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May 2026 Edition



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For more news items



Please visit our website at www.acornnews.co.uk for more news items and more in depth coverage of some of the items in the magazine.

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Pastures new

Peter here. This month I am doing the editorial because I have some exciting news about our editor Tracy. In the time honoured fashion of creating suspense, however, that comes later.

First of all, as most of you have been aware, Tracy's had a rough trot of things lately. In October 2024, Tracy had a serious fall and shattered her shoulder quite badly. She is still receiving treatment and couldn't even drive her car for the first ten months. Consequently, she had to let the Acorn office go at Oswaldtwistle Mills and store all her equipment.

She has improved markedly in the last few months though and we now have new premises at Office 8 in the Cannon Corner Business Centre, 1 Cannon Street, Accrington BB5 2ER.

Tracy wants you to know that although she is always on the move, if you ring her, she will arrange to meet you there.

Okay, I suppose you have waited long enough, here is Tracy's exciting news: Tracy had a recent phone call from Hyndburn Borough Council asking her would she accept the title of Honorary Freeman of the Borough. After she said "Wow," Tracy gladly accepted. I was one of the first people she told, which meant I had to keep quiet about it for a couple of weeks, which, of course I did.

I am also delighted for her. It couldn't happen to a nicer person. The award isn't just for her work with this magazine, but also for organising countless events in the borough, including being part of the organising committee for the Accrington Carnival for the past twenty years.

She receives her award on June 20th, which is coincidentally forty years since she started her newspaper career with the Citizen and the Lancashire Telegraph as head of Niche Publications. She is currently helping Zack Kerr to raise funds for NW Ambulance with his incredible fundraising football match at the Accrington Stanley Community Trust. Tracy says: "Watch this space!"

Peter Jones: Features & website

Useful numbers

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Hyndburn Borough Council (Emerg)	0800 587 5273
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Look who is reading the Acorn!



Chris Waddle was the Guest Speaker at the 63rd Annual Sportspersons dinner for Whinney Hill Football Club at the Poplar Working Mens Club. Andy Ashworth MC interviewed Chris about his football Career Ex Tottenham, Marseille, Newcastle & England, he told many stories which included Paul Gascoigne in front of a packed sell out audience. Purves Ali Chairman of Whinney Hill Football Club would like to Thank The Mayor, Special guests Chris Waddle and Comedian Martin Gold and all that supported the club on the evening to help raise good funds for the Club.

Pictured are Tracy From Acorn Community News, Chris Waddle, Purvis Ali and Pete Cockburn

Take a look on page 6

Interview with Julie Hesmondhalgh as she receives her Laurence Olivier Award.



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Trade Directories: A Useful Research Aid



Mayors viewpoint: Councillor Josh Allen

As my time as Mayor of Hyndburn draws to a close, I find myself reflecting with immense gratitude and just a little disbelief at how quickly the year has passed.

Serving this borough has been one of the greatest honours of my life. From opening community events and supporting our remarkable local charities, to meeting the dedicated volunteers who quietly keep Hyndburn thriving, I have had a front-row seat to the absolute best of our community spirit. I have also mastered the fine art of smiling through all weather conditions—an essential mayoral skill I had not fully appreciated before!

This year has been filled with memorable moments: celebrating local achievements, visiting our schools and businesses, and championing causes close to my heart. What has stood out most, however, is the warmth, resilience, and generosity of the people of Hyndburn. You have made this role not just meaningful, but truly joyful.

I have ended the mayoral year with the annual "Mayor's Ball" which was very well attended and supported by many, bringing a wrap to an amazing year where we had the chance to raise funds for my chosen charities; Andy's Man Club, Accrington Community Events, Church and Oswaldtwistle Royal British Legion and Last but by no means least the Cadet Uniformed Services, with Guides and Scouts at Harvey Street, Oswaldtwistle. I say a massive thank you to all who attended and made this night special.

As I hand over the chains of office I do so with pride in what we have achieved together and confidence in the future of our borough as we move into devolution and a new authority over the coming years.

Thank you for the privilege, the kindness, and the memories. It has been an unforgettable journey which will be cherished always.

Councillor Josh Blayne Allen
Mayor of Hyndburn

The Family Research Centre at 2 Straits, Oswaldtwistle is on your doorstep - and it's FREE.

The volunteers that run the Centre are ready and willing to help with your family history research. If you think you have come to an end and don't know where to turn, then the family history detectives might have the answer.

Why not give it a go? The Centre is open each Thursday and the first Saturday of every month from 1pm - 5pm. There is also a family history group which meets on the first Wednesday of each month at Accrington Sea Cadets, Harvey Street, Oswaldtwistle BB5 3LT.

When researching our family histories there are a great range of different types of records to consider. Have you thought of checking tax records? Benjamin Franklin famously did say that in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes. He was not thinking of family historians, but have you looked at the following tax records?

Land tax, Hearth tax, Poll tax, Window Tax

You may remember the recent Poll Tax we had to pay, but this type of taxation was not new.

In 1660 a married couple had to pay 6d each and single people aged 16 and over 1/- each. Depending on your social status and the value of your estate, you may have had to pay more but there were exceptions for the very poor.

A copy of the 1660 Poll Tax for this area is available to examine at the Research Centre.

The Window Tax also reminds us of the Revd Peter Walkden who, on 2nd Aug 1729 recorded in his diary, that the window assessor (who was referred to as the window peeper) was in the area and had informed him that as he had 10 windows he must brick up one of them or otherwise pay 6s per year (equivalent to £3.500). This tax was only abolished in 1851.

Lancashire Family History & Heraldry Society 2 Straits, Oswaldtwistle and www.lfhhs.org

Hyndburn Branch meet on the first Wednesday of the month at the Sea Scout HQ on Harvey Street, Oswaldtwistle at 6.45 pm. Most evenings we have a speaker but we are always willing to help with any research queries.



Spring Update from The Church & Oswaldtwistle RBL

Church and Oswaldtwistle Royal British Legion recently held their Spring quarter update meeting followed by a light buffet lunch and entertainment by 'The Wildflowers' acoustic group. During the meeting, Oswaldtwistle St Mary's Football Club were presented with a certificate of youth group affiliation with the branch. This award is in recognition of the support given by the club for fundraising for the Poppy Appeal and their recognition of the importance of acknowledging the service and sacrifices made by members of the Armed Forces Community. The certificate was collected by Cllr S Smithson of Oswaldtwistle on behalf of the football team.

Summer events for the branch will be advertised soon, and further information can be found on their Facebook page.

GOLD & SILVER ROADSHOW

FOR 1 DAY ONLY SUNDAY 7th JUNE from 10.30 to 4.00 pm

Jewellery and Coin Roadshow

A very lucky couple called at one of our recent roadshow events with a couple of old gold chains and a silver charm bracelet and a bag of old silver British coins. We paid them over £1600.00 just for the coins alone. They turned out to be pre 1947 silver coins that were normal currency a few years ago and are now highly collected.

