

The TATtler

Topcliffe and Asenby Times

Blue Cross On Our Doorstep

Although the Blue Cross charity has been helping sick, injured, abandoned and homeless pets since 1897, its links to Topcliffe started exactly a hundred years later.

The Thirsk Rehoming Centre based near Alanbrooke Business Park on Station Road, first opened its doors in 1987 and it has been extremely busy ever since.

Charlotte Waite, who lives in Dovecote Mews and who has worked at the centre for 10 years explained that the Blue Cross finds homes for unwanted cats, dogs, small pets and horses, offering a tailor-made service to help each pet find the right person for them.

The main areas of work carried out at the Blue Cross are:

Rehoming: finding new homes for abandoned or unwanted pets.

Veterinary: caring for poorly pets when their owners can't afford private treatment.

Behaviour: helping pets with behavioural issues to have happy, healthy futures.

Education: educating pet owners of the future by giving talks and offering advice.

Pet bereavement: supporting those struggling to cope with the loss of a much-loved pet.

Charlotte added: "We are always looking for volunteers who will give up their spare time to walk dogs or spend time with the cats whilst the search for a new home is underway. There's also a need for short-term foster carers for animals who are struggling to cope in the Centre's kennels or cattery pens."



Charlotte and Blue Cross resident Hunter

"These carers are particularly crucial for providing care for pregnant animals and their litters, or animals that are too young to be rehomed or elderly and struggling with the stress of Centre life. A caring home environment is

great for animals recuperating from operations, where close monitoring is essential. Anyone who would like a pet but is not in a position to give long-term commitment to a pet, might find that fostering is ideal."

"We are also on the lookout for 'ambassador dogs' who are really sociable dogs who love to interact with other dogs and are calm and gentle around them and can provide help for dogs in our care who are nervous or those who require play time."

If you feel you can help out at Blue Cross and with the animals in its care, please pop in to the Centre or contact them on 0300 777 1540. Their web address is thirsk@bluecross.org.uk

Waste Recovery Park Tour

Most locals will have heard of the Allerton Waste Recovery Park, which is highly visible as you drive south on the A1 towards the A59 Harrogate junction. Well, a group of 14 villagers and friends (pictured) set out last month to check it out.



Villagers at the waste recovery park

The facility has been fully operational for about 12 months processing up to 320,000 tonnes of waste from York and North Yorkshire councils every year. It provides a solution for treating our waste while turning it into a resource through a range of technologies, including:

mechanical treatment plant - this receives general waste mainly originating from household bins and household waste recycling centres and removes any remaining metal and plastics for recycling.

anaerobic digestion plant - which treats the organic waste part and produces a biogas which generates renewable electricity.

an energy from waste plant which burns the waste which remains after separation of the recyclables and treatment of organic waste, producing steam to feed an electricity generating turbine that produces enough electricity to supply about 40,000 homes.

Events Coming Up at The Village Hall

Art Connections Classes - Mondays 1 'til 4pm

There's an art class every Monday afternoon that caters for complete beginners through to those with more experience. The class is led by artists Vivien and Barry Wilton-Middlemass of Art Connections. For more details call Barry on 07909 690543 or just turn up on any Monday afternoon to see how it works. Everyone has a free first lesson.

Race Night - Saturday, 6 April 2019

Tickets, priced £6 and including a sausage and mash supper, are now on sale for the popular Horse Race Night. There'll be a licensed bar selling draught beer and other drinks. To sponsor a horse or purchase tickets contact Doug Allan (578526) or Judith Lowe (577911).

St George's Night Supper and Dance Saturday, 27 April 2019

There'll be a Barn Dance with a pie and pea supper to celebrate St George's Day. Music will be courtesy of Ripon-based band The Polkadots. This is a bring your own drinks event. Tickets priced at £12 on sale soon from Judith Lowe (577911).

Dance Night with The Flying Oysters - Saturday 6 July

One of the North East's top Rock/Pop bands is coming to Topcliffe in a few months' time. They'll perform a range of music from 70s to current date including Metallica, Thin Lizzy, Snow Patrol and Coldplay. They're not to be missed, so make sure you put this date in your diary and watch out for tickets going on sale in May.

See us on Facebook, or add your email address to the circulation list maintained by committee member, Doug Allan.

Minister Praises School

Congratulations are in order for a brilliant achievement at Topcliffe Academy. In 2018 the school increased the proportion of children that attained the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics to an excellent 71%, compared to 33% in 2017.

Local MP Kevin Hollinrake highlighted the success when he recently contacted headteacher Abigail Clay to say that the news had been passed to him by the Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP, Minister of State for School Standards.

Mr Hollinrake said: "The Minister and I fully recognise that this achievement is due to the hard work of you and your dedicated team of teachers and staff, and of course the pupils themselves and their parents."

