

Brunch and Open Day at the Village Hall

This month Topcliffe & Asenby Village Hall will again be among hundreds of village halls across the country celebrating the vital role they play in the community and the importance they have in supporting health and wellbeing.

As part of the week-long celebration (16 to 22 March) our Village Hall is holding a 'Brunch and Open Day' on Sunday 22 March between 10.30am and 1pm. Refreshments will include delicious bacon and sausage breakfast buns (and vegetarian options), cakes and bakes, along with copious amounts of tea and coffee.

Councillors from both Topcliffe Parish Council and Asenby Parish Council have agreed to be present to chat to residents about any issues they have about our two villages. Topcliffe Parish Council representatives in particular will be happy to discuss the latest situation relating to the Toll Booth.

There will also be displays by a number of hall user groups, including the indoor carpet bowls group, bocchia club and the regular art class. A slide presentation depicting the whole range of Village Hall activities has been updated and will be shown on the large screen throughout the event.



Village Hall committee members - the volunteers that make the hall 'tick' - will be present to meet residents and answer questions about the hall's operation. Asenby's North Yorkshire Council representative, Cllr Nick Brown will join us, but Topcliffe's representative Cllr Dan Sladden is not able to be present as he is already committed elsewhere.

Across England, it is estimated that over 80,000 people regularly volunteer their time with village halls, from those on management committees who oversee the day-to-day use of the building and its finances, to those who organise

events and group activities for the benefit of the local community.

Here in Topcliffe and Asenby a committee of twelve residents organise a variety of events and ensure that the hall - a hub at the centre of the community - is available for everyone's use.



It would be great to see lots of residents popping into the Village Hall on Sunday 22 March.



Bake to help out

Can you help out by baking cakes, buns or a tray-bake to support the Village Hall open day? If so, your contribution would be greatly appreciated. Contact Karen Morley on 01845 577426 to let her know what you can provide.

The Sunday Email

In early February the Sunday Email clocked up a significant milestone when the 300th edition was published. On 4th April, the 309th edition will mark the sixth anniversary of the publication. Those who received the email back in April 2020 will recall that the Sunday Email was launched to share information about Covid, explain the restrictions and advise how important services - health and everyday needs - could be accessed.

After Covid it morphed into a more general news and information newsletter and today the circulation has grown to over 360. For many residents it continues to be a popular read over Sunday morning breakfast.

Anyone who wants to be added to the circulation can register by going to www.dougallan.co.uk

Topcliffe & Asenby Produce Show

In order to give everyone time to plan and prepare their entries in this year's Annual Produce Show, here are a few pointers to help get you started.

This year's show will be held in the Village Hall on Saturday 29 August. This year there are 88 classes, an increase of four on previous years. The new classes are - Pork Pies in the Baking category, woodworking in hobbies/handicrafts and examples of handwriting for adults and children. There is also a brand new trophy - The Ray Fothergill Cucumber Cup, a special trophy donated by Joan Fothergill in memory of her husband Ray, who was a great supporter of the Produce Show, who sadly passed away last year.

There are five categories, including:

- 47 classes in the Horticultural section.
- 18 classes in the baking/jams/preserves and pickles category.
- 3 floral classes.
- 13 classes in the hobbies/handicrafts section
- 7 specific classes that only children can enter.



Large crowds at last year's show.

The full list of categories and classes, plus the show rules and timings on the day, are available on both village websites - www.asenby.net and www.topcliffe.org.uk or requested from Show Secretary Judith Lowe at lowepeter46@hotmail.com or by calling 01845 577911.

Lunches at the Village Hall

There are only two Warm Hub lunches remaining this spring before a return to Soup & Sweet events from mid-April.

The more hearty, Warm Hub lunches will be served on Wednesdays 18 March and 1 April. Then from Wednesday 15 April the lighter, Soup and Sweets will be served.

These regular lunchtime meals are served at Topcliffe & Asenby Village Hall between 11.30am and 1pm. Everyone, of all ages from Topcliffe and Asenby and surrounding areas, is welcome to attend.

There's no set charge, but donations are welcome to help pay the rental cost of hiring the Village Hall and other unavoidable expenses. The organisers don't receive grant support or surplus food from supermarkets: everything is bought and paid for, cooked and brought into the hall by volunteers, many of whom are senior citizens themselves.

Residents of Topcliffe and Asenby villages can have their lunch delivered if they are housebound - either on a short-term basis because of illness, or longer-term. If you wish to have a meal delivered on the day the lunch is held, please get in touch with Karen Morley on 01845 577426.