We asked them for their permission to pass on this story to help other people realise what they may be sitting on and they were only too pleased to allow us to let everyone know that they might be sitting on a goldmine and not even know it!

Like most people, who can only dream of winning the pools or the lottery, a lot of normal households have a hidden treasure of old gold jewellery, silver jewellery, teapots, trophies, trays and old objets d'art. Why not get a free valuation from our expert at our roadshow at: **THE DUNKENHALGH HOTEL, BLACKBURN ROAD, CLAYTON-LE-MOORS, ACCRINGTON, BB5 5JP.** We will be there from 10.30 until 16.00. With Free Parking. There is no queuing and our expert will give you a one on one appraisal of the value of your treasured possessions in a private area, where there are no prying eyes, watching the process evolve. If you like the valuation our expert will make you the same offer in cash which you can accept or decline at no cost to yourself.



The whole process of Valuation is free of charge and very private, so you have nothing to lose and a lot to gain. Things that you should look for and bring to our roadshows are absolutely anything that looks like jewellery, whether it is yellow gold, silver or platinum.

Any old British or foreign coins. Any old wrist watches or pocket watches. All chains, bracelets, rings and bangles broken or not and in any condition. If you think it is a diamond ring, bring it along and we will confirm it to be genuine. If you have an old trophy or tankard or any silver coloured items, let us value them for you.

Coins & Medals Urgently Wanted

Old war medals and old Masonic medals can be very



valuable. You will be surprised to hear that we have paid THOUSANDS of pounds for certain war medals and even the General Service Medal group is worth bringing especially if you have the original box and letters to accompany them. Also of great interest are old military uniforms, tunics, hats and any army, navy or RAF field gear.

There are rarely any queues at our events and we can normally attend to every caller within a few minutes. We will give you a free valuation which we back up with a cash offer, there and then.

You can accept or decline our offer, so come along and see what we can offer for your old gold or silver jewellery, coins and collectables.

What Do You Have Waiting to be Discovered

Many people are totally unaware of the value of unusual and old items that they own and are just hidden away in drawers around the house. Dealers are now paying record high prices for old jewellery and gold and silver objects and collectables. Most unusual gold and silver items are no longer fashionable but there are still collectors who we deal with that will pay record high prices for your old gold and silver jewellery, and items. Wristwatches and old fashioned pocket watches can surprise you with their values and you will be amazed by the amount that is currently being offered for such items.

Get looking NOW in your old drawers, cupboards, and jewellery boxes. Look in the attic and the cellar, even old broken or squashed item of jewellery and silver are valuable and worth having appraised at these free roadshows. Bullion Investments & Acquisitions are having such a roadshow at: **THE DUNKENHALGH HOTEL, BLACKBURN ROAD, CLAYTON-LE-MOORS, ACCRINGTON, BB5 5JP.**

We will be there from 10.30 until 16.00. With Free Parking. They will be offering a free valuation service and they will make you an instant CASH offer to buy your old jewellery, gold and silver or any old silver or coins that you may have.

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Krugerrand, Maples and Sovereigns are urgently wanted for top prices.



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Gold and Silver cigarette cases, Vesta Cases, thimbles, Candle sticks, trays and all things silver are needed. Pocket watches in gold and silver and all wristwatches by: Rolex, Cartier, Omega, Longine, IWC are particularly collected



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“Our Julie”

talks to us about her Oliver Award

Distinguished local actor, Julie Hesmondhalgh, who writes an occasional column for the Acorn, was awarded a prestigious Olivier Award for Best Actress in a supporting Role for her depiction of Joan in the play “Punch,” at the 50th Anniversary of The Olivier Awards on Sunday, April 12th held at London’s Royal Albert Hall.

I sent some questions to Julie to learn more about the ceremony and her reaction to receiving this acting accolade. I also asked her what the play was about. Her answers to my questions were so thorough, I almost felt like I was sitting there next to her. Firstly, I asked how the play came about and how long it was at the Apollo. Here is what she told me:

“Punch started at Nottingham Playhouse and ran for 3 weeks in May 2024, then transferred to the Young Vic in London Feb-April 2025, then to the Apollo Sept-Nov 2025 for ten weeks.”

We had no idea when we started in Nottingham, how it would go down, and had no idea it would transfer. We should have known that James Graham, the playwright, would do something special.

“It’s a true story based on Jacob Dunne’s memoir. Jacob killed another young man, James Hodgkinson, on a night out in Nottingham city centre, with a single punch - which is more common than you’d imagine. “After serving a short prison sentence, the victim’s parents reached out to Jacob to engage in restorative justice - a system set up to help victims of crime by enabling them to tell of the harm done to them by the perpetrator. In this case, Joan and David, James’s parents, took an interest in what Jacob planned to do with his life, and this inspired him to go back to school and eventually get a degree.

“He and Joan now work together talking to young people about the dangers of one punch and about choosing a different way of life. They are both incredible people.”

I think most of us have watched many awards ceremonies over the years, and I am always curious about the moment when the golden envelope is opened, and whether or not that is the first time the nominees know who’s won, so I asked Julie and she put me straight.

“Absolutely genuinely, hand on heart, we have no idea. My heart was nearly jumping out of my chest - the adrenalin! I was nominated for a BAFTA for Broadchurch a few years back and had the same feeling, but I didn’t win that one, and honestly it was like all the air left my body when they said Vanessa Kirby’s name - I could have curled up and gone to sleep instantly as all the adrenalin left my body, and the relief (that I didn’t have to speak) flooded in! But this time I nearly fell over when they said my name.”

My last question to Julie was probably the most important one. I asked her for her reaction when they had called her name and if she talked with the two people who announced her award; Ambika Mod and Minnie Driver and what went on after that. Her reply was so descriptive; it made me feel like I was there.

Julie told me: “I had some insane competition for that BAFTA: Liv Hill, Vanessa, Anna Friel, but I also had insane competition for the Olivier!”

“I had a lot I wanted to say and very little time, so I was very focussed on not messing about. We worked with some amazing organisations during the making and performing of Punch, including Remedi for Restorative Justice and the Forgiveness Project, and Go Live who enabled hundreds of young people, many of whom had never been to the theatre before, to come and see Punch in the West End and hear the real Jacob and Joan speak.

“That was a highlight of my career. Also, our producers donated their profits to educational outreach work around the themes of the play, setting a new standard for commercial theatre and I wanted to shout about that. Finally I said that I knew the play had resonated so deeply with everyone who was involved and all who came to see it because, in this world, characterised right now by conflict and division, it showed us all a different way to be, inspired by curiosity, compassion, love and hope.

“All that got cut from the telly version! But at least I got to dedicate it to the real Joan, the extraordinary mum I had the honour of portraying. That was what I wanted to do most. My poor husband had already been told there’d be no time to mention him!

“It felt really amazing. And the whole night was just wonderful I- what a show! I got to see Rachel Zegler sing Don’t Cry for Me Argentina! And met so many fantastic people. It was like a dream.”

