

Bollington Lives!

ISSUE 95 SPRING '26



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Bollington Live!

ISSUE 95 SPRING 2026

MATT. IN. A.SUIT.

Yes, we know. It caused quite a stir. For years, our local creative director has bravely championed the shorts-all-year look, so seeing Matt suited and booted was enough to stop traffic in Bollington. But for the Crème de la Crème Cheshire Business Awards, a special occasion called for a special outfit.

And what an occasion it was. Finalists for Small Business of the Year (and, modestly, Power Couple of the Year), we thought it best to look the part. Turns out the suit worked — we won Small Business of the Year. Coincidence? We think not.

The award means the world to us, and we're incredibly grateful to our community for every vote and every kind word.



What makes this recognition extra special is Matt's journey. He first walked into the shop nearly thirty years ago on a work-experience placement (probably in shorts!) Three decades later, he's still here — having mastered a fast-changing craft through sheer passion, skill and commitment.

Awards are lovely. Sharing them with a community that's backed us all the way — even better. Thank you.

Vikki Wray

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



It is with much sadness I start this issue with a tribute to Mark Stedman, who passed away in December.

Mark was one of the founders of Bollington Live! and worked tirelessly securing adverts to fund the magazine from issue 1 in 1994 to issue 78 in 2020. Mark's volunteer work raising the finances for Bollington Live! truly sustained and secured the magazine the current committee are proud to produce today.

At the start of another year, on behalf of the committee I'd like to thank our huge team of deliverers who go out in hail, rain or shine (in Bollington, usually all three in the same afternoon!) delivering the magazine to every household. A massive thank you too to our advertisers and sponsors, everyone who takes the time to write and send in articles and to all the committee.

We usually have our Annual General Meeting (AGM) in January, but this year we have decided to move it to June, when the nights are light and the weather is more conducive to attendance! Our AGM will be on Monday 1 June at 7.30pm at the Community Centre on Ovenhouse Lane. Please come along.

Annette

Date for next copy:
15th May '26

Would you like to write something for the next issue of the magazine? Please email me: liveditor@happyvalley.org.uk

YOUR TEAM

Editor: Annette Hurst - liveditor@happyvalley.org.uk

Design, Layout & Print: Matt Wray & Vikki Wray - Bollington Printshop Ltd 01625 574828

Editorial Team: Sandy Milsom, Janet Beech, Hannah Atkin, Ken Edwards,

Kate Gooding, Helen Wright, Claire Moreland,

Clare Foat, Sarah McKendrick

Advertising: Simon Nottage 07411 521179, Pat Cooper - liveadverts@happyvalley.org.uk

Distribution: Janet Beech - 01625 574618 livedistribution@happyvalley.org.uk

Treasurer: Peter Kennedy - livetreasurer@happyvalley.org.uk

Events: Claire Moreland - livedates@happyvalley.org.uk

Front Cover: Photo kindly provided by Steve Murphy



Bollington Live! is published three times a year on a non-profitmaking basis, with free distribution to households in the town. Under the editorial banner of "*Bollington Live!*" - A voice for everyone" we aim to promote local concerns. The Editor cannot be held responsible for the opinion of contributors, the accuracy of the events listings, or the content of external websites referred to within this magazine.

Bollington Live! is an independent publication. It was established in association with Bollington Arts Centre & Bollington Civic Society. The copyright of all articles and images submitted remain with the respective owner(s) and all submissions are reproduced with grateful thanks. No part of *Bollington Live!* may be reproduced in any form without the express permission of the editor.

Back Issues: www.happyvalley.org.uk/live

MARK STEDMAN A PERSONAL TRIBUTE



Mark Stedman, one of the founders of Bollington Live! Magazine, passed away in December, leaving this magazine as a legacy of his involvement in Bollington's community activities over thirty years.

Mark was born in Swansea in 1933 before moving to Dundee as a child. As war was raging Mark and his brother Michael were evacuated to Vancouver, Canada where his mother, Margaretta, had family. The whole family settled in Highgate, North London when Mark was 11.

He met Jean Barke while they were both studying at Cambridge University and they were married in 1956. They lived in Somerset, where Mark obtained a teaching post. Mark later worked for a teachers' union back in London. They vowed that on retirement, they would leave the city and settle somewhere in the countryside.

Second only to their family – Jean and Mark had three children: Carol, Thomas and John – their greatest love was undoubtedly boating, having bought their first boat, 'Water Hobbit', in 1968. It was boating which eventually led to their arrival in Bollington. On

retirement, the requirement for their new home was that it must have a mooring suitable for their narrowboat, 'Margaretta'.

Andrew Hart, the local estate agent, called to inform them that he'd measured the mooring at a property on the Macclesfield Canal in Bollington and they moved here in 1993. They went by boat to places as far afield as Bristol, Ripon and Lancaster. The trip to Bristol took them back to their boating roots with 'Water Hobbit'.

I was delighted to be able to join them for a cruise through the stunning Standedge Tunnel deep under the Pennines, and on another occasion, the Anderton Boat Lift, along with regular trips to Marple in the north or the Fools Nook Inn to the south.

Shortly after settling in Bollington, Mark answered an advertisement in the Macclesfield Express for volunteers to join a group launching a magazine about life in Bollington.

At this meeting he met John Liley and Dr John Coope, who explained the project. John Liley became the first editor, while Mark offered to

find the advertisers and organise the distribution of the magazine. The first issue of Bollington Live! was delivered free to every household in Bollington in 1994.

Mark became a Town Councillor in 1995. He had been involved in politics and the Labour Party for his entire life, but it was not until Bollington that he was elected. He served as Town Mayor in the year 2000, celebrating in style with Bollington at that year's Bollington Festival.

It was through Mark that I too was elected to the Town Council and had the honour of being Town Mayor in 2003. Again, I would not have become involved with Bollington Live! if not for Mark, being the editor of this magazine for eight years. I thank Mark for his friendship and support throughout this time.

Mark says in his memoir, *From Highgate to the Happy Valley: 'The work I have done for the magazine Bollington Live! has probably taken more time and effort from me than my membership of the Town Council, and it may well have had better results as well. Had I not responded to the advert in the local newspaper my life in Bollington would have been quite different. I am sure the magazine has fostered the town's community spirit, produced new ideas, and provoked debate; and I soon valued the friendship of the other committee members.'*

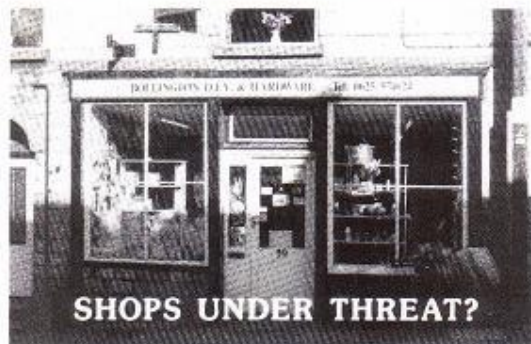
Mark lost his wife Jean in 2024, and Bollington has lost a true champion of our community.

This issue is dedicated to his memory.

