour and a privilege. I have worked alongside town and parish councillors from across Lancashire for many years, and to have their confidence and support means a great deal. Local councils play a vital role in representing and strengthening their communities, and I am committed to supporting them in this role."

Councillor Neal has served on Whitworth Town Council since 1987 and on Rossendale Borough Council since 1988. His decades of service demonstrate his consistent dedication to his community and to local democracy across Lancashire.

PROTECT OUR FARMERS, PROTECT OUR LIVESTOCK

As lambing season begins, farmers in Whitworth and the surrounding hills face a serious and upsetting problem: sheep worrying by dogs. Every year, sheep and lambs are chased or attacked, often suffering severe injuries or dying. Even when not physically harmed, stress can cause sheep to miscarry, abandon lambs, or become unwell. These incidents are devastating for farmers – and they are completely preventable.



The law is clear: dogs must be kept on a short lead near livestock at all times. This applies on footpaths, open land and roads, even if your dog is usually well behaved. A dog chasing sheep is an offence, whether injury is caused or not.

Recent updates to the law give police stronger powers, including seizing dogs, taking DNA samples, and issuing tougher penalties. Livestock worrying is now treated very seriously.

Whitworth's hill farmers already work in challenging conditions. One loose dog can undo months of hard work in minutes, affecting livelihoods and wellbeing.

The solution is simple: always keep dogs on leads near livestock. By doing so, you protect animals, support local farmers, and respect our countryside.

Please keep dogs on leads. No exceptions.

VETERANS IN COMMUNITIES COMPLETES A BUSY TWELVE MONTHS

Supporting ex-service personnel, blue light veterans and families through connection, practical guidance, outreach and community activity, VIC based in Haslingden has continued to provide a welcoming centre where members can drop in for a brew, conversation, and access to groups and partner support. Outreach sessions have also remained a key part of delivery, helping veterans and families connect locally across Middleton, Rochdale, Burnley, Accrington, Clitheroe and Preston.

2025 included a strong programme of wellbeing and inclusion activity, from arts and crafts sessions, and themed painting days, to model railway projects, Veterans in Production builds, outdoor experiences and shared trips. Armed Forces Week activity included local flag-raising ceremonies and a family fun day at the VIC Centre. Remembrance remained central through community tributes, the Rossendale Walk of Remembrance and a Battlefields Tour to France and Belgium.

Crucially, VIC isn't only for people in crisis. Many members attend simply to reconnect, build routine, volunteer and enjoy being around fellow veterans, blue light colleagues and families in a safe, respectful environment. Support is there when needed, but belonging is the starting point.

For information: 01706 833180 | info@vic.org.uk | veteransincommunities.org



VALLEY THAI BOXING CLUB

Valley Thai Boxing Club are working hard in preparation to once again attend the WMF World Muay Thai Championships in Bangkok Thailand in March.

16 Valley Thai fighters will be attending the competition with hopes of becoming World Gold medallists. The team have been selected to represent Team GB in the prestigious competition which welcomes countries from all over the world to come together to battle it out in the motherland and mecca of Muay Thai.

The students are so proud to be able to represent their country and are more determined than ever to show the world once again what can be achieved from hard work and dedication.





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SKYLINE 11

Skyline 11 will take place on Sunday May 24th. The route this year will run clockwise, which means we will be climbing up Rooley Moor Road... but it's a flat finish back to the Golf Club. The full walk is, as ever, 14 miles long (a proper challenge, to be taken seriously), but there will be the usual two shorter options for those for whom that is too much of a challenge: the Western Skyline to Britannia is 9 miles long – still stiff because it too includes the ascent of RMR – while the Skyline Sunday Stroll is a gentler, but varied, 3-miler, concluding at the foot of RMR.



Entry forms will appear in all sorts of locations at the start of April. Instructions for where to return them will be on the form – available from Seasons, the Council Office and Whitworth Leisure Centre. Online entries available too. Please see the Whitworth Skyline Facebook page or the Town Council's events page for more details.

You'll need to register at the Golf Club between 7.45am and 9am (no later please), then off you go, at your own pace, on your chosen challenge. Every walker gets a (small) meal at the end, though if your chosen walk doesn't finish at the Golf Club, you'll need to organise yourself a lift to get back up there. Please note that, as in previous years, no dogs are to take part in the Skyline walk. And fingers crossed, please, for trek-friendly weather.

If anyone would like to be part of the event, but doesn't want to walk, Skyline needs marshals, and backmarkers (but that does involve a bit of slow walking), and maybe one or two people to help out in the kitchen at the Golf Club. If any of those appeal please speak to Chris Rothwell 07846 107922 asap.