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Art in the Village Hall

Art classes have been running at Topcliffe Village Hall for many years and they continue to be as popular as ever.

The classes, which are led by Becky, a qualified artist and teacher, are engaging, creative and full of tips to help artists of all levels and ability to learn new approaches using different topics and materials. Becky has designed the classes to help participants create and relax in the company of likeminded people. Her holistic approach helps you to really enjoy the creative process and experiment without judgement.

Weekly Classes: Monday mornings between 10am and 12 noon. The next block of six starts after Easter on the 13 April. These inspirational and fun sessions. Check out the 'early bird' offer on Becky's website. Beginners are welcome.

Land and Sea in Acrylics: Be inspired by Georges Seurat and paint your own canvas on Thursday 19 March between 10am and 1pm.

Spring Retreat Pastels Experience: Celebrate Spring by painting with soft pastels to create inspired scenes and floral displays, landscapes and gardens. Thursday 23 April, 10am to 3pm.

Spring Retreat Paint in Oils: Tropical Flowers in Oils. A true pop of colours and contrasts against more traditional dark backgrounds. Friday 24 April from 10am to 1pm.

Churchyard Maintenance

Thanks to a loyal and energetic team of volunteers the churchyard has been left looking extremely neat and tidy throughout the winter. St Columba's church community is very indebted to them all.

With the arrival of spring there's a need to restart the regular grounds maintenance to ensure that we keep on top of things. As in past years, a series of Saturday working parties is being planned. These will be open to all who would like to offer an hour or two to help the spring tidy up and also continue progress on reclaiming the lower terraces. Dates will soon be widely advertised, so please join in if you can.

Special thanks go to Malc Morley who has very kindly given the maintenance team's two mowers their annual service, which would otherwise be quite a drain on church funds.



The TATtler



There's always a warm welcome at The Swan - your local pub



As winter comes to an end and we look forward to the joys of spring and much improved weather, here at The Swan - your local pub - there's a friendly and warm welcome for everyone.

The Swan is a traditional hostelry serving good quality food and a wide variety of beers, lagers, wines and spirits...both indoors and out.

Meals are served Tuesday to Saturday between 5 and 8.30pm, and on Sunday from 12 noon to 4pm. (Tuesday is Basket Night and Wednesday is Pie Night).

Please book early to avoid disappointment.

THE SWAN, FRONT STREET, TOPCLIFFE YO7 3NZ TEL: 01845 595185

Vic and Col take on the Post Office

Vic & Col Throupe are the new postmasters in Topcliffe and they have many ideas to implement, including looking into changing the shop layout to accommodate their new business ideas. The shop will be painted and a new sign installed once some better weather arrives.

They hope to offer a wider range of hot food and a whole new sandwich range, which will also include wraps and salads.

Vic says: "We are taking over the Facebook page from the previous owners and hope to grow this social media page for the shop. We'd love it if anyone who doesn't already follow us, would sign up at 'Topcliffe Postoffice'. The page will have the latest news, offers and lots of new changes/lines we are introducing.

She added: "Debbie has done an amazing job of making the shop a huge success and has left us with an amazing team of staff, who could not have been more welcoming. Villagers and customers from surrounding areas have also been very welcoming and we look forward to meeting many new faces going forward.

"Thank you for your ongoing support to keep this shop part of the community."

Snooker Club

The snooker club located on the upper floor of the Toll Booth in the centre of Topcliffe is on the lookout for new members who live in Topcliffe and Asenby villages.

Although the number of members is holding up well, this year an increasing number of new members live outside the two villages. Of course, they are very welcome and they help keep the club viable, but club officials are keen that the local facility is primarily used by local people.

Club membership fees have been held this year at £30, for the third year in a row. Members have their own key so that they can pop in to play at any time. Table lights are controlled by a meter and the cost is just 50p for twenty minutes.

Enquiries about membership should be made to David Bowman on 01845 577843.

Any former members who have not handed back their key are asked to arrange to return them as soon as possible. Getting more keys cut is an expensive business that the club would prefer to avoid. Call David if you have a key to hand in.

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Yorkshire on show in mosaics

If you're looking for a right Yorkshire treat this spring, why not pop down to The Bath House at RHS Gardens Harlow Carr, Harrogate, to take in the annual BAMM North mosaic exhibition?

The theme for this year's exhibition and sale is Up Hill and Down Dale: A Celebration of Yorkshire and it promises a collection of colourful, unusual, clever and whimsical mosaics from over 20 mosaicists working in our region and concentrating on all the best that Yorkshire has to offer.