Anthony Holland

Photo: Mark and Jean

Below: From the first issue Mark worked tirelessly to secure advertising revenue to fund Bollington Live!



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- WHAT'S ON
- THE ARTS
- SHOPPING
- TRAFFIC
- SPORT

PHOTO - REFLECTIONS

You'd be amazed by some of the photos you get to see at the Bollington Photographic Group's meetings.

Having only been a member for a little over a year, I'm rarely among the providers of such gems, but I certainly am beginning to appreciate more than the obvious first impressions – the lighting, the angles, the contrasts, when black and white makes the best photos, when sepia is introduced – and that's on top of the subject matter, whether it be the beautiful views around Bollington, of holidays from all over the world, architecture or still life. I find I'm infected by the members' enthusiasm and inspired to take different photographs of different things.

Looking back on the meetings and events we've enjoyed during 2025, I realise just how many different activities and varied agendas there have been. A regular feature is the 6-in-10 evening. Members (and visitors) are invited to put six of their most interesting photos on a memory stick and present their thoughts as to what they like about them, one at a time.

Viewers then admire and constructively comment on how the photograph might be improved by changes, perhaps to lighting or cropping, or benefit from some post-processing. Often, experts in the group make some of these improvements there and then, and

sometimes it provokes a discussion that leads to a subsequent evening of instruction. All very democratic, and no airs and graces!

We recently enjoyed a visit to the Old Brickworks in Pott Shrigley, led by the current owner, Colin Hammond, as the latest in five generations of his family that have worked there. The tour was highly informative and inspired some great photos. One example featured a stack of yellowish bricks with a brightened image of one of the buildings superimposed to highlight its detail and provide texture. The process was demonstrated to us at the subsequent meeting.

We've lived in the area for nearly twenty-five years, but we've found new walks and roads we didn't know existed. One such was in Kerridge, which introduced us to some wonderful heritage properties, and great views over the Cheshire plain. The walk was taken at a gentle pace, facilitating conversations on all sorts of subjects as well as allowing plenty of time to take advantage of new things to photograph.

Other photo walks in the summer have seen us explore the many ginnels of Bollington, be challenged by high contrasts of sunlight and shade and moving water, and in winter produce light trails from slow shutter speeds, enjoy the reflections in the brass instruments around White Nancy on Christmas Day

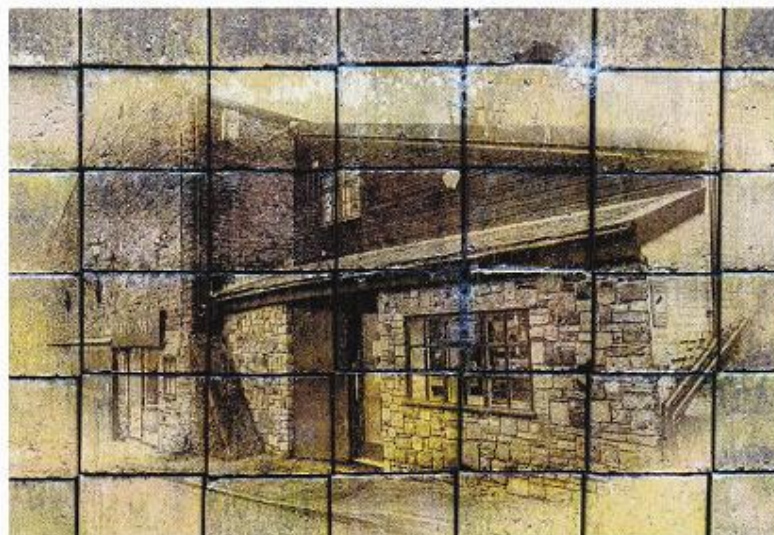


Photo: The Old Brickworks taken by Simon Nottage



Bollington Photographic Group



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www.bollingtonphotogroup.org

and observe festive decorations in a new light.

There's a regular competition on a variety of chosen topics – some challenging one's creativity. The winners are chosen by the members allocating weighted votes to the entries. The standard is high – at least for me!

And to top it all, whilst the photo-walks and visits are out and about, the Thursday evening meetings are in the Turners Arms with a pint in hand, among a group of lovely people that are now friends. What more could one ask?

David Hirst

Bollington Photographic group

Spring 2026 events

March 5th

'Beyond the monitor - from Pixels to Prints.'
Turners Arms 7pm

March 12th

Julie Taylor Newton has invited us to her
Shepherds Hut!

March 19th

Bollington Printshop presentation
Turners Arms 7pm

March 26th

Photo Walk: We look for 'Opposites'!

April 2nd

A.I. Turners Arms 7pm

April 6th

Steam Day at the Anson Museum

April 16th

Share 6 photos in 10 minutes. Turners Arms
7pm

April 23rd

Photo Walk: Bakestonedale. Start at the Coffee
Tavern

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SILK CAT RESCUE

As an animal lover I am happy to support various animal charities, and although I consider myself a dog person, I also love our feline friends. I went to visit Irene and Mike North, who run a small charity on Long Lane, helping stray and unwanted cats and kittens in our area, to see the impact that this small charity has and witness the love and kindness of the volunteers involved.

Mike and Irene have been involved in cat charities for a long time as volunteers. In 2018 they set up Silk Cat Rescue and registered with the Charity Commission. It's a small, friendly charity run entirely by cat-loving volunteers doing what they can to find homes for unwanted and stray cats in the local area. Mike and Irene want to keep their charity small and keep their overheads to a bare minimum, so virtually all the money they receive is used on the care of the cats.

'The charity receives many requests for help, and it is, at times, heartbreaking for our volunteers that we cannot do more', says Irene. But limited time and resources mean they have to be realistic in order to maintain their high standards of care. The cats are housed in cosy, clean and warm cabins, each accommodating one or two cats, and a safety corridor ensures no chance of escape. The four-star accommodation was a do-it-yourself project for the volunteers and seems to be well received by the feline residents, who have superb views over the surrounding fields.

People needing help ring up to relinquish cats for many different reasons, and wherever possible, Silk



Cat Rescue will admit them. Upon admission each cat is checked by a vet, defleaed and wormed.

The charity has a trap-neuter-return programme for feral cats and community cats who are fed by kind members of the public. They are humanely trapped, neutered and returned to the site. This is a well-recognised means of population management. Any socialised cat or kittens are taken into care to be rehomed. Cats taken into care are neutered, vaccinated and, if they are in good health, are ready for adoption.

The process of adoption is very thorough and painstaking. Silk Cat Rescue will check on the location of the proposed adoption and ensure that it's safe and that the cat matches the possible adopter's needs. They can come and sit with the cat and then they have time to provide whatever the cat will need. Then the cat can be collected and a follow-up arranged.

From June 2024 it's been a legal requirement for cat owners to have their cats microchipped and to ensure their contact details are stored and kept up to date in a pet-microchipping database.