WHITWORTH COMMUNITY GALLERIES

Whitworth Community Mini-Galleries exist to give local community groups and individuals with a communitarian attitude a couple of places where they can display what they're about. The exhibitions vary in subject, style and purpose, but they're always worth a visit.

The schedule at our lovely Leisure Centre:

Currently showcasing the work/events of Whitworth Tourism and Leisure Committee. Then, from Feb 20th artwork from the students of St Bartholomew's School; from March 13th creative offerings from the U3A Photography group; from April 2nd, it's a celebration of the graft and glories of Whitworth in Bloom; from April 24th a look back at last year's Skyline 10; and from May 15th artwork from St John with St Michael School.

All exhibitions transfer to our magical Library (but not necessarily in the order above):

There now, artwork from Tonacliffe School; Feb 20th Tourism and Leisure Committee; March 13th St Bart's; April 2nd Skyline; April 24th U3A Photography group; May 15th Whitworth in Bloom.

If you or your organisation/group would like to exhibit please contact jofurtado@hotmail.co.uk or on 07813180748 for more details.

WHITWORTH MUSEUM – FROM THE COLLECTION

We tend to think that personalised items, whether bought as mementoes or given as gifts, are a relatively new phenomenon; this is not so. From about 1875, Measham Ware, a type of ceramic barge ware, was produced in Church Gresley, Derbyshire. The purchaser could request that the item be personalised with a name or inscription before firing. In 1878 one such item, a teapot complete with lid, was purchased by, or given as a gift to, Mary Dearden of Millgate, Whitworth. Unfortunately, we do not know if the date 1878 had any significance for Mary but we do know that she was the wife of Daniel Dearden and she sadly died just three years later in 1881 aged just 59. She was interred at Facit Cemetery.

This highly decorated item is one of the earliest known examples of Measham Ware still in existence.

Whitworth Museum, located in North Street, is open to the public each Saturday between 11.00am – 4.00pm throughout the year and at other times by appointment. Please email secretary@whitworthhistoricalsociety.org.uk for more information.



The personalised 1878 Measham Ware teapot

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH

Every English town or parish must hold an Annual Meeting of the Parish for electors registered in the area. This year, Whitworth's Annual Meeting of the Parish takes place on Thursday 14th May at 7:30pm, at The Ashcroft.

The meeting will be quorate (legal) if just two electors are present. Although chaired by the Mayor, this is not a council meeting. It is a meeting for all Whitworth people to get an overview of what is currently happening in the town, looking at the work of various organisations serving Whitworth, and offering electors the opportunity to raise queries and make observations. It is usually over within the hour or so, so why not come along, everyone is welcome. See you there!

For more information, contact Rachel Hodson, Town Clerk on 01706 852018 or email info@whitworth.gov.uk



WHITWORTH & DISTRICT U3A

Membership of the u3a is made up of retired and semi-retired people from the Whitworth area who wish to continue learning, make new friends and have fun. Monthly meetings are held at Hallfold United Reformed Church Hall Whitworth, on the first Wednesday of the month from 1.15pm for refreshments and notices followed by a monthly speaker.



Upcoming Speakers are:

4th March 2026

Amanda Forshaw speaking about, 'Lancashire's involvement in the Civil War'.

1st April 2026

Sue Holden 'They should have asked me husband'.

6th May 2026

Maureen Hawksworth speaking about 'Our school in Nepal'.

We have 23 Interest groups currently and growing all the time. For insurance purposes only members can join Interest Groups – details are available on our FB page, website or at the meetings. You can contact the Group Leaders for information on dates, times and venues for group activities. Helen, our Groups Coordinator can be contacted on illingworthhelen2@gmail.com.

New members are welcome for an annual membership of £15 and £2 monthly meeting subs. Anyone interested may attend two meetings before joining. A full list of speakers, interest groups and contact details can be found on the FB page and website u3asites.org.uk/whitworth.

Whitworth & District U3A are holding an Open Day on Saturday 16th May at 2pm - 4pm at Hallfold United Reformed Church, Hall Street. Refreshments available. Come and find out about our many Interest Groups.

WHITWORTH MEN'S SHED

With spring just around the corner, those of you with gardens may be interested in the Shed's range of traditional garden products with items such as bird tables and nest boxes. These items are often available from stock or may be ordered. If you have existing garden furniture that requires repair or just some TLC, bring it along - we may be able to help.

The organisation continues to be well supported by local businesses with some helping out with both materials and services. Whitworth is unlike most of the Men's Shed groups in the UK in that it is run by a team of volunteer members for the general membership. This approach keeps running costs as low as possible and helps with sustainability.