Interviewing Julie Hesmondhalgh is always a pleasure and over the years I would like to think we are now friends. May I thank you on behalf of the Acorn ounce more Julie for letting us into your world.

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Community Solutions Launch

Free Garden Party for the Whole Community



Shincracker Swing outside Elmfield Hall, and visitors enjoy the 2025 garden party.

Community Solutions North West is delighted to announce a free Community Garden Party for local residents, taking place at Elmfield Hall in Gatty Park, supported by Hyndburn Council.

The event will take place on Friday 22nd May 2026, from 1pm to 4pm, at Elmfield Hall, Gatty Park, BB5 4AA.

The afternoon promises a fun-filled, relaxed day for people of all ages, bringing the community together in a welcoming outdoor setting.

Visitors can enjoy live entertainment from Shincracker Swing, creating the perfect atmosphere for a summer celebration. There will also be a raffle and tombola on the day, with all proceeds supporting the work of Community Solutions North West.

Guests are encouraged to bring along their friends, family, and a picnic blanket, as gazebos and picnic areas will be set up to help everyone relax, connect, and enjoy the day together.

Mr Gatty's Tearoom will be open throughout the event, serving refreshments, drinks, and a selection of delicious cakes.

This free event is open to everyone, and Community Solutions North West hopes to see the whole community come together to celebrate, socialise, and enjoy everything the day has to offer.

For more information, please contact Community Solutions North West on 01254 460080 or email info@csnw.co.uk.

Accrington Live:

Accrington Live, took place on Easter Sunday (5 April) in the Tiger Lounge car park, offering a full day of live performances, local food, family entertainment and a fantastic community atmosphere.

100's attended with a fabulous vibrant atmosphere of live music

The event, was organised and hosted by the Tiger Lounge, and was delivered with support from Hyndburn Borough Council's Culture and Heritage fund, which aimed to encourage local creativity, widen access to cultural activities and bring residents together.

Throughout the day, visitors enjoyed a diverse lineup of live bands, street food traders, fully stocked bars, marquees and chill out areas, and a main stage providing continuous entertainment. The festival is designed to showcase local talent and offer a welcoming space for residents of all ages.

Acts included Zoltar-The Staags- NRG-ALI -The Ed Show Live -The Haze-Superchunx – The Oasis Experience – massive headline finale with wall-to-wall anthems

In addition to the live music, despite the cold weather a crowd participated in a special Culture and Heritage Walk, Hosted by Tracy Simmonds from The Acorn, the experience began with a short introductory talk before setting off on a guided walk through the town. Designed to be engaging and accessible for all ages, the walk highlight key historical landmarks, uncover lesser known stories, and brought local heritage to life as part of the day's celebrations.

Event organiser Damian Cunliffe, Tiger Lounge, said:

"We're thrilled to have brought Accrington Live to the town. Our aim created a mini festival experience that everyone enjoyed, whether it was for the music, the food or just a great day out with friends and family. The support from Hyndburn Borough Council had made it possible.





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If you would like to find out more, come along to our friendly, relaxed Lady Boss coffee morning.

You will have the opportunity to meet and ask questions to the programme delivery team, hear from participants who have previously completed this course share their thoughts and experience.

Finally to top it all there will be plenty of coffee and cake on offer too.

Lady BOSS Coffee Morning



Wed 10th June | 9:30am - 12:30pm

Hyndburn Borough Council, Scaitcliffe House,
Ormerod St, Accrington, BB5 0PF

If you are a Hyndburn resident and would like to book a place please email business@hyndburnbc.gov.uk



Joan is undefeated on a Century

Clayton-le-Moors resident, Joan Turner just celebrated her 100th birthday. She says she was born on Primrose Day in 1926. I had to look that one up and found that Primrose Day is April 19th and is so called in memory of British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli's death, which was on that day in 1881. According to Queen Victoria, the primrose was his favourite flower, and she laid a wreath of primrose on his grave soon after his death. On her birthday, Joan was delighted to receive a card from the King and Queen.

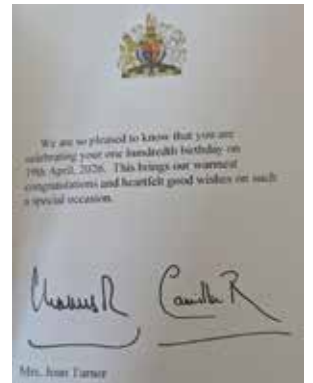
Joan doesn't look anything like her age and still lives in her own flat off Whalley Road in the town. Her home is modern and spotless and although she has some mobility problems, she is otherwise self-sufficient.

When the Acorn called, she told us she didn't get out much these days, but still bought clothes and accessories from the QVC channel.

Growing up, Joan attended Blakey Moor High School in Blackburn. She served in the RAF and worked for ten years as a telephonist in Blackburn.

She was married to Allan Turner for over 60 years prior to his passing in 2009. The couple shared three children: Vivienne, Valerie & Christopher; 3 Grandchildren: Hayley, Christopher & Jack and 2 Great Grandchildren: Mia, Hattie & new edition Aurora.

Joan loves to watch Wild Life Documentaries, and Gardening programmes. Her former interests included dressmaking, Knitting and puzzles. We wish her continued good health going forward.



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The history of the Dunkenhalgh Hotel

Mercure Blackburn Dunkenhalgh

Blackburn Road, Clayton Le Moors Lancashire, BB5 5JP Blackburn, United Kingdom

Phone: +44 1254 303400 Email: H6617@accor.com



The name 'Dunkenhalgh' comes from Roger de Dunkenhalgh who built the house. Dunkenhalgh first appears in recorded history in 1285. In 1332 it came into the hands of the Rishton family who held it for 239 years. The Rishtons acquired the Dunkenhalgh Estate through the marriage of Henry De Rishton in 1366.

The name 'Dunkenhalgh' comes from Roger de Dunkenhalgh who built the house. Dunkenhalgh first appears in recorded history in 1285. In 1332 it came into the hands of the Rishton family who held it for 239 years. The Rishtons acquired the Dunkenhalgh Estate through the marriage of Henry De Rishton in 1366.

The Rishtons owned the Dunkenhalgh until 1571 when it was sold to Thomas Walmesley, a man of the Law, who had a distinguished career, becoming Sergeant at Law in 1580: Member of Parliament for Lancashire in 1589 and a Judge of the Common Pleas in the same year: Being knighted by James 1 in 1603 and granted a priest for his private chapel at the Dunkenhalgh. He acquired great wealth, which he spent on enlarging his estate, both in Lancashire and Yorkshire. He died in 1612 having made considerable additions and alterations to the Dunkenhalgh, which he passed to his son Thomas, whose son (another Thomas) was knighted by James 1 at Ashton Hall near Lancaster in 1617. He was a Member of Parliament for Clitheroe in 1621 and for Lancashire in 1625. Sir Thomas Walmesley died in the Dunkenhalgh in 1642 and was succeeded by his grandson Richard, a minor. In the following year the house was occupied by Roundhead soldiers the night before the fight at Whalley.



