

Meltham Mercury

Meltham Town Council's Newsletter - Spring 2025

The Council offices are open:-
Mon - Thurs: 9:30am - 5:00pm



 /AroundMeltham



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The Council offices are on the first floor of
The Carlile Institute, accessed via lift or stairs.

Mayor's Musings and Observations

I was honoured to represent the Council at the annual Remembrance Day held outside St Bartholomew's Church on November 10th, to partake in the reading of the Roll of Remembrance jointly with the Revd. Dracup. The attendance was excellent, filling the churchyard and the road nearby to remember the fallen of our township. A tear came to my eye a few times, especially when I read the name of a great uncle who gave his life in the Great War of 1914-18.

Things became more hectic in December starting with the switching on of the Christmas lights and attending the Christmas Fayre in the Parish Hall. Thanks to all who give their time installing and servicing our town Christmas lights and organising the Fayre.

There was an excellent attendance at the Council's Over 70s Christmas Gift, provided by Cafe Direct Roastery of Meltham Mills and mince pies and shortcake gifted by the Council. There was much laughter, chatter and enjoyment of this year's new provision of live music by Olta.

I was able to attend the excellent musical presentation at Meltham Moor Primary School a credit to all the pupils, the joint Probus and over 60's Carol Service at the Parish Church and the Honley Male Voice Choir Christmas Concert at Huddersfield Town Hall, a feast of brass band playing, men's and children's voices, a superb and uplifting event. It was good to meet the Kirklees Mayor Nosheen Dad again.

Once Christmas was over, we entered the harsh reality of days of truly winter weather with snow and compacted ice. The Town Clerk and I received many complaints about slips and trips due to a lack of snow clearance leading to compacted ice not helped by a lack of gritting and unfilled grit bins.

The Township has many roads not on the Kirklees gritting schedule and some of our local bus routes are not included, the topography of Meltham is hilly so many residents suffered during the winter blast. Comment has been passed on to Kirklees council departments about the above issues and I personally told the Kirklees deputy leader about our resident's treatment at a public transport liaison meeting in late January.

At our council's February planning meeting we examined the Kirklees highway winter response plan and noted there is a section about community self-help which we hope to further develop in our town to give us more resilience especially in the Town Centre.

Whilst on the topic of Kirklees please report to them any potholes in your locality. The website for highways can be frustrating to use and if you despair, please contact our Clerk and we will aim to help. It also means we are aware of issues for the planning and amenities committee at our council to monitor. The same is true for bin collections, some roads, especially in estates are regularly left

uncollected. There is a process on the Kirklees cleansing department site to report issues but as I and some of our district councillors concede, this does not always lead to rapid action.

Thinking of the future you might be aware that the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) voted for a franchising model for public transport like that started over in Greater Manchester to start in a couple of years on a phased basis. In essence this means the authority will own the vehicles, depot and other infrastructure and contract out to providers such as First, Arriva South Pennine etc..., the authority will be responsible for the network and it may hopefully give more stability. We may even see the hospital bus via Milnsbridge reinstated.

I spoke with Tim Taylor, the WYCA Director of Transport Services at a consultation event in January and he has offered to come along to the Town council to speak with us later in the year to explain the ideas behind the change.

Finally, I wish the Revd. Dracup all the best with the plan to look at community use for the church buildings at Helme and Meltham Mills, to ensure their future and conservation and hopefully to help other community groups and organisations in our Township.

At the time of writing, Spring seems a long way away but I am sure we all look forward to warmer, lighter, and milder days to enjoy our beautiful town with its lovely walks and attractions.

*David Haigh. J.P.
Town Mayor*



Snow Clearance

Thank you to all the volunteers who cleared footpaths and helped senior citizens and the vulnerable who were marooned in their homes during the icy and bitter cold days.



CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Following the Christmas Lights Switch On, the Christmas events in Meltham really start to get going with the annual Over 70s event, organised by Meltham Town Council and funded by the Poores Allotment Trust.

Local coffee company Cafedirect Roastery Limited continued their wonderful support and provided the drinks, we also had an event first - live music, which was organised by Maria Wallace from True North Music who, with some grant funding, were able to book the fabulous folk band Ólta, which really gave the event a buzz.