The Shed hosts two drop-in sessions each week, Wednesday morning and Friday morning. Both sessions run from 10am - 12 noon and are open to all men aged 45 years and over. Just come along and find out what activities we have to offer; newcomers are always welcome.

For more information about the activities of the Shed see the website, visit the Shed at 6 Milner Street, Whitworth, OL12 8RQ, or phone 07746 702389.



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Aqua Tai Chi	£6.50 (per session)
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Junior Gold Membership - Gym, Swim & Classes <small>*Restricted access apply</small>	Coming soon - £15

Pay As You Go	
Adult Gym	£6
Junior Gym	Coming soon - £5
Adult Swim	£6
Junior Swim	£5
Child Swim	£4
2 Years And Under Swim	Free
Family Swim - 2 adults & 2 children <small>(Children must be 15 years and under)</small>	£16
Inflatable Session <small>*Excluded from memberships</small>	£8
Studio Classes	£6
Concession £5	£5
60+, Students and Blue Light Holders	

Adult Memberships (18 years +)	Month/Annual
Adult Gym Membership	£25 / £250 annual
Adult Swim Membership	£25 / £250 annual
Adult Gym & Swim Membership	£30 / £300 annual
Gold Membership - Gym, Swim & Classes	£36 / £360 annual

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- Age 5 - 7 years - 1 adult to 2 children
- Age 8 - 15 years - No adult supervision providing the child is a competent swimmer.
- Age 16+ no supervision require.

THE WORD PUZZLE PAGE

Beginning with another **OLD ENGLISH RIDDLE**

The answer to the riddle in the Winter 2025 edition was SHIELD.

This one shares some of the militaristic language, but the answer is rather more domestic.

*On earth there's a warrior of wondrous origin.
He's created, gleaming, by two dumb creatures for the benefit of men.
Foe bears him against foe to inflict harm.
A woman often fetters him, strong as he is.
If women and men provide for him in the proper manner and feed him often,
he'll obey them and serve them well.
Those who succour him win themselves pleasure.
But this warrior savages those who let him become proud.*

So, think yourself back a thousand years to a simpler, if harder, life, and see what you can come up with.

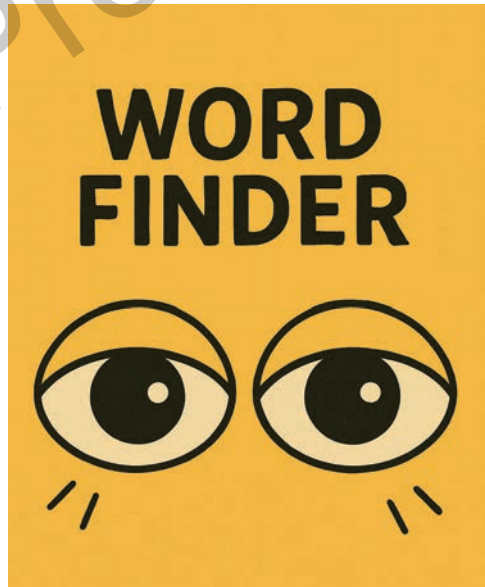
... And **WORDFINDER** full rules in the Autumn 2025 edition, but basically how many words of 3 letters or more can you make out of the letters of this word: RELEGATED?

NB – because there are 3x E in the head-word, you can use up to 3x E in your answers. Other letters (R/L/G/A/T/D) strictly one per answer.

There are loads. 73 gets you a rating of GOOD, 87 VERY GOOD, 99 BRILLIANT. If you can squeeze over 100, hats off to you.

Along the way... can you find 6 pairs of homonyms – words that sound the same but are spelled differently e.g. blue/blew or pair/pear. (You might get 7 or 8 if you change the way you read one of the words in two of the pairs.)

Or, for your brewtime puzzle, how about doing the same to BURNLEY? (No connection to the above... who would be so cruel?)



14 – GOOD 18 – VERY GOOD 20 – BRILLIANT Over 20 – hats off!

Along the way... 3 words associated with cricket esp. the Ashes; and you might find two words adding up to a Scottish mountain stream.

Happy puzzling!

SPRING FLOWER EXTRAVAGANZA AT THE ASHCROFT - SATURDAY 2ND MAY 2026

Whitworth will once again play host to a National Horticultural event, when the East Lancs Group of the Alpine Garden Society stage another huge Spring Flower Show at The Ashcroft on Saturday 2nd May 2026. The event will feature over 140 individual classes ranging from rare alpine gems to bulbs, dwarf conifers, hardy plants, ferns and mini gardens.