Photos:

Irene North

**Volunteer Elise
with one of the
cats**

www.silkcatrescue.org.uk

Tel: 07754 337089

This significantly increases the chances of a cat being reunited with its owner if it strays. This is done before rehoming. The charity has many successes with happy rehoming and an excellent relationship with the Bollington Veterinary Centre who, as Irene says, will go the extra mile to help.

If you want to know more about the charity, Silk Cat Rescue has an excellent website which answers many of the questions people ask and also suggests ways we can help either volunteering or fundraising. They are also partnered with the King's Trust and the charity welcome three participants each year for work experience. *'This is always enlightening and we hope the candidates benefit from their time with us - we certainly do',* says Mike.

I found this visit enlightening too. Did I leave with an adopted cat? No, not on this occasion, as I have so many canine visitors – some of whom are terrified by cats – I felt it would be unfair on both species.

Sandy Milsom

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Bill P.
Photographer

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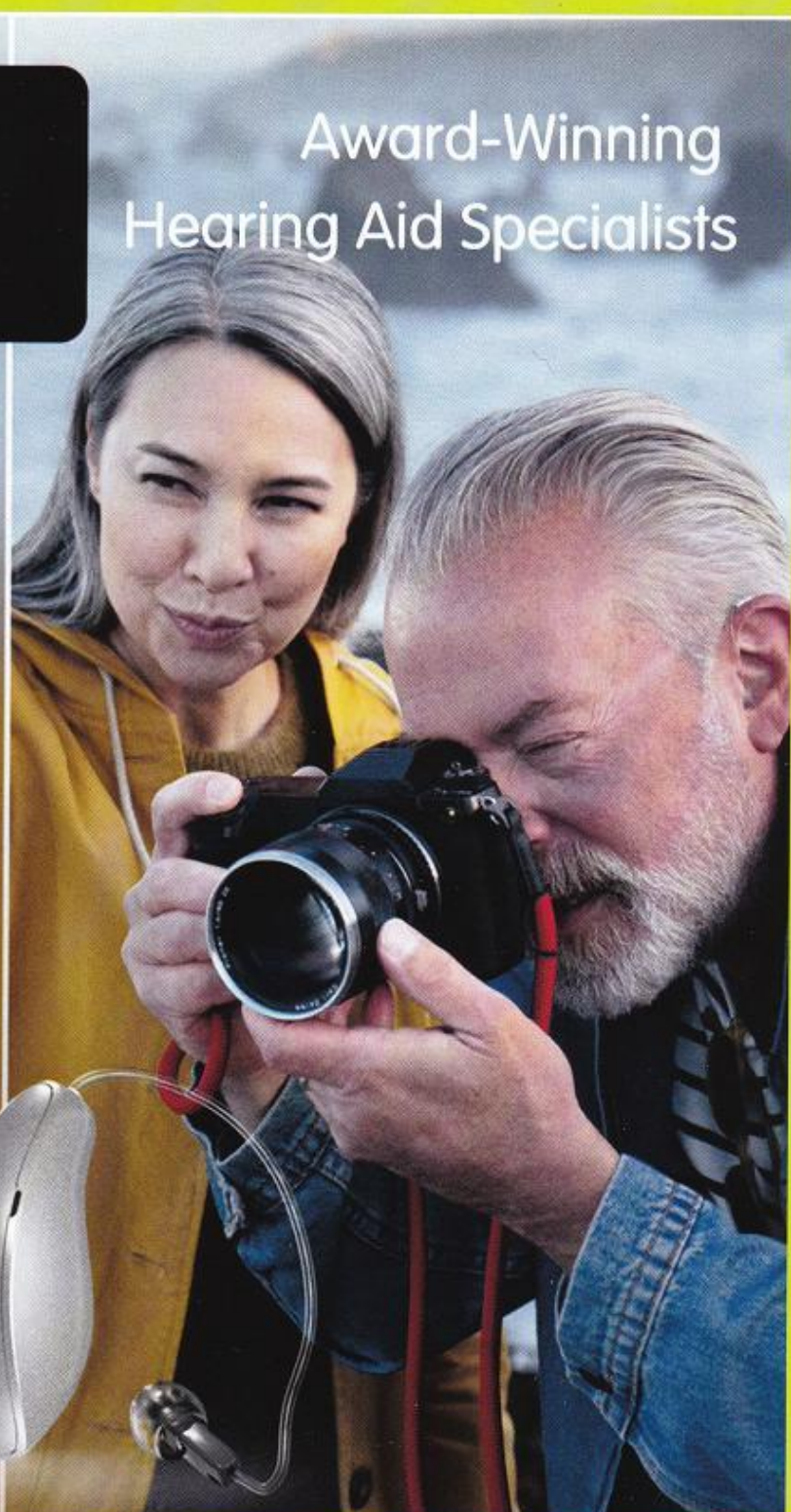
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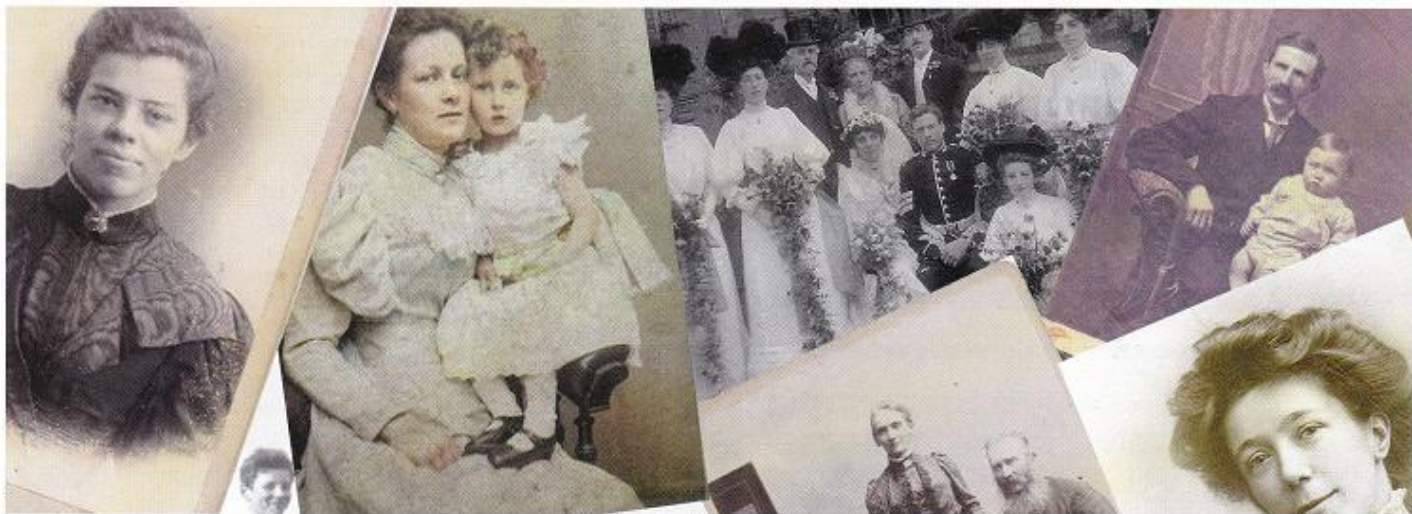
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KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY



What's your family story?