Wedding Fayre, Sunday 17th May, 12pm until 2pm

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REJUVENATING SPA & DINING Our Restaurant & Bar brings together refined dining and relaxed comfort, celebrating the best of Lancashire produce in a classic country-house setting. Experience pure relaxation at Spa Naturel Fitness, set within the historic Mercure Blackburn Dunkenhalgh Hotel & Spa. Discover a haven of calm featuring luxurious treatment rooms, a heated indoor pool, sauna, steam room, and state-of-the-art fitness suite.

MEETINGS & EVENTS The hotel accommodates up to 400 delegates, with multiple meeting rooms, a business centre and free Wi-Fi. The hotel also offers an ideal backdrop for birthdays, baby showers, anniversaries, engagement parties and every celebration in between

Civil war broke out on the 22nd August 1642 and Richard, grandson of Thomas Walmesley, had just become Master of the Dunkenhalth and its estates at the age of eleven years. Cromwells troops took over the hall, and Richard, with his mother, crossed over to France and a steward, Adam Boulton, was left in charge. Adam Boulton struggled to keep the estate together when the tenants in Rishton refused to pay their rents and threatened Adam with his life.

The Dunkenhalth was occupied by Parliamentary troops under Colonel Shuttleworth of Gawthorpe who was a relative of the Walmesleys, and by April 1643, there were two troops of Parliamentary soldiers occupying the hall under the command of Captain Assheton.



Mayor of Hyndburn Josh Allen pictured with his ancestors Richard Walmesley in the Portrait Room

With the restoration of Charles II in 1661 Richard returned. He found that after the occupation by troops, it was necessary to restore the Dunkenhalth, and this he did at the enormous cost of £10000. He refurbished the mansion, laid out a magnificent deer park and employed expert landscape gardeners to lay out the grounds and gardens in French and Italian styles.

In 1662 a tax was imposed on hearths, two shillings per annum being paid to the King for every fireplace in any dwelling house. In 1666 the returns for the Dunkenhalth declared 31 hearths, and this was also the total number of hearths in the whole township of Church. This tax was abolished in 1688, but was replaced by a tax on windows.

The Dunkenhalth estate passed from the Walmesley's to the Petre's by the marriage in 1712 of Catherine Walmesley to Robert 7th Lord Petre, who died the following year leaving Catherine, aged 16 years, a widow with a baby son.

Dr Whitaker wrote in 1799, that "The house of the Dunkenhalth, with the stables and offices, nearly surrounds a large quadrangle, with an arched embattled gateway. From the style and appearance a great part of the building must have been erected by Sir Thomas Walmesley, the Judge, but the south and part of the west side are of a much higher antiquity".

In the following year, the greater part of the house, largely ruinous, was pulled down and rebuilt in the fashionable gothic style of the period. Little of the earlier buildings are visible, though it is not improbable that some of the internal walls and foundations are ancient. The oak panelling in the Oak Room came from Hacking Hall, Billington, another property belonging to the estate, and the fine staircase dates from the early eighteenth century. There are several interesting family portraits in the Portrait Room. The part of the Dunkenhalth, or Dunklaw, as it was very often named, at one time over 600 acres in extent, has been considerably curtailed. It was at one period famous for its deer.

It still contains some fine oak, lime, beech and other trees while the old yew walk reminds us of the fashion in gardening of the Jacobean days. There were several ancient stones in and about the grounds, including a very curious sundial. By the wall are grouped a number of querns and mortars. There is also a stone slab with

the figure of an angel, bearing a shield with the Paslow Arms. This was formerly built into the walls of a house in Elkar.

You will notice that the house has been designed to look like a castle. This is known as a crenellation. In medieval England a license to crenellate granted the holder permission to fortify their property. Such licences were granted by the King. Licences to crenellate were mainly symbolic representations of lordly status: castellation was the architectural expression of noble rank. They indicated to the observer that the grantee had obtained 'royal recognition, acknowledgment and compliment' They could however provide a basic deterrent against wandering bands of thieves and it is suggested that the function of battlements was comparable to the modern practise of householders fitting highly visible CCTV and burglar alarms, often merely dummies. The crown usually did not charge for the granting of such licences, but occasionally charged a fee of about half a mark.

Through the lower part of the grounds flows the river Hyndburn, and there is also a small ravine. From the stone bridge a passage preceded to another bridge, near the old kitchen gardens, known as the "Boggart Bridge". This brings up the story of the Dunkley Bogart, which old residents spoke of with bated breath. In our grandfathers time people compelled to pass Dunkenhalth after nightfall cast around many a fearful and furtive glance. Not "for love or money" could anyone be prevailed upon to pass that way of the witching hour of midnight on Christmas Eve. This ghost or boggart is supposed to appear every Christmas Eve in the form of a young lady, dressed in a winding sheet, who moves along the trees and by the site of the bridge, then disappearing. The story goes that in olden times, when the Petre family were in their "Hey Day", they had a young French lady as Governess to their children, known to all the countryside as Lucette. One Christmastide there came a dashing young officer who fell in love with Lucette, soon found a way to woo her, and gained her affections. But he never intended to marry her. The deceiver rode away after he had accomplished her ruin and promised return. The promise was false and Lucette realised that the Dunkenhalth was no place for her but did not dare go home to France. Often she wandered about in the gloaming, through the glades where her false lover had gone. Her reason failed at last and one stormy night she wandered to the bridge and threw herself into the rushing torrents. Such was her fate...but her lover did not escape; her brother, who thus avenged the death of his sister, killed him in a duel. Her ghost, dressed in her burial cloak, is still said to haunt the scene of her unfortunate love on Christmas Eve.

In 1942 the house, which was owned by Captain C Petre, was opened as a private school. It lasted only a few years as a school before going bankrupt. The house was then sold to a Mr. N. Burton of Manchester with the intent of converting it into a Hotel. In September 1947 the house opened as The Petre Arms Hotel. In 1950 the hotel was sold and became The Dunkenhalth Hotel.

The house since 1950 has undergone many changes, which include an extension in 1957, which is now known as the "Pendle Suite", followed by a further extension known as the "Towneley Suite" the same year. The gothic conservatory was replaced by the existing one shortly after. The courtyard was re-designed to accommodate the Leisure Club. The most recent addition is a further block of 50 executive rooms being completed in April 2005.

From 1950-1994 the hotel was owned and run by local and national brewery chains without success. A small but ambitious Scottish company, Macdonald Hotels, secured ownership in 1994 and made it what it is today, one of the Northwest regions finest four star properties, renowned for quality service whether for business or pleasure. Supplying first class accommodation, leisure, conference and banqueting facilities to all.

At the beginning of 2007 a company called Moorfield Real Estate purchased the premises and signed a management contract with Accor Hotels, a company recognised throughout the world as a market leader in the hotel and services industry.

Accor have placed the Dunkenhalth Hotel within the prestigious Mercure branded portfolio. The dawn of a new era.