The organisers hope that Whitworth folk will again be tempted by a raffle, free parking, plant sales, bar and excellent refreshments. Open from 11 am until 3.30pm on 2nd May, entry for the general public is only £4 per person. There will be a number of superb nurseries in attendance selling a wide range of alpine and garden plants and leading exhibitors will travel from across the UK. Over the years Whitworth has rightly gained a proud reputation as 'The Friendly Show' among enthusiasts.

The East Lancashire Group still holds regular monthly meetings, now at Ashday Lea in Rawtenstall and additional Zoom meetings are drawing large international audiences.

New members are always warmly welcomed and encouraged. Group Secretary, Cliff Booker can be contacted on 01706 534626 and Show Secretary, Alan Elwell on 07742646784.



Facit Garden Centre 

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THE MOORS ARE CALLING... AND THE MUSIC IS BACK!

Music on the Moors at Lobden Golf Club in May 2025 was a huge success. As the very first festival of its kind, it exceeded expectations, bringing the community together against the stunning backdrop of the moors for a joyful celebration of live music, sunshine and laughter.

A fantastic and diverse line-up created a lively atmosphere throughout the day, with something for everyone to enjoy. Families were especially well catered for, thanks to the popular **Munchkins on the Moors** area, which provided brilliant children's entertainment and added to the festival's welcoming, inclusive feel.



Following the success of 2025, we are delighted to confirm that **Music on the Moors** returns on **Saturday 16th May 2026**, with plans in place to make it even bigger and better. Lobden Golf Club will once again be transformed into a spectacular outdoor music venue.

Tickets for 2026 are on sale now and can be purchased via the QR code alongside this piece.

More details are available via the **Lobden Golf Club Facebook page**, and paper tickets can also be purchased directly from the Golf Club.

Whether you were there in 2025 and can't wait to return, or you missed out and heard all about it afterwards, this is your chance to be part of something special.

Save the date, secure your tickets, and get ready for another magical event on the moors – we'll *'Meet you on the Greens'*, Whitworth!



WHITWORTH VALE AND HEALEY BRASS BAND

The band would like to thank the residents of Whitworth for their support during the street carolling season. The band are very grateful for all the donations and lovely comments and would like to wish everyone all the very best for 2026!

The new year sees Whitworth band beginning rehearsals for the regional competition in Blackpool on Sunday 1st March. For the first time in the band's 173 year history, they will now be competing in the Championship section.



Concerts this quarter:

Sunday 22nd March - Ribble Valley music season - 3pm

Sunday 29th March - Hallfold Church - 3pm

Friday 03 April - Good Friday, Heywood Churches - 12 Noon

Friday 29 May - Whit Friday contests

Whitworth Academy and Youth Bands continue to look out for new members aged between 7 and 18. Please call into the band club between 6 - 8.30pm on a Wednesday night for further information.

STRONGER TOGETHER



The last few months at Stronger Together Carers have been nothing short of incredible, and the team are so proud of what the local community has achieved together.

Stronger Together's Whispering Winds Memory Garden continues to grow as a peaceful space of reflection, love and remembrance. One of the most special parts of the garden is the Memory Tree, which is now completely full. Seeing it filled with names and messages has been incredibly moving and has shown just how much this space means to local people. It has truly become a place where memories live on and where people can sit quietly, reflect, and feel connected. During the festive season, they held their Christmas Party, bringing joy, laughter, music and friendship to so many

who might otherwise have felt alone. Stronger Together would like to thank the kindness of local businesses, donors and their amazing volunteers. It was a huge success.

Stronger Together also hosted a Christmas Dinner Community Day, where an incredible 120 Christmas dinners with all the trimmings were served. This was a way of making sure nobody in our community felt forgotten at Christmas. The warmth, gratitude and togetherness felt on the day was something that will not be forgotten. Everything Stronger Together do is volunteer-led and powered by kindness, donations and support from the community - and the team are so thankful. And watch this space... Stronger Together have something new and exciting coming soon which will help to reach even more local people and continue building a warmer, stronger community together.

Together we support. Together we care. Together we are stronger.

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Along with garden lights and gardening tools and accessories, we also stock a wide range of decorating and DIY products.



ROSSENDALE COMMUNITY FIRST RESPONDERS (RCFR)

Rossendale Community First Responders (RCFR) are dedicated local volunteers, trained by the North West Ambulance Service, who give their time to support the community when it matters most. Responding to 999 medical emergencies across the Rossendale Valley, RCFR work closely alongside ambulance crews to provide vital early care in those crucial first minutes before an ambulance arrives.

Beyond emergency response, the team is actively involved in community training sessions and public engagement events, helping residents gain essential life-saving skills. RCFR regularly delivers CPR and defibrillator awareness training, empowering members of the public to act confidently and effectively in emergencies.