To start investigating your family history, begin by talking to all the family members you can, and writing down their stories and how they remember events within the family. Carefully collect old photos and documents and make careful notes about who's in them. This is the best advice we can give – it costs nothing. There's no need to join one of the genealogy websites. It brings you closer to your family and if you keep this information safe, one day you or a relative will be so glad you did when you start your family tree.

Bollington Family History Group

The group was started in 2004 by the late Dr John Coope, long before genealogy became popular on television. It began to help people research their family tree and to document their stories. It doesn't matter whether your family comes from Bollington or not, or you are a complete beginner or more experienced. We'll help you get started and help solve problems along your journey.

What can I find out about my family?

It's possible to trace your ancestors back many generations, and to find out who they married, who their children were, where they lived, when they died and how they earned their living. Were your ancestors in rural farming, working in the local cotton mills or at sea in the Merchant Navy in the nineteenth century? Did they serve their country during the First and Second World Wars? Where is your 'ancestral home'?

DNA testing?

We're happy to discuss our experiences with DNA testing, how DNA has helped members and what it actually told them, and which relatives should take a test.

So many questions! We're here to help.

Our meetings have an open discussion element, or members give us an insight into their research. Recently we've had fascinating talks on 'Breaking Down Brick Walls', DNA and Jewish

ancestry, which included lots of

Jewish baking for us to sample! Alternatively, we run sessions on explaining or demonstrating a specific aspect of genealogical research. We usually meet at the Arts Centre on the first Thursday of the month, 10.30am to 12 noon, between September and June. A couple of times a year we meet at Bollington Library. Library members can search the Ancestry and Findmypast websites free of charge. Membership of the library is also free and for a small charge staff will show you how to use these sites.

Family History Group

BOLLINGTON FESTIVAL, MAY 2026

The Family History Group will be supporting the Bollington Festival's exhibition at the Arts Centre. Pop in and find out more about our group and see some of our members' stories

OPEN MORNING

On Thursday 4 June 2026, from 10am to 12 noon, we invite you to come along to the Arts Centre and chat about exploring your own family tree

MORE INFORMATION

Come along to any of our meetings. The first session is free. Annual membership is £20 or £5 for occasional visits

CONTACT US

Phone Carole on 01625 574410 or email bollingtonfhc@gmail.com

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WELL, WELL, WELL...

This year the well dressing will be part of the Bollington Festival in May 2026, and the theme will be 'Volunteering Makes the Community'.

We have to start by applauding the volunteers who've managed the well dressings so beautifully for many years, but who've decided to take a well-earned (excuse the pun!) rest. They've upheld the well-dressing tradition in Bollington for twenty years but now a new team of volunteers hope to keep the tradition alive (but have very big shoes to fill!).

Well dressing is a Derbyshire tradition celebrating the gift of a plentiful supply of water. The first well dressing in Bollington took place in 2005 at the Greg Fountain at Bollington Cross. We continue to 'dress' our water sources with

decorated boards to recognise the great debt we owe to the rivers and streams that provided water to power the mills that helped to make Bollington the place we love today.

This year the boards will be designed by two very talented local artists, Caroline Constable of Run Walk Draw and Jennie Gaywood of Bollington Art Group. St John's School will also be designing and creating a board.

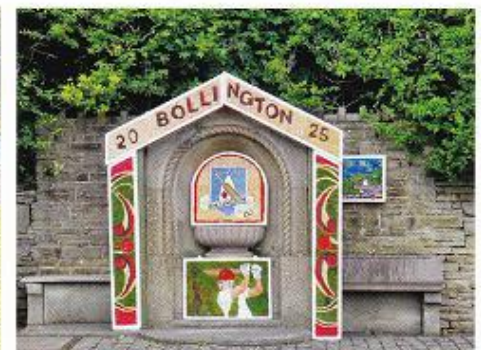
The designs will be brought to life by decorating clay-filled boards with petals, cones, leaves and many other natural materials. Work will start on Sunday 17 May when the boards will be moved from the Town Hall to the cricket pavilion on the Rec, and 'petalling' will take place in the pavilion from Monday 18 to Thursday 21 May.



Volunteers are always welcome to help petal and, just as importantly, to move and erect the boards. And supplies of any colourful, natural materials are also gratefully received. We'll be advertising for help nearer the time!

The well-dressing boards will be on display as part of the Bollington Festival, from 22 to 30 May 2026.

The Bollington Well Dressing Team



SCENE DIFFERENTLY

Scene Differently is an exhibition (until 22 March 2026 at Bollington Arts Centre) based on local landscapes but seen differently through the eyes of a landscape painter, Stuart Mollison and a photographer, Lynne McPeake.



The Peak District and Cheshire with its varied and often dramatic landscape, climate, light and changes of season provide a fascination and inspiration for Stuart Mollison's work. Using acrylics and mixed media he attempts to express the essence of what he sees and feels. The work is as much an emotional response rather than strictly representational.

There is a similarity of elements with Lynne McPeake's photographs although produced independently in the same general locations. As with Stuart's landscapes, Lynne's photographs are an impressionistic response to a location, not a

Photos:
Left - In the secret garden by Lynne McPeake
Right - Wild willow by Stuart Mollison



straight representation and as such evoke an atmospheric moment in time. Images are captured in-camera using intentional camera movement (ICM) and multiple exposure (ME) techniques.

WHAT'S ON

MARCH

Sundays 1 – 22 March 2-4pm
'Scene Differently' Art Exhibition
Works by **Stuart Mollison and Lynne McPeake**
Arts Centre

Sunday 1 March 7.30pm
Folk Club
Dog and Partridge. bollyfolk.com

Wednesday 4 March
Luncheon Club
Community Centre, Ovenhouse Lane. Open for coffee from 10.30am with lunch served at 12 noon. All ages welcome. Book in with Win 07815 672413

Wednesday 4 March
Flix in the Stix 'Juror #2' thriller/drama
Pott Shrigley Village Hall SK10 5RT
Doors and bar open 6.30pm
film starts 7.30pm Ticket price £4 in advance, £5 on the door Tickets from Anthea Wilkinson 01625 573538 or email pottflix@gmail.com

Friday 6 March 8pm
Comedy Club
Arts Centre. Doors open at 7pm. Tickets £15 EarlyBird £12
rockcentralpromotions.com/

Friday 6-Saturday 7 March 10am-4pm
Exhibition 'Letters from Macclesfield'
Macclesfield Philatelic Society
Silk Museum SK11 6TJ. Feature on Bollington's Tullis Russell, producer of much of the world's stamp paper. Free entry garrie.naden@btopenworld.com

Saturday 7 March
Hannah Brine singer-songwriter
Arts Centre
www.bollingtonartscentre.co.uk

Monday 9 March 6.30pm
SciBar: Adventure Neuroscience - How the brain responds to extreme challenge in the wild Speaker: **Dave Gallagher, Adventure Neuroscience**
Venue TBD No charge, all welcome bollingtonscibar.co.uk