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Community Invited to Share Memories as Heritage Group Launches

Community Solutions North West is calling on local residents to get involved in its newly launched Heritage Group, which began on Wednesday 8th April.

The group aims to celebrate and preserve the rich history of the local area, and organisers are keen to hear from as many people as possible. You do not need to be a participant of Community Solutions to take part - this is a project for the whole community.

Do you have fond memories of Gatty Park? Stories from Elmfield Hall? Or experiences of Community Solutions that have made a difference to your life?

Whether it's a childhood memory, a family story, or a moment that means something special to you, every story matters. The Heritage Group is particularly interested in hearing:


Whether it's a childhood memory, a family story, or a moment that means something special to you, every story matters. The Heritage Group is particularly interested in hearing:

- What does Elmfield Hall mean to you?
- What does Gatty Park mean to you?
- Have you accessed services from Community Solutions?
- What impact has this had on your life?

By sharing these memories, the group hopes to build a lasting collection of stories that reflect the heart and history of the community.

Sessions are friendly, welcoming, and open to all. Whether you'd like to share your story, listen to others, or simply find out more, you'll be warmly welcomed.

To get involved or find out more, please contact Community Solutions North West on 01254 460080 or email info@csnw.co.uk



Great Harwood Civic Society
Formed 1908

Events for 2026

Saturday, June 6th - Boundary Walk – This traditional 10mile walk around the Great Harwood boundary is open to all ages and provides an opportunity to witness the local stunning scenery.

Saturday, August 15th – Annual Charity Fair
The annual Charity Fair on the Town Hall Square gives the local faith, voluntary and community groups the opportunity to raise money for their organisations at the same time publicising the good work they do in the area for our benefit.

Friday, August 21st – Crying the Fair – On St Lawrence Day, August 21st, the Town Crier “Cries the Fair” to commemorate the town receiving a Charter from King Edward III in 1338 as a thank you to local landowner, Adam Nowell, for helping him in his fight with the Scots.

Saturday, September 5th - Horticultural and Craft Show – This annual event gives locals of every age the opportunity to display the products of their green fingers and their handiwork in many other hobbies and pastimes. This year the Show will take place in the refurbished Mercer Hall.

Mid November – Annual Primary Schools competition – the 5 Great Harwood Primary schools compete for the Marian Smith trophy.

Friday, November 27th - Lancashire Day –Every year at Churchfield House the Great Harwood Town Crier toasts the monarch, the Duke of Lancaster, and the opportunity is taken to sample some of the traditional Lancashire fare.

Sunday, December 20th - Carols Around the Tree –The band of the local Salvation Army provides the music to accompany the carol singing on the Town Hall Square which is enjoyed by young and old alike – a “Must Not Miss” event.

More details about the events will be advertised closer to the date

For further information contact the President, Peter Holden, on 07906 463962



ACCRINGTON
COMMUNITY
EVENTS

Do you have what it takes to win Hyndbarns FIRST Junior Town Crier competition? do you have the “gift of the gab” or want to learn? join us on May 31st at the Harvey Street Sea Cadet Building, Oswaldtwistle to be taught how to be a Town Crier by Great Harwoods very own Town Crier, Mr Rowden Kerr. To apply, simply follow the link or scan the QR Code.

SCAN ME



**JUNIOR TOWN CRIER
COMPETITION
SUNDAY MAY 31ST 2026**

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APRIL

Grasmere Gingerbread & Windermere

Sunday 19th April - 9.00am-4.00pm

Senior - £20.00 • Adult - £25.00 • Child - £20.00

MAY

Llandudno Extravaganza

Sunday 3rd May - 11.00am-4.30pm

Senior - £37.00 • Adult - £40.00 • Child - £37.00

Whitby Fish & Ships

Saturday 16th May - 11:00am - 4:30pm

Senior - £37.00 • Adult - £40.00 • Child - £37.00

Howarths 1940's Weekend

Sunday 17th May - 10:00am - 4:00pm

Senior - £15.00 • Adult - £18.00 • Child - £15.00

PICK UP POINTS

Accrington - Castle Inn, Whalley Road
Clayton Le Moors - Car Park Atlas Street & Woodland Bus Stop Sparth Rd
Great Harwood - Tesco Bustop, Towngate Bus Stop
Rishton - St Peters & St Pauls Bus Stop
Blackburn - Penny Street & Ewood Working Mens Club
Darwen - Parliament Street Bus Stop, St Edwards Bus Stop
Clitheroe - Well Terrace Stand D & Aldi Bus Stop
Whalley - Bus Station Stand C

OTHER PICK UPS AVAILABLE

JUNE

Southport

Saturday 6th June - 10.00am-3.30pm

Senior - £20.00 • Adult - £24.00 • Child - £20.00

JULY

Chester with cruise

Saturday 25th July - 10.30am - 4.00pm

Senior - £30.00 • Adult- £35.00 • Child- £30.00

AUGUST

Blackpool Airshow & Zoo

Sunday 9th August - 9.30am - 6.30pm

Senior - £15.00 • Adult - £18.00 • Child - £15.00

York

Saturday 15th August - 10.30am - 3.30pm

Senior - £19.00 • Adult - £22.00 • Child - £19.00

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Local schools put to the test by BAE Systems

The annual Rotary International / BAE Systems Technology Tournament took place on Friday March 20th 2026 at Accrington and Rossendale College, Accrington.

Our regional competitions take place, on the same day across Lancashire and Cumbria.

The local Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley event took place at Accrington and Rossendale College, with 7 schools participating. 58 students made up 16 teams plus a team of Teachers.

This year's challenge:

The three sections, Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced, had different parameters to work with around the same basic problem:

Build and demonstrate a 4 wheeled vehicle, powered by an electric motor, to travel down a 100mm diameter pipeline to clear debris.

Vehicles could be decorated with artwork highlighting 'Energy Conservation'.

Teams had to work on a design for their vehicle, followed by construction and a demonstration of how well it worked.

The students enjoyed a great day, not to mention the teachers, putting different ideas forward, using wood, glue, elastic bands, an electric motor and cables.

All while developing teamwork skills, meeting deadlines, planning, design, build and performance skills, as well as getting to know students from other schools.

BAE Systems sponsored the event, with students receiving a certificate of participation and details of how to access the BAE Apprenticeship Scheme when considering their careers.

Rotary in East Lancashire organised the event, with Rotarians from Clubs across East Lancashire helping on the day. Rotary would like to thank BAE Systems and Accrington and Rossendale College for their continued support and the use of their premises.

A great day was enjoyed by all who took part!

The results were:

Foundation section:

Winners: Woodhey High School, Ramsbottom.

Runners up: Bowland High School, Grindleton, Nr Clitheroe.

Intermediate section:

Winners: Our Lady and St. John RC High School, Blackburn.

Runners up: The Hollins High School, Accrington.

Advanced section:

Winners: Senator Group, Altham.

Runners up: Nelson and Colne College.

Thank you for your support.