The weather was far kinder to us this year and that reflected in the attendance figures, with over 300 residents of Meltham enjoying the event throughout the day.

Jingle Banjos

Folk-bluegrass trio Ólta came to Meltham on 2nd December to play live music as part of the Meltham Over 70s Christmas Event hosted by the Town Council. The three accomplished musicians in the band are guitarist and singer Paul Higham, fiddle player India Shan Merrett (both based in Glossop) and Marsden banjo maestro Jonny Hulme. Local grassroots music promoter Maria Wallace (True North Music) booked the band to play at the event. Maria said "I was delighted to bring Ólta to this event as part of our community outreach during our 2023-24 live music series. I managed to get some grant funding from Arts Council England to support a number of community events (including primary school workshops) alongside ticketed concerts in Meltham and Marsden, and they've all been really successful and appreciated"



Over 300 local people came in over the course of the day to socialise, pick up their small Christmas gift and have a mince pie and a free coffee courtesy of local business Cafédirect. A grand time seemed to be had by all, and the musicians were excellent. They performed three entertaining half hour sets, including reels, jigs, original songs and a few Christmas tunes, and it really added to the atmosphere. Maria received lots of positive feedback, including "The music is brilliant", "It's been a wonderful bonus" and "The music has kept me here longer than I planned"

To find out more about True North Music, visit Maria's website at truenorthmusic.co.uk.

Meltham Scarecrow Festival



The 8th May 1945 was a very special day in our history when victory in Europe was declared after World War Two, and people celebrated with street parties with bunting & flags adorning the streets.

2025 is the 80th Anniversary of that victorious day and to remember and celebrate this, we will be having the Meltham Scarecrow Festival on Bank Holiday Monday 5th May 2025 with the anniversary as its main theme.

There will be flags flying, bunting and hopefully some of the Scarecrows on display with the theme of Victory in Wartime. You too can dress up for the occasion as there will be prizes for the best Scarecrows and the best dressed humans on the day.

Scarecrow making workshops will take place in the Fourth Fiend:

Wednesday 26 March, from 3.30pm | Wednesday 2 April, from 3.30pm | Wednesday 23 April from 3.30pm

These are free to all, with frames, stuffing & instructions supplied.
You just come along with the ideas and take them home to dress them for the occasion.

For more information contact Pam on 07761 393502
or email: pammurg.mgt@gmail.com

Flower Bomb

A year on from the launch of the Our Quilt project in 2024, Meltham Textiles Group are excited to be launching our 2025 community textiles project today: Yarn & Fabric Flower Bomb.

We are asking our wonderful Meltham community to knit, crochet or sew flowers and foliage that can be used to Flower Bomb Meltham throughout June as part of Woven in Kirklees

We are looking for:

- People to knit, crochet or sew flowers and leaves
- Business owners in the village who would like to host a display inside or outside of their premises
- People to donate yarn and plant pots to the project

Deadline for all flowers and leaves: Friday 23 May 2025.

To get involved, pick up an information sheet from The Crossroads Shop. When complete, your floral creations can be dropped off at The Crossroads Shop too.

We will be running workshops and will have more information about this in the coming weeks. For any questions please email julia@upcycle-fashion.co.uk.

We can't wait to see all of the creations made by our wonderfully creative village!

Meltham
we need YOU!

Yarn & Fabric Flower Bomb

Meltham Textiles Group are planning a spectacular floral inspired textile installation for WOVEN in Kirklees, to be displayed throughout June 2025.

Can you sew, knit or crochet a flower or leaf to add to our installation?

Do you own a business in Meltham and would like to host a display?

To get involved pick up an information pack from The Crossroads Shop or email julia@upcycle-fashion.co.uk

Meltham Community Day

Meltham Carlile Institute and the Crossroads Centre are hosting a Community Day on Saturday 10 May, 11.00am - 3.00pm

The purpose of the event is to share information of all the activities and classes that are available to Meltham residents, including crafts, fitness, music, gardening and more.

Our previous events have been really successful, with over 40 groups and organisations involved. The event is free, with refreshments for sale in the Carlile Institute.



Care Home Park Bench Sponsorship

Thank you to Greenacres Care Home who have sponsored a Bench For Life in Robert Ashton Memorial Park.