Monday 9 March 7.30pm
Happy Valley (Bollington) WI
Community Centre. We welcome visitors. Please come along and bring a friend happyvalleybollwi@gmail.com

Tuesday 10 March 10am-12noon
Men's Probus: The trials of a wedding
Speaker **Jonathan Simcock**
Civic Hall. Guests are welcome contact Mike Rotherham 01625 576736

Saturday 14 March 2-4pm
Bollington and District Gardening Club Spring Show
Civic Hall

Saturday 14 March 7.30pm
Jazz Club The Wabash Jazzmen
Arts Centre. Doors and bar open 6.30pm. Payments on the door and bar are card only. To reserve tickets (£13) call 01625 574410

Sunday 15 March 7.30pm
Folk Club
Dog and Partridge bollyfolk.com

Tuesday 17 March 10am-12noon
Ladies Probus: The history of advertising. Speaker **Frank Vignon.**
Civic Hall, guests £2

Thursday 19 March 7.30pm
Bollington and District Gardening Club meeting Speaker: **Judith Matthews 'Arranging Flowers and Plants sustainably for the Home'**
Community Centre, Ovenhouse Lane
www.happyvalley.org.uk/horticulture and Facebook – search for Bollington & District Gardening Club

Sunday 22 March 7.30pm
Bollington Festival Choir and Cheshire Chamber Collective perform 'Membra Jesu Nostris'
St Oswald's Church. Tickets £15

Thursday 26 March 7pm
Fun Pub Quiz
Venue TBD, 01625 575147. All proceeds to Silk Cat Rescue

Friday, 27 March 7.30pm
Bollington Singers concert
St Oswald's Church
www.bollingtonsingers.co.uk

Saturday 28 March 11am - 4pm
Bollington Makers Market
Civic Hall. Hosted by Bollington Printshop, supported by Bollington Council

Saturday 28 March 7.30pm
Chamber Music concert
Ben Norris, viola and Jamie Cochrane, piano
Arts Centre. Tickets bollington-chamber-concerts.org or 07535 892436

Sunday 29 March -Sunday 26 April 2-4pm
Art Exhibition featuring drawings and paintings by Andrew Pal
Arts Centre
www.bollingtonartscentre.co.uk

APRIL

Wednesday 1 April
Luncheon Club
Community Centre, Ovenhouse Lane. Open for coffee from 10.30am with lunch served at 12 noon. All ages welcome. Book in with Win 07815 672413

Wednesday 1 April
Flix in the Stix
Pott Shrigley Village Hall SK10 5RT
Doors and bar open 6.30pm film starts 7.30pm Ticket price £4 in advance, £5 on the door. Tickets from Anthea Wilkinson 01625 573538 or email pottflix@gmail.com. sites.google.com/site/pottflix

Saturday 4 April 7.30pm
Jazz Club Kevin Grenfell's Jazz Giants with Paul Harrison
Arts Centre. Doors and bar open 6.30pm. Payments on the door and bar are card only. To reserve tickets (£13) call 01625 574410

Sunday 5 April 7.30pm
Folk Club
Dog and Partridge. bollyfolk.com

Monday 13 April 6.30pm
SciBar
Venue TBD No charge, all welcome bollingtonscibar.co.uk

Monday 13 April 7.30pm
Happy Valley (Bollington) WI
Community Centre. We welcome visitors. Please come along and bring a friend happyvalleybollwi@gmail.com

Tuesday 14 April 10-12noon
Men's Probus: I should have asked
Speaker **Sue Holden**
Civic Hall. Guests are welcome contact Mike Rotherham 01625 576736

Thursday 16 April 7.30pm
Bollington and District Gardening Club meeting Speaker: **James Ellson 'Will perennial vegetables save the planet?'**
Community Centre Ovenhouse Lane.
www.happyvalley.org.uk/horticulture

Friday 17 April
'Looking for me friend' Victoria Wood show
Arts Centre
www.bollingtonartscentre.co.uk

Saturday 18 April
Brass Band Concert
Arts Centre
www.bollingtonartscentre.co.uk

Sunday 19 April 7.30pm
Folk Club
Dog and Partridge bollyfolk.com

Tuesday 21 April 10-12 noon
Ladies Probus: Flower Demonstration with Judith Matthews of Loose Leaf
Civic Hall, guests £2

Thursday 23 April 7pm
Fun Pub Quiz
St George's Day Special
Venue TBD, 01625 575147. All proceeds Silk Cat Rescue

WHAT'S ON

Saturday 25 April 7.30pm
Jazz Club 'Spats' Langham's Hot Fingers Combination with Emily Campbell

Arts Centre. Doors and bar open 6.30pm. Payments on the door and bar are card only. To reserve tickets (£13) call 01625 574410

MAY

Saturday 2-Monday 4 May 10am-5pm
Bollington Art Group Exhibition
Arts Centre

Sunday 3 May 7.30pm
Folk Club
Dog and Partridge bollyfolk.com

Wednesday 6 May
Luncheon Club
Community Centre, Ovenhouse Lane. Open for coffee from 10.30am with lunch served at 12 noon. All ages welcome. Book in with Win 07815 672413

Wednesday 6 May
Flix in the Stix
Pott Shrigley Village Hall SK10 5RT Doors and bar open 6.30pm film starts 7.30pm Ticket price £4 in advance, £5 on the door. Tickets from Anthea Wilkinson 01625 573538 or email pottflix@gmail.com. sites.google.com/site/pottflix

Friday 8 May 8pm
'An Evening of James Taylor' with Vernon James Americana folk music.
Arts Centre Doors and bar open at 7.15pm. Tickets £20 www.bollingtonartscentre.co.uk

Monday 11 May 6.30pm
SciBar
Venue TBD No charge, all welcome bollingtonscibar.co.uk

Monday 11 May 7.30pm
Happy Valley (Bollington) WI
Community Centre We welcome visitors. Please come along and bring a friend happyvalleybollwi@gmail.com

Tuesday 12 May 10-12noon
Men's Probus: 'Sent to Siberia'
Speaker Prof. Terry Callaghan
Civic Hall. Guests are welcome contact Mike Rotherham 01625 576736

Tuesday 12-Saturday 16 May
Step into the dazzling world of 'Kinky Boots' with Bollington Musical Theatre Group!
Civic Hall, 7.30pm, with a matinée at 2pm on Saturday 16th. Tickets www.ticketsource.co.uk/bolly

Sunday 17 May 10.30AM
Chamber Music Coffee Concert (Northerly Winds) for the Bollington Festival Roald Dahl Extravaganza with additional performers Julian Davis (piano) and Isolde Coope (narrator)
Arts Centre
www.bollingtonartscentre.co.uk

Sunday 17 May 7.30pm
Folk Club
Dog and Partridge. bollyfolk.com

Thursday 21 May 7.30pm
Bollington and District Gardening Club meeting. Speaker: Christian Dupont 'Water in the garden'
Community Centre, Ovenhouse Lane.
www.happyvalley.org.uk/horticulture