Further information is available from: Rotarian David Bleazard, Clitheroe Rotary, 17 Hippings Way, Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 2PQ.

Tel: 01200 444388 Mobile: 07736 742188 E-mail: bleazardd@aol.com



Celebrating our shared success

Dear Employer,

I wanted to take a moment to share some fantastic news with you, and to thank you for the part you have played in it.

East Lancashire Learning Group, bringing together Nelson and Colne College, Accrington and Rossendale College, and Lancashire Adult Learning, has been recognised as the number one further education college group in the country in the latest national achievement rate tables.

What this means in practice is simple but powerful. Learners who study with us are more likely to achieve their qualifications and exceed expectations than anywhere else in the country.

This is something we see every day through our work together. Learners grow in confidence, develop the right skills and behaviours, and go further than they thought possible. Just as importantly, they bring real value into the workplace.

For us, this achievement is not just about outcomes, it is about partnership. The opportunities you provide, the insight you share, and the standards you expect all play a vital role in shaping our learners. Together, we are developing people who are capable, motivated, and ready to contribute from day one.

You know the quality we strive for. Our learners are supported by exceptional staff, challenged to perform at a high level, and encouraged to develop the resilience and professionalism that employers value most. They do not simply meet expectations, they consistently go beyond them.

At East Lancashire Learning Group, integrity sits at the heart of everything we do. The way we support our learners, work alongside employers, and communicate our outcomes is always grounded in openness and consistency. You can be confident that this recognition reflects genuine, sustained excellence.

We are also proud to remain the only college group in the country to have maintained Ofsted Outstanding status for 20 consecutive years. For our partners, this means working with an organisation you know and trust to deliver, time and time again.

What makes this achievement especially meaningful is that it belongs to our region and to the partnerships that underpin it. As a group rooted in Lancashire, we are committed to supporting employers like you by developing the talent that helps your organisation grow and succeed.

We value the relationship we have with you and look forward to continuing to build on it. Together, we can keep creating opportunities, strengthening our workforce, and shaping a confident, capable future for our communities.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership. It truly makes a difference.

Warmest regards,

Lisa O'Loughlin CBE

CEO and Principal of East Lancashire Learning Group

Accrington Lions Club

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Free ticketed event food and entertainment

SUNDAY 31ST MAY 2026

1:30PM-5:00PM

Poplar Club Accrington

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Please advise of any dietary requirements

Charity Number: 1191479



Art Exhibition "Offerings" Everyone has a story, everyone is creative

Derelict Arts, in collaboration with **Maundy Relief** and its patron **Julie Hesmondhalgh**, is excited to announce that the art exhibition, "Offerings," which featured work from the people of Accrington and was displayed at the **Haworth Art Gallery**, in March, will be displayed at **The Dome** throughout May.

"Offerings" showcases the experience of real people in Accrington coming together, sharing stories and being creative. With handmade booklets on display to look through filled with authentic stories and artwork on display, along with handmade textiles, paintings and more autobiographical art, this exhibition invites viewers to experience the thought-provoking journey taken by real people in Accrington to showcase what they offer in art, in life, in themselves.

Phil Sykes, Co-Director of Derelict Arts, says: 'We're thrilled to show off the terrific talents and creativity of this amazing group of people we've been working alongside at Maundy Relief. This piece of work is an opportunity for the art group to flip the traditional narrative of support and show off what they have to offer.'

'The whole thing has been about authenticity. It's about being true to yourself.'
Kim, Maundy Relief Art Group member.

The exhibition is free and open to the public, with The Dome opening hours being Friday and Saturday, 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM.

About the Derelict Arts CIC

Derelict Arts is a non-profit organisation made up of Preston based artists and producers and is supported by Arts Council England, UCLan and Preston City Council. Their activity aims to generate new audiences for international, national and regional arts in the North West of England whilst also supporting the development of new emerging artists & producers.

About Maundy Relief

Maundy Relief is an award-winning charity based in Accrington, Lancashire, responding immediately to the needs of the people in their community. Established in 1998, Maundy Relief offers a range of services including food, accommodation, mental and physical health services and benefit advice. Their intention is to bring about sustainable change to those experiencing social exclusion, financial hardship and ill health, and also to support those individuals who lead chaotic and chronically unstable lives, for whom radical change in lifestyle is not currently possible.

About Julie Hesmondhalgh

Julie Hesmondhalgh is an Accrington born actress and narrator. She is best known as playing Hayley Cropper in the ITV soap opera Coronation Street, along with roles in Mike Lee's Peterloo, Happy Valley and the award winning Mr Bates Vs The Post Office.

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Time Gentlemen Please - part 2

— by Ellison Street

There was a well known challenge for those dedicated embibers of beer. This was to start in Church and take a glass in every pub between there and the top end of Union Road. This in post war years involved visiting thirteen establishments.

The starting pump sounded in the Church Commercial with only a short walk up Market Street to the Rose Bud, then the Railway Hotel just beyond the bridge. Having crossed into Ossy the first pub was the Royal Arms at number 4, which stood on the corner of a short back leading to the Empire cinema (later a dance hall). The next establishment was the Printers adjacent to the Palladium picture palace, handy for the staff at Naylors Printers across Union Road. Moving on, the next encounter was with the Horse Shoe at Nos.109-111, followed by the Foxhill 136-138. Next came the Tinker & Budget at 215, before the Bay Horse at 226. From there it was just a short stagger to the Golden Cross on the corner of Stone Bridge Lane, from where the end was almost in sight. But not before visits to the Royal Oak No.334, the Rose & Crown 372-374, before reaching the finishing urinal in the Black Dog at number 384. (For those who could still crawl there was a trek up New Lane to the White Bull)

There were more beer houses on this journey that could not be included as they had closed previously. These were the Greyhound Inn and the Musicians Inn at 61 Market Street, and at 17 Union Road the Startled Fox.

A similar challenge could have been undertaken on the length of Abbey Street in Accrington with The Brigade followed by The Golden Eagle (at 37), The Duke of Wellington (55), the Black Horse (58) where the origins of Accrington FC founder members of the first football league were discussed. After this in succession came the Arden (85), The Swan (117), the Weavers Arms (118) and the Bulls Head (124), not to mention the White Horse near to Spring Gardens.

Many local pubs gave a clue to the history of Accrington. Its almost a century since the last tram passed the Tramway at the corner of Timber Street and Manchester Road, close to the junction with Grange Lane and the former Toll House, The Alma at 388 Manchester Road commemorated the opening battle of the Crimean War of the mid-19th century. (the charge of the Light Ale Brigade not the Light Brigade).

Some buildings that were formally pubs are still standing, including the Derby on St James Street, the Richmond on Brown Street, the Bridge on Church Street, the Palatine on Frederick Street, the Imperial at the junction of Blackburn Road with King Street, the Adelphi in Avenue Parade and Kings Arms in Lee Street to name just a few. In Green Haworth the Red Lion in Bedlam and the Shoulder of Mutton. Whilst in Huncoat the White Lion and the Black Bull have also succumbed.