You can expect to see local flora and fauna, familiar views and wild and wonderful interpretations of the theme from these members of the British Association for Modern Mosaic which includes local artist Siobhan Gifford from Asenby.

This hugely popular exhibition is manned daily by the mosaicists themselves who are always happy to answer any questions you may have about this art form or to offer advice on workshops in the area if you are inspired to have a go yourself. There will be mosaic kits for sale along with various other small mosaics, cards and the like in the pop-up shop.

The exhibition runs from 23 April to 17 May 2026 and entrance to The Bath House is free once you have accessed the gardens.



Siobhan Gifford, of Asenby, has been celebrating the richness of the Yorkshire dialect with this work in progress 'Ey Up Duck'.



A delightful take on our familiar view of the White Horse at Sutton Bank entitled 'Kilburn' by Flick Gillett of Moon Child Mosaics.

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New Air Ambulance base takes shape

Yorkshire Air Ambulance's new helicopter base near Skipton Bridge is really taking shape. Over the past month or two, construction teams have made great progress on the new HQ building. The steel framework for the first floor is now in and work on the roof is complete, despite the terrible weather lately. Work is on track to be operational by late summer 2026.



Asenby Parish Meeting

Asenby's Annual Parish meeting will be held on Wednesday 20 May at 7pm, followed immediately by the Annual Parish Council meeting at 7.30pm. Both meetings will be held in the upper floor meeting room at Topcliffe & Asenby Village hall..

St Columba's anniversary celebrations

This year's anniversary celebrations will be held on Sunday 7 June.

Few people will realise the St Columba's was founded between 635 and 640AD, meaning it will celebrate its 1400th anniversary in just nine years' time.

Plans for this year's celebration will be simpler than those for the major anniversary in 2035. The details are still being worked on, but plans will include a BBQ at 12.30pm, to which everyone is very warmly invited, plus the ever-popular guided tours of the church tower.

There'll also be displays and discussions about the church's Celtic origins, its Victorian makeover and more recent improvements. During the afternoon teas and cakes will be served.

To conclude the day there are plans for a special Choral Evensong with drinks to follow. Watch out for more details in due course.



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The Old Tolbooth - Update and Next Steps

Topcliffe Parish Council has continued to review the condition of the Old Tolbooth and to consider the options for its future. The building is clearly valued by many residents, however recent professional surveys confirm that substantial works are now required if it is to remain safe and in use.

Background

In late 2024, the Parish Council commissioned a condition survey of the Old Tolbooth. The report, received in January 2025, identified significant repair liabilities. The Council wrote to all households seeking views on whether to proceed with repairs or consider a sale. Although response numbers were low, the majority of those who replied supported exploring a sale.

In March 2025, a group of residents asked the Council to pause any sale while they investigated possible grant funding to retain the building in village ownership. A second, more detailed survey was subsequently commissioned. This report was received in January 2026. The Council has now reached a point where clear decisions are required and wishes residents to have straightforward information before further consultation.

Summary of Survey Findings

Two independent surveyors (Savills 2025 and Ian Smith 2026) have inspected the building. These surveys have produced the following estimates of repair costs:

Savills (January 2025): £60,000-£70,000

Ian Smith (January 2026): £52,500-£54,000

These figures do not include structural engineer investigations, listed building consent requirements, scaffolding and access arrangements or detailed contractor quotations. Both surveyors advise that hidden defects are highly likely to be uncovered once works commence. Final costs are therefore expected to exceed the headline estimates.

Condition of the Building

Both reports state that the identified works would only stabilise and maintain the building in its current state. They would not improve or modernise it for new or expanded uses. They state that the main beams supporting the first floor are a significant concern, particularly given the load of the snooker tables. They indicate that a full structural assessment and likely substantial remedial works would be required before confirming the floor is safe for continued use. Ongoing maintenance costs will remain a continuing liability. Neither report provides annual figures.

They both agree that essential works should begin as soon as funding is secured to prevent further deterioration.

Funding Position

The Tolbooth Group, which requested time to explore fundraising have not, to date, secured grants or raised funds towards the repair costs. The Parish Council's only available mechanism to raise the necessary funds would



be through an increase in the parish precept. The earliest this could take effect is the 2027 financial year. The implications:

Doubling the current precept would raise approximately £35,000 per annum.

Even at the lower repair estimate, this level of increase would likely need to remain in place for at least two years, and more realistically three years, once additional costs and contingencies are allowed for.