Members of the Rossendale First Responders' team, including Dawn Taylor, far right.

RCFR is currently keen to hear from people in the Whitworth area who may be interested in becoming "the lifesaver next door". If you live or work locally, are aged 18 or over, have access to your own vehicle and want to make a difference, volunteering could be right for you.

The group also works closely with its sister organisation, Community Defibrillators for Rossendale, raising funds and maintaining Community Public Access Defibrillators throughout the valley. These lifesaving devices are vital in cases of sudden cardiac arrest, giving communities the best possible chance to save a life.

To learn more, visit www.rossendalefirstresponders.org.uk

DAWN TAYLOR

In the New Year Honours List, Dawn Taylor was awarded the British Empire Medal for her work with Rossendale's First Responders. She is also the force behind Community Defibs for Rossendale and has helped to install the defibrillators across Whitworth and the rest of Rossendale. Everyone here at Whitworth Town Council would like to congratulate Dawn on her well-deserved award and we know that she would like to use this as an opportunity for more locations for local defibrillators to be installed.

In Dawn's own words "In December 2009, I received the Rossendale Woman of the Year Award from Rossendale Hospice, having been nominated by members of Team Rossendale CFRs. I began to consider how I could use the Award to raise the profile of community care. Knowing how important Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) are in the care of Sudden Cardiac Arrest patients and having seen items on the internet about public access AEDs elsewhere in the world, I approached two of my CFR colleagues – Brian Pickup and Andrew Walmsley – to see if they would support the idea of installing the devices in Rossendale.

"Together we formed Community Defibs for Rossendale. In February 2011, we installed what we believe was the first Community Public Access Defibrillator (CPAD) in the North West Ambulance Service (NWS) area on Bank Street, Rawtenstall. Funds for this, and subsequent units, were raised by members of the community. In 2025, there are currently over 90 units in the Valley. My sincere thanks to all those who have supported me throughout my journey. I am very grateful for the support and encouragement I have received over the past 21 years during my time with the Rossendale CFR Team, in particular my mentors Brian Pickup, Richard Peters, Andrew Walmsley and Dean Hebden."



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We are offering a package of £700.00 + VAT when applying for both Power of Attorney applications. Please note that the £82.00 registration fee would still apply to each application.

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HALLFOLD UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Hallfold United Reformed Church is a building known to many in the valley. The origins of the church date back to 1698 when the first congregation met in a farmhouse at the top of Hallfold. In the 1700s, the first Hallfold Chapel was built on a site near the graveyard and lodge, at the Hall Street/Wallbank Drive junction. By the mid 1800s, the original church was deemed too small for the growing band of worshippers and a new church was built on Hall Street, adjacent to the Whitworth High School/Hall Street junction. Eventually, this building was also demolished and a new sanctuary, formerly the Sunday School, was dedicated in the 1970s.



Hallfold Chapel which once stood in Hall Street.

This is the building that many people in Whitworth visit regularly. It is a welcoming place for Christians and non-Christians and hosts many community groups. The church is looking forward to its Easter services and extends a warm invitation to anyone who would like to attend. Services will be held on the following dates: Palm Sunday 29th March, Good Friday 3rd April, Easter Sunday 5th April. All these services begin at 10.45. There is also a Maundy Thursday service at 6.30pm.

Follow us on Facebook.

ARE YOU OF STATE PENSION AGE?

If you are in receipt of a State Pension and have some physical or cognitive challenges, you may be entitled to claim nearly £6000 per annum under Attendance Allowance.

Some examples could be that you have arthritis, memory problems or a bad back. It doesn't matter what you are diagnosed with, it is more about the pain you experience, the length of time it takes you to do a task or needing someone to help support or supervise you.

You can still claim if you live on your own and don't have any support.

All the activities are based on personal care, such as having a shower or getting dressed and do not include activities such as cleaning or gardening.

If you are unsure, please just pick up the phone and speak to our friendly consultants who will guide you through the process.

Millcare has supported over 200 people in Whitworth and supported others, across the UK and Europe, to claim in excess of £14 million to help them remain independent at home.

We do all assessments in your own home so you don't need to travel.

Call 01706 482002 or visit www.millcare.info



ROOM HIRE AT THE ASHCROFT



The Ashcroft, nestled in the heart of Whitworth, offers a welcoming space for families and communities to come together and celebrate life's special moments. With its versatile rooms and warm atmosphere, this venue is perfect for hosting unforgettable events, especially children's parties filled with laughter and joy.