Many have gone forever, the Cricketers Arms in Pit Street, Welcome Inn on Elephant Street with the Colliers around the corner on Birtwistle Street, the Pickups Arms on the corner of that street and Spring Hill Road, with the Antley close to the boundary with Church at 449 Blackburn Road.

Local breweries supplied the majority of establishments Duttons, Lions and Thwaites in Blackburn, with Masseys of Burnley (The Old House At Home on Melbourne Street) providing an alternative. It was said that if you were baptised in one you didn't drink any of the others! Beverley's Brewery also supplied an off-licence on Nuttall Street not far from the Star and the Britannia pubs.

One pub that did its best to keep up with the times was the Hyndburn Inn at 314 Blackburn Road. This public house was the first to serve draught Guinness, brought about by the fact that the Catholic Club to the rear of the Sacred Heart Church also served it from the pumps rather than in bottles. When the bingo sessions commenced in this club there was a migration of men across the road, who asked for what they had been supping earlier. Such was the demand that the landlady had it installed to keep her clientele happy.

Who could possibly resist a visit to The Good Ale For Nothing at 52 Warner Street, (was there no Trades Description Act then?)

It's your round - so get some in. (may continue when I have sobered up)



The ornate Brown Street entrance to the former Richmond Hotel one of the newer hostelrys built



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HYNDBURN SCENE

Arden Inn Long Serving Live Music Venue

Friday 8th May 9.30 - LA82
 Saturday 9th May 4pm - Twin Junction
 Saturday 9th May - Dark Knight 19
 Sunday 10th May - Love Tattoo
 Friday 15th May 9.30 - Losing Touch
 Saturday 16th May 4pm - The Johnny Friendlies
 Sunday 17th May 7pm - Jaycee, Motown & Northern Soul set
 Friday 22nd May 9.30 - The Stories
 Saturday 23rd May 4pm - TBC
 Saturday 24th May 9.30 - One In Ten
 Bank Holiday Sunday 25th May 9pm - Best Kept Secret
 Friday 29th May 9.30 - Punkbox
 Saturday 30th May 2pm - 6pm - Northern Soul & Motown With DJ Dave P
 Saturday 30th May 9.30 - Band Of Gypsies
 Sunday 31st May 7pm - Missy Frankel
 Friday June 5th 9.30 - Into The Groove - 80s Band
 Saturday 6th June 4.30pm - Stuart Wolfenden
 Saturday 6th June 9.30 - Echo Beach 80s Duo
 Sunday 7th June 7pm - Razor Holler
 Friday 12th June 9.30 - Black Thursday



Summer Fair

Elmfield Hall
 Gatty Park
 Hyndburn Road
 Church
 BB5 4AA

Free Entry

Family Fun Day

Saturday 13th June 2026
 11am-3pm

Fairground Rides • Face Painting • Tombola •
 Ice Cream Van
 Family Games • Hook a Duck • Emergency
 Service Vehicles
 Craft Stalls • Raffle • Live Entertainment •
 Imperial Alliance
 DJ • Penalty Shootout • Stocks & Sponges

Mr. Gatty's Tearoom Open All Day

Contact 01254 460080 or info@csnw.co.uk



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SUNDAY 21ST JUNE 2026

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CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH ON

3rd Dec 26, from 6pm - Jubilee Gardens, Oswaldtwistle

WHAT'S ON?



If you know of any upcoming show or want to advertise something you are doing, give us a call or send us an email and we can shout about it for you!

Hyndburn Ramblers

Hyndburn Ramblers are an active group of people who enjoy walking and who organise regular walks throughout the year. We walk on Sundays and Wednesdays with walks of various lengths mainly in Hyndburn and the Ribble Valley sometimes into Yorkshire, Bowland and the Lake District. You are very welcome to join us.

Walks on Wednesdays are about 7 miles or 10 miles.

Walks on Sundays are about 10 miles.

Walks in May include:

Crookside Crag – Skipton 10 miles, Hebden Bridge 10 miles, Silverdale 10 miles.

Walks in June include:

Grimwith Reservoir – Grassington 10 miles, Gargrave 10 miles.

Contact: Pauline Hughes 07544 516116 or Visit our web site for more information: www.ramblers.org.uk/hyndburn

Oswaldtwistle Writers

Is there a writer within you? Why not join Oswaldtwistle Writers:

Our next meetings are on

**May 11th
June 8th & 22nd**

Everyone is welcome from complete beginner to novelist.

**For more details contact:
Peter Jones on 07763 822540**

We will be happy to see you there.

Whether you have something that you want to read out, or even if you just want to listen, you are very welcome, and you might even enjoy the experience.

Oswaldtwistle Writers started in 2010, so we have been helping writers express themselves for over ten years. Just come and check us out. We don't think you will be disappointed.



Cambridge Street

Methodist Church (off Burnley Road)

Movement To Music

Monthly On Tuesdays 2pm
19th May, 16th June

Come along for fun, friendship, gentle exercise. Only £3 (incl. Tea and Biscuits)

Ukelele Evening

Friday 15th May 7pm

to include: Pie & Mushy Peas
Donations to North West Ambulance gratefully received

Do you have a business and would like to feature it in the Acorn?

**JUNE
Oswaldtwistle Carnival
Fathers Day**

**DISTRIBUTOR
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**Great Harwood
Harwood Bar Area**

**For more information contact
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07971 772168

Garth's Memory Corner



Carnival June 1969 RR2



6851 ladies cricket 1963

**A new monthly feature in Memory of Garth
courtesy of the Dawson family**

**The Garth Dawson Archive Collection
is available to see on Facebook**



FREE ARTS & CRAFT DAY

**SUNDAY 31ST MAY 2026
1PM TO 3.30PM**

**SEACADETS BUILDING, HARVEY ST,
OSWALDTWISTLE**



**Lots of fun activities for FREE
plus, making flags and banners
to decorate Oswaldtwistle
Carnival field**





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Youth Hub Secures Second Year of Funding to Continue Supporting Young People in Hyndburn



Maggie Moody, CEO of Community Solutions North West, pictured with Mark Roberts, Project Manager, Rachel Place and Sarah Gregson, Youth Hub Coordinators, celebrating the continuation of the Accrington Youth Hub at Elmfield Hall.

Community Solutions North West, in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions, is delighted to announce that the Accrington Youth Hub, based at Elmfield Hall, has secured funding for a second year, ensuring continued support for young people aged 18–24 across Hyndburn.

Since its launch, the Youth Hub has provided vital employment, training, and wellbeing support to local young people, helping them build confidence, develop new skills, and take meaningful steps towards their future careers. The continuation of the programme reflects its strong impact and the ongoing need for tailored youth services within the community.

The Youth Hub will continue to act as a central, welcoming space where young people can access personalised guidance, connect with local employers, and benefit from a wide range of opportunities designed to break down barriers to employment.