Robert Ashton Memorial Park

It's now 12 months since the play area in Robert Ashton Memorial Park was initially re-opened, only for the weather and constant use to create a muddy mess!

Now the park is looking great and is proving to be popular with young and older kids alike.

Former Town Mayor, Cllr Richard Noon commented, "The 12 month inspection and sign-off was completed in February and the Town Council is now drafting plans for the wider management of the landscaped areas in the park, as well as continuing to develop plans for The Lodge at the entrance to the park."

"The play area was an important part of my time as your Town Mayor, I'm really pleased with the outcome. My thanks go out to all our delivery partners, fellow Councillors, our Clerk and the wider community for their determination to get this right."



Bus Karaoke

As part of the festive celebrations our Town Mayor, Cllr Haigh attended the Christmas Carol Karaoke held on the 933 Meltham local bus on the 20th December.

The Mayor undertook most of the driving on the day, with the assistance of our usual Meltham driver and Pride of Meltham award recipient Wayne Barrett who also organised the music equipment. Assistance was also given on the day by Julie Boothroyd and Gerald Beer. A good time was had by all on the day and our thanks to all that helped make the day be a success.



A REMARKABLE RUN!

Congratulations to Mel Sykes, who completed the gruelling 268 mile Montane Winter Spine Race 2025, a remarkable feat, especially as Mel had extensive brain surgery and intensive care just 2 years ago and was uncertain if she would ever run again.

Congratulations and well done Mel!



Special Celebrations in St Bartholomew's Bell Tower

The end of 2024 was a special time in St Bartholomew's tower when two of the ringers celebrated their 80th birthdays within days of each other. Peter Murgatroyd was 80 in late November and Jean Walters followed in early December.

Peter started ringing when he was 15yrs, a few years later he had a long break from ringing and returned 17 years ago, to eventually become the Tower Captain at St Bart's. However, Jean didn't start ringing until she was 67, which all goes to show you can learn to ring bells at any age, with the youngest often starting around the age of 12 and some are still ringing into their 90s.

Peter celebrated his birthday by ringing a quarter peal with five other ringers. This is a method for approximately 45 minutes without stopping or making a mistake. A method is a changing pattern that the bells ring, which has to be memorised. Jean chose to ring eight different short methods and styles of ringing for the eight decades of her life, with breaks in between the ringing for chocolates and mince pies.

Bellringers agree that bellringing is a very enjoyable hobby. Learning to ring will keep you active physically, mentally and socially, so important in today's stressful world. It is a great cardiovascular exercise - the repetitive motion of bell ringing builds muscle endurance and cardio fitness. The swinging motion provides a cardio workout, allowing bell ringers to improve heart health and reduce the risk of heart disease. Bellringing is free so it's a lot cheaper than a gym.

Who can become a ringer? The short answer to this is, practically anyone. As long as you are reasonably fit and enjoy a bit of physical and mental challenge you can start at any age. No musical skills are needed. If you can count and have a reasonable sense of rhythm then everything else will fall into place, with support from one-to-one tuition with experienced teachers. No special skills are necessary to start with but you will need to have a full range of movement in your arms and shoulders. People ask if you have to be strong to ring bells, the short answer to this is, no, only if you choose to ring the heavier bells because ringing is all down to technique, with the bells and gravity helping you.

All ages are welcome to come along to St Bart's, every Thursday at 7pm, to find out what bellringing is all about and what it is that inspires Peter and Jean to carry on ringing into their 80s, along with the friendly band of ringers you will find in the tower.



2024/25 Grants Awarded

Wilshaw Hall Village Trust

(reg. no. 512468) – A £9,000 grant was awarded on the 17th July 2023 for renovation works, £4,500 was paid in 2023/24 and the balance of £4,500 has been paid on the 8th April 2024 – COMMUNITY PROJECTS FUND – LARGER GRANTS.

Friends of Robert Ashton Park

A £1,000 grant was awarded on the 18th March 2024 to support the running of the Picnic in the Park event, held annually on the last Saturday in August – GRANT SCHEME – SMALLER GRANTS.

The Crossroads Charity Shop

A £2,500 grant was awarded on the 16th September 2024 towards the renovation of the shop front – SHOP FRONT GRANT SCHEME.

Meltham Churches Together

A £350 grant was awarded on the 18th November 2024 towards the Carols in the Park annual event each December – GRANT SCHEME – SMALLER GRANTS.