The Main Hall provides ample room for energetic celebrations, with bespoke packages available and our special package including our bouncy castle. For smaller gatherings, The Lounge offers a more intimate setting with up to 50 guests, ensuring everyone feels part of the celebration.

The dedicated team understands that every event is unique. They go above and beyond to ensure your party runs smoothly, so you can focus on making memories with your loved ones. The surrounding grounds, including a play park, add to the charm, giving little ones even more opportunities to explore and play.

Whether you're planning a birthday party or a family gathering, The Ashcroft combines a beautiful setting with thoughtful service. It's a place where families come together to create moments that matter. Enquire by emailing us at team@the-ashcroft.co.uk

WHITWORTH VALE AND HEALEY BAND CLUB



Thanks to all who joined with the club in celebrating Christmas and New Year. It's great to see friends and families getting together over Christmas.

The pre-Christmas Bottomess Brunch was particularly well received. Keep looking at the club's social media for updates on the next.

The club continues to host an open mic night on the last Wednesday of every month.... a free pint for every performer, and free entertainment for everyone else.

The club has been happy to provide meeting room facilities for The Whitworth Leisure Centre team, swimming club, and Town Twinning Committee. Other local community groups are invited to use the committee room - just give us a ring on 01706 852484.

The club's Facebook and webpages provide updates on events and current beers on tap, including any changes to opening times for live football on TV. Remember the club normally opens at 5pm on Thursdays and Fridays and 3pm on Saturdays.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

The illegal use of motor bikes, quads, 4 x 4's and ATV's, on the moor and common land, contrary to popular belief, is not a victimless crime.

The livelihood of local farmers is under serious threat and there is also a serious threat to walkers, horse riders, mountain bikers, livestock/wildlife and all people who use the moors for recreational use.

Report incidents by:

- Calling 101 to GMP or Lancashire Police
- Report retrospectively, on-line – see below:
- **Lancashire Police**
<https://doitonline.lancashire.police.uk/PEDisclaimer/Create>
Ask to refer the report to RTF (Rural Task Force) and Op Dragster
- **GMP**
<https://www.gmp.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime>
Ask to refer the report to Op Dragster
- **If incidents are not reported, the Police are not aware and cannot assign resources**



Please scan for Lancs Police



Please scan for GM Police



Church in the Village
Mother's Day!

Join St Bartholomew & St John for our very special family worship at The Ashcroft - lots of fun, whatever your age!

Sunday 15th March
10.30am

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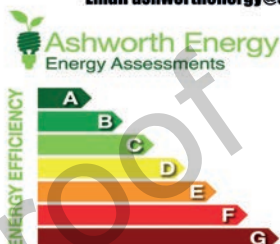
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WHITWORTH TOWN COUNCIL PRECEPT 2026/2027

Whitworth Town Council has this year set a net budget of £83,914. The Council has worked hard to keep the increase in the precept to a minimum, which has been difficult in the current financial climate. Statutory wage increases and inflationary increases in office rent has meant that Council has had to take the difficult decision to increase the Precept this year but has managed to offset some of the increases by making savings in other areas.

This past year has seen some pressures on finances and significant increases in costs, but the Town Council's wise investments are still providing a healthy dividend, thanks to favourable interest rates.

Employee costs include salaries for the Town Clerk (30 hours), Business Administration Apprentice (30 hours), our full-time Whitworth Town Caretaker, who makes a significant impact on the town's cleanliness, and our Parish Lengthsman, who tackles repairs and general maintenance around the town.

The Valley News magazine, produced quarterly, continues to be hugely popular, and the Council's Tourism and Leisure Committee has a variety of leisure and cultural events planned for the year ahead, information about which is included on the Town Council website. The Town Council continues to promote Whitworth as a great place to live, and lobbies hard for the best possible services for the town. It is at the forefront of tackling crime through the sponsorship of the Police Community Support Vehicle and facilitates monthly multi-agency meetings attended by all the local agencies.

To conclude, the Town Council continues to be proud of its achievements and looks forward to working with and for the people of Whitworth during the forthcoming financial year.