Maggie Moody, CEO of CSNW, said “We are absolutely thrilled that the Youth Hub will continue for a second year. Over the past year, we’ve seen first-hand the difference this support makes to young people’s lives, helping them to grow in confidence, gain new skills, and move closer to employment or education. This continued funding allows us to build on that success and reach even more young people who need our support.”

The Youth Hub will maintain its strong partnerships with local employers, training providers, and community organisations, ensuring a holistic approach that supports not just employability, but overall wellbeing and personal development.

Young people can continue to access the Hub through referrals from Jobcentre Plus, with services including one-to-one support, skills workshops, careers advice, and wellbeing provision, all delivered in a supportive and inclusive environment.

This second year marks an exciting opportunity to expand the reach and impact of the Accrington Youth Hub, continuing to empower the next generation and strengthen the local workforce.

For more information about the Accrington Youth Hub and how to access its services, please visit www.csnw.co.uk or contact Community Solutions North West directly.



Baxenden Brownies help to Fund raise for the RSPCA!

- On Sunday 22nd March the Baxenden Brownies hosted a charity fundraising sale to raise money for the RSPCA Lancashire East Branch. They raised an incredible £540.00!! The Brownies are currently working towards their charity badge and chose the RSPCA Lancashire East as their charity. The RSPCA is currently fighting to keep their centre open by raising as much money as possible by the end of June 2026.

- Please visit the RSPCA Lancashire East Facebook page to keep updated on their progress, donate and book onto their current events!

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OFFICIAL ACCRINGTON STANLEY SUPPORTERS TRUST



A stunning new mural celebrating Accrington Stanley's proud history and the town's rich heritage has been officially unveiled by the Official Accrington Stanley Supporters' Trust (OASST).

Installed on the exterior wall of The Crown Pub, next to the Wham Stadium, the vibrant artwork is already turning heads and is set to become a must-visit destination for supporters, residents and visitors alike.

Project leaders at OASST are hopeful the mural will attract tourists to the area, providing a striking backdrop for photos while telling the story of both the football club and the town it represents.

The mural weaves together iconic elements of Accrington Stanley and the wider community. Among the many features are recognition of Accrington as a founding member of the Football League; a chimney symbolising Accrington's industrial heritage, complete with a blue plaque marking its Football League founding status and a list of the 12 founding members; a milk bottle, a nod to the club's famous television advert; the Accrington Pals; and the town's distinctive NORI brick.

The artwork also includes the outline of the Coppice, a celebration of the club's promotion to League One in 2018, the Stanley Ultras' drum, and many more carefully chosen references that reflect the pride and identity of the town. QR codes have also been included to help those visiting the mural to find out more, such as a history timeline.

The work was undertaken by the award winning, Liverpool based artist, Paul Curtis, who specialises in street art and large murals. He came to public attention with his very first piece of street art, "For All Liverpool's Liver Birds" (aka The Liver Bird Wings), which became a massive hit with locals, tourists and many famous faces too.

Since 2017, Paul has created more than 250 public pieces across the UK, with most of his work found around Merseyside and the Wirral, including pieces for Liverpool and Everton Football Clubs. His work is well known and seems all over the world and, amongst his many honours is being named in the tops 20 people who make Merseyside happy.

The project has been over two years in the making, with fans and the local community playing a central role throughout.

Over the past 12 months, the OASST in conjunction with #AmazingAccrington, carried out extensive consultation including special workshops, drop-in suggestion boxes at the Wham Stadium and matchday questionnaires. In total, 832 individual contributions were received during the consultation process, including one from Emmerdale star and Accringtonian Dominic Brunt, ensuring the mural truly reflects the voices, memories and passion of the local community. All of the contributions were grouped into different sections, which are reflected in the creation i.e. trophies, the landscape, the club's badge, industrial heritage and more.

In December 2024, the project successfully reached its fundraising target following an 11th-hour rally from #AmazingAccrington business leaders, who collectively pledged more than £4,000 to push the total beyond the original £18,021 goal.

Plans announced for £1.6m community football facility at Livingstone Road

Accrington Stanley Community Trust (ASCT) is pleased to announce plans to develop a new £1.6 million community football facility at the Livingstone Road site, adjacent to the Wham Stadium.

The proposed development will transform the site into a modern, high-quality grassroots football hub, featuring:

- A new full-size floodlit 3G artificial pitch
- A natural grass pitch
- On-site car parking
- A modular building including catering and toilet facilities

The project represents further significant investment in local infrastructure by ASCT and is designed to enhance opportunities for grassroots football and wider community participation across Accrington and the surrounding area.

ASCT is working closely with the Football Foundation to secure a substantial grant towards the construction costs, alongside ongoing collaboration with Hyndburn Council, with a formal planning application expected to be submitted in the coming months.

As part of the plans, current leaseholders Accrington Football and Sports Club CIC will vacate their existing lease to enable ASCT to secure a new long-term agreement on the site. This long-term lease will provide the Trust with the stability required to unlock significant external funding and deliver the proposed development. The project will be delivered in partnership with the current tenants, ensuring continuity and long-term benefit for the local football community.

The scheme is currently progressing through the necessary legal processes, with detailed designs for the site being developed.

Subject to completion of these stages, construction is scheduled to begin in Spring 2027, with the new facility expected to open in late Summer 2027.

Martin Fearon, CEO of Accrington Stanley Community Trust, said: "This is a hugely exciting development for both Accrington Stanley Community Trust and the local community. The Livingstone Road project represents a significant step forward in our long-term ambition to enhance local sports infrastructure and provide high-quality facilities that can support participation at all levels.

We are pleased to be working closely with the Football Foundation and Hyndburn Council to bring this project forward, and to be collaborating with Accrington Football and Sports Club CIC to deliver a facility that builds on the strong foundations already in place at the site.

This development will not only support grassroots football, but also create wider opportunities for community engagement, health and wellbeing, ensuring the site can meet the needs of the area for many years to come."

Craig Jenel, Chairman of Accrington Football and Sports Club CIC, said: "We are proud to have played a role in developing football at Livingstone Road over many years, and we fully support these plans to take the site to the next level.

Working alongside Accrington Stanley Community Trust, we believe this project will deliver a first-class facility for the local community and grassroots game. While stepping away from our current lease is a significant decision, it is the right one to ensure the long-term future and sustainability of the site.

We look forward to continuing to work in partnership and supporting the success of this exciting new development."

Warren Eastham, CEO of Accrington Stanley FC and Trustee of ASCT, said: "Grassroots football is the very lifeblood of the entire football pyramid. When games are being called off week after week and leagues are disrupted because teams can't complete fixtures, it highlights the urgent need for better facilities.

That's why this project is so important. The Football Foundation, our Community Trust, Hyndburn Borough Council and the grassroots game are all coming together with a shared purpose, to make a real, lasting difference for people across the borough.

I'm really looking forward to seeing the plans come to life, getting children off their Xboxes and back out playing sport, where they belong. It's also fantastic to see continued investment into the town from the Football Foundation, underlining their commitment to our community and the future of the game."

Further updates will be provided over the coming months.



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