An annual maintenance budget would still be required thereafter.

For an average household, this would equate to an estimated increase of approximately £250-£300 per year, based on current figures.

It should also be noted that any improvement works to make the building suitable for wider public use (for example, enhanced community facilities at ground floor level) would require a separate and substantially greater programme of investment beyond the essential repairs outlined above

Considerations for the Parish Council

The Parish Council must now consider whether to commit to a significant and sustained increase in the precept to fund essential repairs (with further funding likely required in future), or explore the sale or transfer of the building, enabling its preservation without placing the financial burden on local residents.

Next Steps

The Council does not wish to proceed without clear guidance from villagers. A letter will shortly be delivered to every household seeking views on the future of the Old Tolbooth, including whether the Parish Council should undertake the repairs or pursue transfer to another owner. Councillors will also be present at the Village Hall Open Day on 22 March and will be pleased to speak with residents and hear comments at that time.

Residents are strongly encouraged to respond to the formal consultation. A clear and representative response will enable the Parish Council to determine the most appropriate course of action for both the building and the wider community.

Village Hall gets new accounts examiner

Following the appeal in the last edition of The Tattler, village resident Martin Hexter has agreed to act as the new independent examiner for the Village Hall's accounts. The Committee is required to produce an annual report and accounts each year and, as the hall's annual turnover is under £40,000 pa, they don't need to be audited, but can choose to have their accounts independently 'examined' by a suitable person.

Martin has stepped forward to take on the task and he will tackle his first examination at the close of the 2025/26 financial year. Martin, who has lived in Topcliffe for six years, was in banking for thirty-three years and then spent twelve years in the finance department of the Mears Group dealing with housing contracts on behalf of local authorities and housing associations. He has also been Treasurer of various charities over the years.

Floral workshops at the Catton Kitchen

Ever hopeful that spring is just around the corner the Catton Kitchen is advertising a couple of spring classes with Holly of Tarragon Flowers. Holly joined the team to work on the market garden in February last year and is leading on presenting these special classes, which are:

Living Wreath Class - Sunday 22 March between 3 and 5pm.

Spring Table Centre Workshop - Friday 27 March between 5.30pm and 7.30pm.

Check out their website for more details:

www.thecattonkitchen.co.uk

The change of examiner is happening because John Graham, who has undertaken the job for many years, has decided to 'retire' from a few of his voluntary roles now that he is in his 80s. John, who is a former chair of Topcliffe Parish Council and chair of the Village Hall Committee, and also authored The Millennium Book Of Topcliffe, moved from the village over twenty years ago. He recently examined and approved the hall's accounts for 2024/25 and gave them a 'clean bill of health'.

Village Hall Committee chair, Richard Byas, said: "John Graham has always been a conscientious volunteer and has served Topcliffe well in many capacities. As the independent examiner of the hall's annual accounts, he provided an invaluable service to the committee and I and the other Trustees are extremely grateful for his help and advice."

He added: "It is always good when a volunteer steps forward to undertake a task in the community. Martin will undertake the examination of this year's accounts and I am confident that we have found an excellent person for the job."

Village Hall - bookings and hire

Topcliffe & Asenby Village Hall is available for hire to local organisations, businesses and individuals. It is a superb venue with fully equipped kitchen - an ideal place for children's parties and for anniversary events. Book online for your event by visiting either the Topcliffe or Asenby village websites.

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St Columba's Services

Wednesday 11 March at 7pm - Compline for Lent

Thursday 12 March at 11am - Midweek Morning Prayer

Sunday 15 March (Mothering Sunday) at 10.45am - Sung Matins, followed by refreshments

Wednesday 18 March at 7pm - Compline for Lent

Thursday 19 March at 11am - Midweek Morning Prayer, followed by refreshments

Sunday 22 March at 10.45am - Holy Communion, followed by refreshments

Wednesday 25 March at 7pm - Compline for Lent

Thursday 26 March at 11am - Midweek Morning Prayer, followed by refreshments

Sunday 29 March (Palm Sunday) - No Service at Topcliffe (5th Sunday) but at 10.45am there will be a Benefice Service at Baldersby St James

Wednesday 1 April at 7pm - Compline for Lent

Thursday 2 April at 11am - Midweek Morning Prayer followed by refreshments and at 7pm a Benefice Maundy Thursday Service will be held at St John's, Dalton