	2026/27	2025/26	2024/25
Employee costs	£ 89,432	£ 84,000	£ 72,000
Parish Lengthsman materials	£ 500	£ 500	£ 500
Administrative Expenses	£ 12,350	£ 12,850	£ 11,800
Statutory and Civic Events / Expenses	£ 5,150	£ 4,900	£ 5,320
Audit Fee	£ 420	£ 420	£ 420
Training / Member Expenses	£ 800	£ 800	£ 800
Insurance	£ 3,000	£ 3,000	£ 3,000
Grants to Outside Bodies	£ 2,000	£ 2,000	£ 2,000
Special Projects	£ 14,150	£ 11,300	£ 13,750
Street Floral Displays	£ 1,000	£ 1,000	£ 1,000
Whitworth Valley News Magazine	£ 2,500	£ 2,500	£ 2,500
Investment Income	-£ 21,400	-£ 21,400	-£ 21,400
RBC devolved funding	-£ 22,150	-£ 22,150	-£ 22,989
Other income	-£ 838	-£ 1,638	-£ 800
Contingencies	£ 2,000	£ 2,000	£ 2,000
Financed from reserves	-£ 5,000	£ -	£ -
COST OF TOWN COUNCIL LEVY (£)	£ 83,914	£ 80,082	£ 69,901
Number of band 'D' equivalent units	2,377	2,365	2,257
Council Tax per band 'D' property (£p)	£ 35.30	£ 33.86	£ 30.97
Percentage increase per band 'D' property	4.3%	9.3%	14.1%
Actual increase per band 'D' property	£ 1.44	£ 2.89	£ 3.83



Monday	12pm-6pm
Tuesday	9am-5pm
Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	9am-5pm
Friday	9am-5pm
Saturday	9am-1pm
Sunday	Closed

Whitworth Library, right at the heart of the community, where you'll always get a warm Whitworth welcome. Check out these fabulous activities at the library for everyone to enjoy this Autumn/Winter. All are FREE unless stated.

Mondays

- 10:00 – 10:45 **Fitsteps** exercise class followed by Pilates (£8.00) 07939 087122 (Jan) for info
 14:00 – 16:00 **Knit and Natter** - all welcome!

Tuesdays

- 10:00 – 12.30 **Scrabble Club** Great company and good fun - why not join us?
 14:00 – 14:30 **Storytime and Crafts!** Stories and themed activities (18 months - 5 years)
 15.00 – 17.00 **U3A Wellbeing** 1st Tuesday of month - 07762 757925 (Sheila) for info

Wednesdays

- 10:00 – 11:30 **Rossendale Children and Family Wellbeing Session** for children aged 0-5 yrs
 18:00 – 20:30 **Yoga, Pilates and Relaxation** Contact Sheila Daly for details (07762 757925) (£5.00 donation)

Thursdays

- 09:30 – 10.30 **Learn My Way** Computer class for beginners
 10:00 – 11.30 **Shared Reading Group** All welcome!
 10:00 – 12:00 **U3A Family History** on last Thursday of month. T. 07790 192120 (Jean) for info
 14.00 – 15.00 **U3A Creative Writing** 1st Thursday of month. T. 07903 570008 (Kay) for info

Fridays

- 10:15 – 11:00 **Baby Bounce and Rhyme** (birth to 3 yrs)
 14:00 – 15:30 **U3A Card Games** on 2nd Friday of month. T. 07860 314968 (Helen) for info.
 15:30 – 16:30 **Teen Book Club** on last Friday of month. Come along to join!

Saturdays

- 10:30 – 12.30 **Lego Club** (ages 3+)
 10:30 – 11.30 **Arts and Crafts** (children, all ages)

And of course, the library has books, lots of books, including audio and large print. You can brush up your digital skills on the public computers, with free Wi-Fi and print and photocopy too.

If you, a relative, or someone you care for, can't get to the library, the team can bring the library home to you, via the Home Library Service. Get in touch by calling 0300 123 6703 and ask to be put through to Whitworth Library, or email: whitworth.library@lancashire.gov.uk

Follow the library or the Friends of Whitworth Library Group Facebook page, for news about events. You can also contact friendsofwhitworthlibrarygroup@gmail.com to be added to the mailing list.

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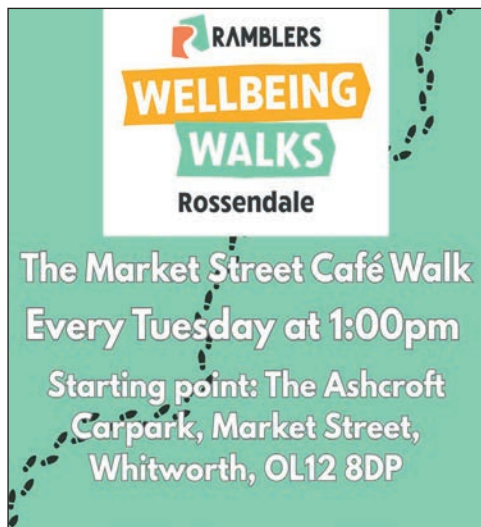
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Whitworth Town Council cannot be held
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RAMBLERS
WELLBEING
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Rossendale

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Whitworth, OL12 8DP



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police and communities together