Thursday 28 May 7pm
Fun Pub Quiz
Venue TBD, 01625 575147. All proceeds to Silk Cat Rescue

JUNE

Wednesday 3 June
Luncheon Club
Community Centre, Ovenhouse Lane. Open for coffee from 10.30am with lunch served at 12 noon. All ages welcome. Book in with Win 07815 672413

Wednesday 3 June
Flix in the Stix
Pott Shrigley Village Hall SK10 5RT Doors and bar open 6.30pm film starts 7.30pm. Ticket price £4 in advance, £5 on the door. Tickets from Anthea Wilkinson 01625 573538 or email pottflix@gmail.com sites.google.com/site/pottflix

Thursday 4 June 10-12noon
Family History Open Morning
Arts Centre. Come along and see our work and chat about your own Family Tree www.bollingtonartscentre.co.uk

Saturday 6 June 2-6pm
Bollington wine fair
Knowles Green Creative Tasting 6th Anniversary. Our largest event of the year. Tickets £25 from Knowles Green. Unlimited samples of wine on the day from our brilliant suppliers. A mega lineup of live DJ's bringing all the good vibes. Plus cult-classic food from a notorious local food vendor.

Sunday 7 June 10.30am
Bollington Chamber Concerts Coffee Concert
Arts Centre
www.bollingtonartscentre.co.uk

Sunday 7 June 7.30pm
Folk Club
Dog and Partridge. bollyfolk.com

Monday 8 June 6.30pm
SciBar: Forens-omics
Speaker Dr. Noemi Procopio, University of Central Lancashire
Venue TBD No charge, all welcome bollingtonscibar.co.uk

Monday 8 June 7.30pm
Happy Valley (Bollington) WI
Community Centre. We welcome visitors. Please come along and bring a friend happyvalleybollwi@gmail.com

Tuesday 9 June 10-12noon
Men's Probus: 'Is 3D printing any good?' Speaker Ernie Hill
Civic Hall. Guests are welcome contact Mike Rotherham 01625 576736

Saturday 13 June
Festival Choir Singing Day
Mozart's Requiem, with Guest. Conductor Prof. Ian Tracey, Organist and Choir Director, Liverpool
Arts Centre.
www.bollingtonartscentre.co.uk

Tuesday 16 June 10-12noon
Ladies Probus: 'And the Band played on...' Speaker Sue Holden
Civic Hall, guests £2

Sunday 21 June 7.30pm
Folk Club
Dog and Partridge bollyfolk.com

Thursday 25-Saturday 27 June
Festival Players Summer Show
www.bollingtonartscentre.co.uk

Sunday 28 June 7.30pm
Bollington Festival Choir concert 'Sprig of Thyme'
Arts Centre. Tickets £15
www.bollingtonartscentre.co.uk

ADVERTISE YOUR EVENT

If you would like to advertise an event in July, August, September or October please email livedates@happyvalley.org.uk

Deadline for the next edition is 15 May 2026

All dates and times were correct when we went to print. Apologies if things have changed and we made a mistake

GO WITH THE FLO

Note from the editor: Flo was going to write this article for the last edition of Bollington Live!, but adverse weather (as you will read) delayed the swim and the copy deadline was missed. I think Flo's story is truly inspirational so I wanted to include it in this issue. Flo has lived in Bollington for 15 years, and attended St Gregory's Catholic Primary School before moving to All Hallows Catholic College. Now over to Flo to tell her story.

When the idea of swimming the English Channel came up at the dinner table, I jokingly said I could do it. Before I knew it, that joke became a reality!

I hadn't done any competitive swimming before last year. I'm scared of the sea and don't like fish, and there would be jellyfish too. But I like a challenge and wanted to prove I could do it.

Training with the Beech Hall School Mencap Marvels squad was tough. I swam three times a week at the school, plus my own timed sessions at Macclesfield Leisure Centre. In the year I brought my 1km time

Photos:

Left: Flo swimming the Channel

Background photo: Bonifacio Strait

Right: Flo, Xander and Ethan swim the Bonifacio Strait

down from 23 minutes to 17, and braved the 8-degree water without a wetsuit to improve my resilience to the cold.

I didn't know any of the other swimmers when I started, and I was the only girl who qualified for the squad. But that was just the beginning; to qualify to swim the Channel I needed to swim for two hours continuously in water under 15 degrees. I did my first qualifier in Beech Hall pool in January, but not wanting to stop there, I then qualified again on two further occasions in Liverpool docks, finally securing a spot in a six-person junior relay team with a crossing booked for August 2025.

Swim camp at Dover in May was tough – up at 6am, in the water by 7 – but the delicious breakfasts made it worthwhile. I got to know my teammates and it was like a second home, all cooking and eating together. Even chipping my tooth on the first day didn't stop me.



We were in Kingsdown, Kent, training at the exact spot where Trudy Ederle landed after her solo crossing from France to England in 1926. Her story was an inspiration to me, and I watched the film about her life, *Young Woman and the Sea*. She was the first woman to successfully cross the Channel solo. Almost a hundred years later I was determined to follow her example.

Events like 'Swim the Channel Up North' at Boundary Water Park in Manchester toughened us up. I was swimming on my own in the dark at 3am, with just a small flashing light guiding my way.

The weather was against us in August and September. Storm Amy meant our original swim window was not to be. Then alternative dates in September were also weathered out. The swim season was drawing to a close, and I was worried all my training would have been for nothing. It was so frustrating. We had to keep our fitness up and be ready at any time to get down to Folkestone.

I was turning 16 in October, and therefore then not eligible for the junior relay team I had trained with all year. I was devastated as my teammates travelled down to Dover without me on my birthday. Luckily, I had been invited to join a senior Mencap Marvels team, due to swim the very next day. I was ready, but knew conditions in the Channel can change quickly, and we were swimming on a spring tide, much tougher than on the neap tide we'd trained for.

Eventually the time came to put all that training into practice. I was pleased to be on the same team now as my coach Nikki Pope and my friend Finya. And at 2am, two hours after my sixteenth birthday, we set off from an eerily dark and quiet beach at Samphire Hoe. Within 20 minutes of my first hour-long swim, I was sick in the water. The waves were choppy, I had water in my goggles, and I couldn't really see the boat beside me or hear Nikki's instructions!

But I loved it. Despite the salt in my mouth, I finished my first hour, and then recovered. My second hour in the water came after the sun had risen, and we could see France in the distance. The tide was stronger here, but we were so close. We even saw some dolphins playing!

On the very last day of the swim season we landed in 11 hours 13 minutes, the fastest of all the twenty Mencap Marvels relays to date. After a sip of champagne to celebrate, it was back to England. We were so fortunate to have the wonderful Mardle family on their boat Masterpiece guide us across. I also got to sign my name on the wall of successful swimmers at the Rising Sun pub in Kingsdown.

Swimming took over my life last year. Two weeks after my Channel swim, I was part of a three-person team to swim the Bonifacio Strait between Corsica and Sardinia. With my teammates 13-year-old Xander and 12-year-old Ethan we now hold the record time for the fastest junior mixed relay of that 14km swim (5 hours 3 minutes). I'm the youngest female ever recorded to have crossed the Strait. There were loads of jellyfish on that crossing – we even had to scrape some off our arms while in the water, using credit cards! I still have the marks now.