Meltham Scarecrow Festival

An £800 grant was awarded on the 17th February 2025 for the purchase of flags and bunting to help commemorate the 80th Anniversary of VE Day – GRANT SCHEME – SMALLER GRANTS.

Meltham C of E Primary School

A £1,000 grant was awarded on the 17th February 2025 to go towards a new climbing frame – GRANT SCHEME – SMALLER GRANTS.

Kirklees Bridleways Commendation

Kirklees Bridleways Group - Chair's Commendation. For exceptional work by a British Horse Society (BHS) committee, British Riding Club or Equestrian Access Group.

The highly dedicated and hugely proactive Kirklees Bridleways Group has made 41 Definitive Map Modification Order applications in total, to help secure bridleways for future generations, along with the installation of 10 new bridleway gates and handles.

As a BHS affiliated group, the good work of the BHS is highlighted and shared across the Yorkshire area.

The group's Secretary Beverley Corrigan received the award at Newbury Racecourse from BHS President Martin Clunes OBE in the presence of Her Royal Highness Princess Anne.



Meltham Community Choir



Meltham Community Choir is approaching its 10th anniversary. Cllr Kate Buchanan first mooted the idea of creating a community choir in the summer of 2015 and was encouraged to advertise for singers. Beginning with a modest 15

people, the Choir now has circa 35 members meeting weekly and performing regularly in Meltham and nearby.

The Choir's Christmas Concert in December 2024, raised over £550 for two charities: Meltham Foodbank and Target Ovarian Cancer. As well as favourites such as Sweet Chiming Bells, Gaudete and In the Bleak Mid Winter, the concert featured special arrangements by Holmfirth composer Barry Russell (also the Choir's pianist) and Julia Winterson with an instrumental ensemble of local musicians. Audience members commented on the variety of music and how much they enjoyed the different sounds and instruments. During the lead-up to Christmas, the Choir

performed at Friend to Friend in the Methodist Church Hall and for Meltham's Fundraising group for Kirkwood Hospice. We sang Christmas songs and carols at Greenacres care home in Meltham and White Rose House care home in Holmfirth.

Cllr Buchanan is rightly proud of the Choir and sees it as central to her week. As someone living with cancer, she was delighted that the Choir could support the charity Target Ovarian Cancer. Cllr Buchanan said *'The Choir has helped me through some difficult times and it brings me such joy to hear the improvements year on year. Everyone is so enthusiastic and we enjoy passing that on to others.'*

More Meltham Youth Success

Meltham Youth workers have continued to work hard over the winter period, with numbers growing each week. The weekly drop-in sessions (Mondays 3.30pm – 5pm @The Crossroads Centre) are supportive sessions to give young people the chance to talk about relationships, look for support with family problems and issues that arise within their friendships.

The sessions also include hot food, and other activities such as craft workshops. Recently Kirklees Youth Alliance have secured funding which enabled the delivery of Safe Girls sessions, teaching young girls how to stay safe and protect themselves. Councillor Lisa Coates attended one of the sessions and said 'it was incredible to see so many young girls turn up on a dark winter's night, all looking to learn and develop their skills. All 21 girls were engaged in the session and seemed to really enjoy working together to promote safety'.

As numbers grow, so does the need for volunteers, and potentially even bigger spaces to deliver youth work. If you think you can help in any way, please contact Lisa at:

lisa.coates@melthamtowncouncil.gov.uk
for more information.

News from the Crossroads Project

The Kings Award for Voluntary Service for the volunteers of the Crossroads Project was received on the 14th November 2024. Following this there will now be a presentation of the Award on the 16th of April in the Jubilee room at the Carlile institute.

The event will start at 3pm and the presentation will take place at 4pm. The Award will be presented by Ed Anderson HM Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire. All volunteers at the Crossroads Project will be receiving an invitation to this event. Several others will also be invited as they have been involved with the Crossroads project for many years

Exciting news for two lucky winners

As a result of receiving the award two current volunteers were invited to attend a Royal garden party at Buckingham Palace in London. To ensure this was fair, all volunteers were asked if they would like to attend and if so complete a form.