Friday 3 April - 2pm to 3pm - Good Friday Reflection

Saturday 4 April at 7pm - Vigil for Easter Eve and First Mass of Easter (Sung by Topcliffe Choir), refreshments and wine to follow

Sunday 5 April at 8.30am - Said Easter Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer) but no 6.30pm Choral Evensong

Thursday 9 April at 11am - Midweek Morning Prayer, followed by refreshments

Sunday 12 April at 10.45am - Holy Communion, followed by refreshments

Thursday 16 April at 11am Midweek Morning Prayer, followed by refreshments

Sunday 19 April at 10.45am - Sung Matins, followed by refreshments

Thursday 23 April at 11am - Midweek Morning Prayer, followed by refreshments

Sunday 26 April at 10.45am - Holy Communion, followed by refreshments

Thursday 30 April, 11am Midweek Morning Prayer, followed by refreshments

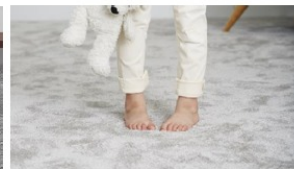
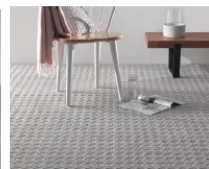
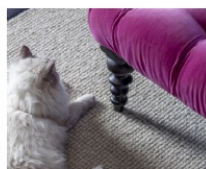
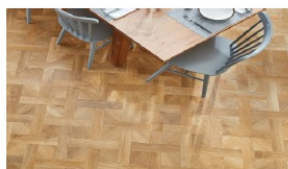
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The Saltburn Smugglers

Asenby Parish Council is delighted to announce that the modern shanty group, the Saltburn Smugglers, will be performing on Sunday 28 June in Topcliffe and Asenby Village Hall from 2-4pm. The group transform tales from the North-East coast smuggling heyday into vibrant, contemporary sea shanties.

At the interval, there'll be a grand raffle to raise funds for Asenby Community Park

A not to be missed event for all ages. Tickets, which will be £10 per adult and £8 per child, will go on sale from 1 April from Jane Gallon, 07909 614086 or Catherine Catterick on 07709 321048. Demand will be high and numbers limited. But for now, get a note in your diary and save the date.



A1 southbound resurfacing

Resurfacing work will take place on the southbound carriageway of A1 between junction 52 Catterick and junction 50 Ripon in two phases over the next few months. Work will be carried out as follows:

- Phase 1: 1 March - 11 April (Leeming Bar to Ripon)
- Phase 2: 13 April - 16 May (Catterick to Leeming Bar)



There'll be a series of overnight (8pm to 6am) full southbound carriageway closures. When closures are in operation, diversions will be via A6055. A temporary 50mph speed limit will be in operation for the full duration of the work.

The Next Tattler

The next Tattler newsletter will be published in early June 2026. Anyone with ideas for articles should get in touch with the Editor.



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10 am to 1pm (last entries by 12.30pm)

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THE ANGEL INN AT TOPCLIFFE

Business over the Christmas and New Year period was absolutely amazing and we thank all of our customers who attended parties and events, or visited our bars and restaurant. We enjoyed being of service and as the winter season comes to an end and spring is on the horizon, we look forward to seeing you all again.



THE BIG YORKSHIRE DO RETURNS

It's amazing to think that already we are planning our second anniversary! We will be organising a fun-packed summer birthday celebration on Saturday 11 July and this year we're taking it to a new level. We'll be using the whole pub and its gardens for a full day of partying. There'll be lots of live music acts and multiple choice food vendors providing meals throughout the day. More room, more music, more food, more atmosphere.

It will be a ticket only event - only 450 tickets available, and bookings will be via Eventbrite.

This will be a party you won't want to miss so watch out for more details in due course.

Keep an eye on The Angel's website and Facebook page for more details over the coming months.

Spring Accommodation Offer

Enjoy a relaxing overnight stay with our Dinner, Bed & Breakfast package for just £150 per night. This offer includes £25 per person dinner allowance, overnight stay and breakfast the following morning. This exclusive offer is only redeemable when booking directly with The Angel Inn and quoting 'Spring 2026'. Please call our reception team on 01845 57800 to secure your stay.

Easter Weekend - 3 to 5 April

At the time of going to print, the programme of events for the Easter weekend had not been finalised, but rest assured there'll be a full weekend of activities, including the ever-popular Easter Egg Hunt. Watch out for more details on our website and Facebook page.

Weddings, Christenings, Celebration of Life, Private Parties, Shoot Dinners & Corporate Meetings.
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Restaurant and Bar Meals

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