I felt I had come a long way from my first swimming lessons in Bollington pool many years ago. I'd like to see more girls train to swim the Channel, and now I'm training to gain my swim teaching qualifications, I hope I can give younger swimmers the confidence to take on challenges like mine.

I'd like to thank everyone in Bollington and beyond who sponsored me. I managed to raise £3,178 for Mencap, an amazing charity.

As for the future, I'm aiming for a solo swim across Coniston Water later in the year, and who knows, maybe a solo Channel swim one day. My Mum Katy loves cold-water swimming, so maybe it's in the family genes!

I've learned so much in the past year, and not just about swimming ... about life, resilience and not giving up when the going gets rough.

Flo Goford



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THE HEART OF OUR HAPPY VALLEY

If you've ever been out walking around our hills and valleys on race day, you'll know it feels a little different. There's a buzz in the air, a cheery greeting at every junction, and the welcome sight of a table laden with homemade cake just when it's most needed.

As Marshal Coordinator for the Bollington Harriers' Happy Valley Trails Event, I'm lucky enough to see this side of Bollington at its very best.

While runners may get the medals and the muddy trainers, it's our volunteers who give the day its heart. Dozens of local people turn out to marshal the course, guide runners safely along footpaths, clap and encourage them up the tougher climbs and make sure everyone finishes with a smile. Others are busy baking, brewing tea or simply standing at the roadside offering a shout of encouragement that can make all the difference when legs are tiring.

Many of our marshals aren't runners themselves. They're neighbours, friends, family members and Harriers supporters who enjoy being part of something positive.



Some come back year after year, claiming the same marshal point like an old friend. Others are new faces who quickly discover that standing in a hi-vis vest on a country lane is a surprisingly sociable way to spend a Sunday morning.



That community spirit is what makes the Happy Valley Trails Event so special. The event showcases our local paths and countryside, but it also reflects Bollington itself: friendly, supportive and quietly proud of what we can do together. Runners often tell us that it's the marshals' encouragement and warm atmosphere that stay with them long after the race is over.



And of course, while I'm here to sing the praises of our volunteers, this is also an open invitation to anyone who fancies being on the other side of the tape next time. Whether you're a seasoned trail runner or just looking for a new challenge in familiar surroundings,



the Happy Valley Trails Event – there's a 10k or Half-Marathon to choose from on Sunday 10 May – is a welcoming, well-organised event with a fantastic local feel.

If you'd like to take part, head to the Bollington Harriers website and click on 'Club Races' for full details and entry information. And if running isn't your thing, but cheering, marshalling or baking cake might be, we'll have a hi-vis vest and a warm welcome waiting for you.

Andrew Vincent

Marshal Coordinator, Happy Valley Trails

www.bollingtonharriers.co.uk

ANDREW PAL THE HUMAN LANDSCAPE

Working mainly with watercolour on paper, Andrew's approach embraces movement and uncertainty. Whether responding to a built or natural landscape, the human form, or a simple still life, each painting begins with observation of the real and familiar. From there, it transforms into something that aims to evoke a feeling or memory in the viewer.

His gestural approach means paint is free to flow. Splodges and splashes become new start points. Rather than correcting these 'mistakes', he welcomes them. The result is a series of paintings that feel alive and honest.

The exhibition will be at Bollington Arts Centre on five consecutive Sundays from 2pm to 4pm starting on 29th March and ending on 26th April. You can meet Andrew

at these times. All proceeds after exhibition costs will be donated to East Cheshire Hospice.



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WITNESS THE FITNESS

Fitness in Mind opened its doors in Bollington in December, and feels like a full-circle moment for owner and founder Geo Berry.

Although we opened our first space in Disley Newtown, Bollington has always felt like home, as a place where I spent ten years working as a graphic designer in Clarence Mill. Bollington has always felt like a place grounded in community, connection and shared values, things that sit at the very heart of what Fitness in Mind is about. When the opportunity came up to open our Bollington space in Clarence Mill, it felt instinctively right.

Fitness in Mind was created to



offer something different to the traditional gym experience. Our focus is on inclusive, coach-led group training that supports both physical and mental wellbeing. We work with people at all stages of life and fitness, from complete beginners to experienced trainers, creating an environment where people feel supported, challenged and genuinely welcomed.

Returning to Bollington has been incredibly special. There's something powerful about building a space where familiar faces meet new ones, where people show up for themselves and each other, and where movement becomes something to enjoy rather than endure.

Clarence Mill itself reflects everything we stand for – character, warmth and a sense of belonging. Training here doesn't feel pressured or forced; it feels welcoming and friendly. Our members train together, laugh together, and support one another far beyond the gym floor.



Photo:
Right: Geo Berry (founder) (left); and Laura Krasij (head coach)

Opening in Bollington wasn't about just replicating what we've done in Disley. It's about rooting Fitness in Mind in a community that values connection and care. Seeing the Bollington space already becoming a hub of energy, encouragement and confidence is so exciting to see.

This launch isn't just a business milestone, it's a personal one. Coming back to Bollington to build something meaningful, surrounded by a supportive community, feels like exactly where Fitness in Mind is meant to be.

Geo Berry – Founder and Owner
www.fitnessinmind.co.uk

BOLLINGTON ART GROUP

Bollington Art Group will be holding its third annual exhibition at Bollington Arts Centre from 2 to 4 May – building on the success of previous years.

The Art Group now has over a hundred active members who regularly attend classes tutored by gifted local artists. Classes range from abstract through landscapes and still life to life drawing. Examples of work produced at the classes are exhibited and offered for sale at competitive prices.

As well as the artworks, which are

shown in the main hall and gallery, we run a café serving tea and coffee and a selection of homemade cakes. This is always very popular!

We're a thriving group in the community and also aim to support other local groups. Each year we donate the profit made from the exhibition to local good causes – in the past these have included the Bridgend Centre and East Cheshire Hospice.

Come along in May – you'll be impressed and may even decide you'd like to join our group.




Please have a look at our website for further information about the group and the courses we run.

Jan Appleyard


www.bollingtonag.org



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SING, SING, SING

Bollington Singers, a friendly community choir, welcomes all singers – whether you're an experienced singer, or haven't sung since school, we'd love you to join us!

Singing in a group boosts your mental health, lowers stress and is a great way to meet people in the local area. We rehearse during termtime on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 8.30pm at Bollington Cross C of E Primary School (SK10 5EG). We sing a wide range of music – there's something for everyone!

We use sheet music as well as learn some pieces by ear and there are MP3s to listen to between rehearsals, which are very helpful.

Our end-of-term concerts are challenging and great fun! This term, we'll be performing on Friday 27 March at 7.30pm at St Oswald's Church.

Occasionally we also have other opportunities throughout the year, such as singing carols for charity in Trafalgar Square.

If you're interested in finding out



more, you can sign up for a taster session on our website www.bollingtonsingers.co.uk.