On Monday the 3rd February all the names were placed in a hat and selected at random by Captain John Smith. The lucky winners were Liz Rogan and Christine Hall. We have been fortunate to receive a generous donation to cover the costs of an overnight stay and money provided to cover the travel, hotel and expenses during the trip to London.



Meltham Memories

Meltham Memories returns on Saturday 5th July 2025.

After a challenging couple of years, we're focussing on making the event a great one for the Meltham diary.

All the details can be found at www.melthamevents.co.uk - including details for those wanting a pitch or looking for tickets to our Saturday night event; which will see The Greater Manchester Police Big Band return for a musical extravaganza.

The Latest from **The Complex**

The Trustees of Meltham Sports and Community Centre (*The Complex*) have been busy recently, working on a few exciting updates that they would like to share with the community. The team of trustees and volunteers have set up a new Facebook page to help communicate sports activity, and there is also a new website on the way very soon too.

In the last few weeks, the Trustees have also been out recruiting for a new Bar Manager/Promoter to help manage the facility operations and advertise all they have to offer. Also, Pickle Ball has arrived in Meltham. Pickle Ball is a fun sport that combines elements of badminton, tennis & table tennis.

Look out for updates & events, or contact the Complex by heading to their Facebook page (Meltham Complex) or sending an email to: melthamsportscomplex@gmail.com



Champion Motorcycle Racer

Isabelle Wingate from Meltham is already a champion motorcycle racer and she is only 13!

Her achievements so far include;
2023 Scottish ACU supermoto academy champion,
2023 Scottish supermoto best junior newcomer, 5th overall in the National Academy Supermoto Championship, winner of the 2023 John Blakeman memorial trophy, 2023 Norasport most improved junior rider award, youngest ever triple race winner at Olivers Mount in Scarborough and junior class winner of the 2023 Crowther Deardon Memorial Hillclimb.



Crossroads Foodbank

Members of Friend to Friend kindly donated £350 to the Foodbank at their Christmas Lunch and volunteers Jenny Goodwin and Patricia O'Brien helped Foodbank volunteer Chris Sinclair to spend it at Morrisons Supermarket.

Friend to Friend is a local group, centred around the Colne and Holme valleys, and they run a host of different activities. They have fortnightly Tai Chi sessions at the Methodists', a men's group at the Sports Centre and their popular monthly lunch club. If you'd like to know more, their website is www.friendtofriend.org.



Ask Meltham - Updates

Ask Meltham 2024 took place between September and December 2024, and Meltham Town Council is now in the process of analysing all of the results. We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to everyone who took the time to take part in the discussions. It is through using feedback like this that we can monitor issues, make improvements and make our

long-term strategic decisions for the good of our town.

In total, 514 individuals took part in conversations either online or face to face with councillors and volunteers. Initial assessment shows that average scores have improved in areas such as 'Natural Space' & 'Play & Recreation', whilst other

areas like 'Traffic & Parking' or 'Public Transport' dropped slightly or remained the same.

Full details will be available shortly, and we look forward to updating residents with how we plan to address issues raised.

Events

Monday 5th May:

Scarecrow Festival

Saturday 10th May:

Meltham Community Day, 11.00am - 3.00pm Carlile Institute and Crossroads

Saturday 5th July:

Meltham Memories

Tuesday 8th July - Saturday 12th July:

Meltham Fringe: Holmfirth Art Week, Carlile Institute, Crossroads, Wilshaw Village Hall, Fourth Fiend

Saturday 30th August:

Picnic in the Park 11.00am – 4.00pm, Robert Ashton Memorial Park

Easter Services

The Church of England

Thursday 17th April:

7:30pm Maundy Thursday Communion, St James

Good Friday, 18th April:

11:30am Service of Witness outside St Bartholomew's; 3.00pm An Hour at the Cross, St Bartholomew's

Saturday 19th April:

Easter Trail 10:00am - 3:00pm starting on the Greenway ending at St James
Easter Day

Easter Sunday, 20th April:

5:56am Sunrise Service at the Cock Crowing stone on Wessenden Head Road; 10:00am St James';
11:15am St Mary's


Meltham Methodist

Good Friday, 18th April:

Soup lunch at the Methodist Hall with donations to Christian Aid after the open air service.

Easter Sunday, 20th April:

10.30am Easter Morning Communion Service



What's on
in Meltham
Apr-Jul 2025