IT IS REALLY IMPORTANT THAT ALL CRIMES ARE REPORTED

**TO REPORT A NON-URGENT CRIME OR INCIDENT, PLEASE DIAL 101 OR VISIT WWW.
LANCASHIRE.POLICE.UK/CONTACT-US/HOW-DO-I-REPORT-A-CRIME**

FOR EMERGENCIES DIAL 999

**THE DEDICATED COMMUNITY PCSO FOR WHITWORTH IS HEIDI KIRKBRIGHT, WHO CAN BE
CONTACTED ON 07790 970878 WHEN ON DUTY OR EMAIL 7356@LANCASHIRE.POLICE.UK**

**SIGN UP TO "IN THE KNOW" TO RECEIVE ALERTS AROUND CRIME PATTERNS IN WHITWORTH
STAYINTHEKNOW.CO.UK/LANCASHIRETALKING**

Lancashire County Council:

0300 123 6701 (general enquiries)
www.lancashire.gov.uk

Highways 0300 123 6780

Email highways@lancashire.gov.uk
Out of hours social care emergencies
0300 123 6720

Rossendale Borough Council:

01706 217777 (council tax, bin collections
and other services)
0300 222 5944 (revenues and benefits)
0300 22 5946 (out of hours emergencies)
www.rossendale.gov.uk

The Lighthouse Community Foodshare:

551-553 Market Street, Whitworth
Tue & Thu (10am-4pm)
Sat (10am-3pm) by appointment only
lighthousefoodshare@gmail.com
07922 951 096

Together Housing:

0300 555 5556 (general enquiries)

Homestart:

01706 214621 / emma@homestartrbh.co.uk
www.home-start.org.uk

Carers Link Lancashire:

01254 387444
info@carereslink.net
www.eastlancscareres.org.uk

Citizens Advice Rossendale:

Financial, welfare and benefits advice
0300 456 2552
www.carh.org.uk

The Samaritans:

01706 830999
(Freephone) 0800 116 123

Universal Credit:

(Freephone) 0800 731 9344

Lancashire Volunteer Partnership:

Befriending service for people who want
someone to talk to
www.lancsvp.org.uk
07779 972114

Initial Response Service

0800 013 0707

For urgent or general mental health issues

WHITWORTH TOWN COUNCILLORS

FACIT & SHAWFORTH WARD

Kim Blezard (Independent) 07931 760303 • cllr.k.blezard@whitworth.gov.uk

Louise Burton (Independent): 01706 852018 • cllr.louiseburton@gmail.com

David Chorlton (Independent): 07939 218266 • cllr.d.chorlton@whitworth.gov.uk

Mackenzie Ritson (Reform UK): 07496 186202 • mackenzieritson@rossendalebc.gov.uk

Sarah Rhodes (Independent): 07891 269998 cllrrhodes@outlook.com

Janet Whitehead (Independent): 07884 795201 • cllr.j.whitehead@whitworth.gov.uk

HEALEY & WHITWORTH WARD

Gareth Baron (Reform UK): 07773 307669 • cllr.g.baron@whitworth.gov.uk

Steven Butterworth (Reform UK): 01706 854402 - Redlionwhitworth@hotmail.co.uk

Alan Neal (Community First): 07817 414721 • cllr.a.neal@whitworth.gov.uk

Julie Greenwood (Independent) 07396 724607 • cllr.j.greenwood@whitworth.gov.uk

Scott Smith (Conservative): 07891 695962 • cllr.s.smith@whitworth.gov.uk

Michael Whitworth (Community First): 07850 910321 • cllrmikewhitworth@gmail.com

WHITWORTH TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES

The Ashcroft, Market Street Whitworth, OL12 8DP

Contact: Rachel Hodson, Town Clerk

Tel: 01706 852018 • Email: info@whitworth.gov.uk • www.whitworth.gov.uk

Office hours: Mon–Fri 9.30am–2pm

FORTHCOMING WHITWORTH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING DATES

All the following Thursdays:

19th February, 5th March, 19th March, 16th April and 21st May

All meetings are open to the public and take place at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber

See the Town Council website for details or contact the Town Clerk

ROSSENDALE BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

Councillor Alan Neal

07817 414721

alanneal@rossendalebc.gov.uk

Councillors Scott Smith

07891 695962

scottsmith@rossendalebc.gov.uk

Councillor Mackenzie Ritson

mackenzieritson@rossendalebc.gov.uk

07496 186202

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR

Councillor Daniel Matchett

daniel.matchett@lancashire.gov.uk

Office - 01772 537129

Mobile – 07856 930912

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Andy MacNae MP

andy.macnae.mp@parliament.uk

01706 489387 (Constituency Office)