Jane Brett

COMMUNITY UNITED

Since 28 September 2025, when Adlington appeared on the government's New Towns list, our community has transformed from a peaceful rural haven into a powerful force of opposition. The Stop Adlington New Town campaign is gaining remarkable traction, with our collective voice being heard far beyond Cheshire's borders.

The campaign has secured unprecedented local support. Tim Roca MP stands firmly against the proposal, as do neighbouring constituency MPs. Cheshire East Council voted unanimously to oppose the scheme – every councillor, across all parties, said no. Adlington Parish Council, neighbouring parish and town councils, the CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England), the Cheshire Wildlife Trust, local medical partnerships and farm businesses are all opposed. This united local front demonstrates what's at stake for our communities.

Bollington residents should be proud that our Town Council, alongside Adlington, Poynton,

Prestbury, Pott Shrigley, Rainow and Mottram St Andrew, has taken decisive action. These seven councils have jointly engaged Norton Rose Fulbright, one of the UK's leading law firms, to provide strategic legal advice. Sarah Fitzpatrick, Head of Planning, will advise on planning legislation and scrutinise the Strategic Environmental Assessment. This gives our campaign a powerful legal foundation.

Up to 20,000 new houses would make a catastrophic impact on Adlington and the surrounding area and infrastructure would break under the strain. Our roads are already congested – they can't cope with tens of thousands of additional vehicles. Our schools are at capacity – where will thousands of new children be educated? Our hospitals and GP services are overwhelmed – how will they serve a massive population increase? The infrastructure doesn't exist, and no amount of 'good planning' can solve these fundamental problems.

We'd lose 1,000 hectares of irreplaceable Green Belt forever



– ancient woodlands, species-rich habitats, farmland stewarded for over a thousand years. The CPRE, which has supported seven other new town proposals on brownfield sites, has specifically objected to Adlington because brownfield alternatives exist. Our local farmers are fighting for regional food security. This destruction would be permanent and irreversible.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment is expected in early 2026. Stop Adlington New Town is preparing an extensively researched report for decision makers, building the evidence to demonstrate why this proposal must be rejected.

Subscribe to our newsletter at stopadlingtonnewtown.kit.com/6dbfa67b59. Follow us on social media, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok.

*Photo credit:
Ged Wilson*

Together, we can protect our Green Belt, our wildlife, our farms, our infrastructure and our community's future. Together, we will stop Adlington New Town. But only if we keep fighting.

Stop Adlington New Town Group



Bollington Festival is back! Friday 15 May - Monday 25 May 2026

Mark your diary, the Festival is back and this time it's bigger and better! After six days of events in the Bollington Arts Centre, the action will shift to the Recreation Ground. Here are a few highlights to whet your appetite. Check the Festival website for full programme and ticketing details. See you there!

Ambridge comes to Bollington!

We are thrilled to welcome the inimitable Sunny Ormonde to the Bollington Arts Centre. Better known as the 'outrageous Lillian Bellamy' in BBC Radio 4's The Archers, Sunny will fill you in on all the behind the scenes stories about the world's longest running soap opera.

Standing on the Shoulder of Giants

They're back. The hugely popular Oasis. The UK's premier Oasis tribute band. Liam Gallagher famously said of Paul, the lead singer 'yeah, he's alright man!' Over 800 tickets were sold in 2024. Don't 'look back in anger', grab your tickets quick!

Family Fun

Bank Holiday Monday 25 May is FAMILY FUN DAY! Join us on the Rec for a full day of FREE activities for all the family. Highlights include face painting, stilt walkers, the Rock Choir, Bollington Balloons and the Children's Potting Table. See you there!

Not a Ceilidh, but a Twmpath!

Twmpath means 'hump'. At one time it signified the mound on the village green where the musicians sat and played for the community to dance. Today it has come to mean the event itself. Traditional Welsh music band Caffl bring you a night of dance and fun. It's like a ceilidh but the dances and tunes are Welsh. Bring the family!

Roald Dahl Extravaganza

Join us for a morning of coffee and chamber music brought to you by the Northerly Wind Quartet. Meet the instruments, enjoy the music and delight in readings from Dahl's Revolting Rhymes. This concert is supported by The Chamber Music Trust.

Party@The Rec

In a first for the Festival, we are delighted to host a fantastic double bill of dance music. Our Special Guest Headliner will be a Manchester based producer and DJ. He has more releases under his belt than we've had hot dinners. He will be supported by the inimitable Smugglin' Budgies. Treacle Market favourites, the Budgies are guaranteed to make you smile as they belt out singalong dance and floor-filling classics. What a line up!

Viva la Vida

Widely recognised as the UK's finest Coldplay tribute band, Ultimate Coldplay are virtually indistinguishable from the real thing.

Cartoon Creativity Without Constraints!

Join local cartoonist, Marc Jackson, for two fabulous cartoon workshops. Marc runs workshops at comic festivals around the country. Children are encouraged to let their imaginations run wild in a relaxed atmosphere.



The Festival Needs You!

Run entirely by volunteers, we are reliant on the goodwill of Bollington to oil the wheels of the Festival. Do please drop us a line if you can offer an hour or three to help out as a steward on the Rec, or in the Bollington Arts Centre. We also need volunteers in the tea tent. info@bollingtonfestival.org.uk



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TALKING SPORT

I'm lucky enough to have witnessed FIFA World Cup finals, Open Golf Championships and Wimbledon finals live, but for me now, seeing the Bollington Hornets U15 footballers (my son Seb's team) take to the field gives me the greatest pleasure.

Playing and supporting local sport is the bedrock of our society, and when Nick Wright offered me the chance to present a weekly sports show on Canalside Radio, I was eager to get started.

Within weeks of my first show in September, Bollington Cricket Club First XI had won promotion to the Cheshire County League Division 1.

Bollington Town and Bollington United Football Clubs have been riding high in their respective leagues, while Macclesfield Rugby Club Men's First XV are having a storming season.

And then we have Macclesfield FC's FA Cup heroes. It was pure joy witnessing their historic win over Crystal Palace, hugging strangers at the final whistle. I wanted to rush straight to the Canalside studio and present a live reaction show!

Being able to broadcast the exploits of the Macc Town Raiders junior basketball team and Macclesfield Hockey Club results has brought me closer to a fabulous community I've been fortunate to live in for 15 years.

I've had great studio guests too, like Bollington Town FC manager Jeff Eastham, and I even interviewed my own daughter



Flo after her English Channel relay win last October. That was a surreal experience. Maybe I'll invite Seb on the show if his Hornets team win the league or the cup this season!

I know I've more ground to cover, and I'd love to hear from anyone who'd like their sporting club or achievements recognised on the show. Please do get in touch. Looking forward to the spring, we've the start of the cricket season, athletics and the ever-competitive lawn bowls competitions!

Giles Goford

The Sports Show is on Canalside Radio 102.8fm each Wednesday at 6.30pm, with a repeat on Saturday morning at 8am.

Giles Goford can be contacted on Facebook or via Instagram (ggoford)

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