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Thirsk Area Cross Country Competition

On Monday, 11 February, 36 KS2 pupils from Topcliffe Academy participated in a Cross Country Competition at Thirsk School & Sixth Form College. The standard was incredibly high this year, with only the top 6 boys and 6 girls from each year group successfully making it through to the Hambleton District Finals. Well done to all of the pupils who took part in the event, you all did incredibly well. Well done to Holly Binks, Maisie Binks, Emilia Brierley, Freddie Fyfe and Lexi Ramshay who successfully made it through to the finals.



Well done to KS2 who took part in the cross country competition.

Fancy a game of bowls?

Topcliffe Bowling Club has been going for over 30 years and is now on the lookout for new members.

Men and women of all ages can join the club and Vice Chair Richard Wallis says: "There'll be a very warm welcome to anyone who thinks they'd like to give it a go. Bowling is often seen as a sport for the more elderly but that is an outdated view as many younger people are taking part and having lots of fun. There's also the pleasure of making new friends and taking part in a very enjoyable social gathering."

The club plays from April to August on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 6.30 to 9.30pm and on Friday afternoons from 1.45 to 4.30pm.

If you fancy seeing what's involved pop along to try a game and meet some of the regulars at an open day being held on Sunday 14 April between 2pm and 4pm. You'll need to be wearing flat sole shoes or trainers if you want to play.

Before that if you want a chat about the sport, please call Club Secretary Janet Sissons on 01609 781471, Les Chapman on 577026 or Richard Wallis on 577437.

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High Quality Writing from Year 5/6 Pupils

Year 5/6 at Topcliffe Academy have been busy learning all about the circulatory system. From the flow of blood through the heart, to why we need oxygen in our bodies and why our bodies demand more oxygen when we exercise. They have created factsheets, written stories of the journey of a red blood cell, conducted science experiments and even dissected hearts to extend and consolidate their learning. Alongside this, they have also read the book 'Pig Heart Boy' by Malorie Blackman, which has opened up a lot of discussion about the moral and ethical issues surrounding organ transplant, and the potential use of animals in this process. In the accompanying image some examples of their published work can be seen - our visitors have commented on the exceptionally high standards of both content and presentation and we are beyond proud of what our children have been able to achieve.



A brilliant presentation of the circulatory system!

The Coffin Path

The fund-raising team at St Columba's Church recently raised £388 at a coffee morning held to help raise cash to reinstall the original 'coffin path' in the church grounds and other planned improvements.

The coffin path used to run from the double gates in Church Street to the top of the church steps. The plan is to lay resin bonding to make a solid path across the grass and then continue to the church entrance to ease access for wheelchairs, pushchairs and those unsteady on their feet.

Volunteers will be seeking grants and organising more fund-raising events over the coming months.

Asenby Parish Council Still Needs You!

In the December edition of The Tattler we mentioned that the position of Clerk to the Parish Council is vacant and the position needs filling as soon as possible...but, unfortunately, it's still vacant.

It's an important post which helps ensure the smooth running of village business and it's hoped someone will step forward to take it on. The Clerk, who will be paid £9.50 per hour, is responsible for taking minutes of meetings and dealing with correspondence. Attendance is required at the six meetings held each year and these last around two hours each. Applicants must be computer literate. Anyone interested should contact Peter Palmer on 578057.

New councillor also required following the recent resignation of Peter Dale, there is a vacancy for a parish councillor on Asenby Parish Council. Anyone with energy and fresh ideas who is interested in village matters is asked to step forward to take on the role. Again, the person to contact is Peter Palmer on the above number.

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Bed & Breakfast

Tuesday Treats - Meals in a Basket - £5.50

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Curry of the Day served with rice or chips - £6.50

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Sunday lunch - 12 noon to 3pm

Main menu and Chef Specials:
Wednesday to Sunday

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Basket Night - Tuesday

Pizza and Pasta Night - Wednesday

Pie Night - Thursday

Home cooked Sunday lunch - 12 noon to 3pm

Main menu and Chef Specials:
Tuesday to Saturday

Telephone: 01845 523384

Topcliffe Parish Council Elections

Topcliffe Parish Council is made up of five councillors who hold a number of powers and duties, all of which impact directly on the community.

They are responsible for managing their own budget and are financed through the precept, an amount of money calculated as an estimate for the coming financial year and collected as part of your council tax.

Key areas of responsibility for Topcliffe include grass verges, play areas, village open spaces and benches and the Toll Booth.

The largest cost each year is the grass cutting. Areas covered are Jubilee Gardens, the cemetery, the

Sheepwash, the play area and the grass verges around the village.

All meetings are public meetings, at which residents can raise areas of concern including street lights being out, potholes, issues with speeding or HGVs coming through the village. All of which are then fed back to the relevant area of responsibility.

This May, the Parish Council will have an election and local residents are able to be nominated for the role of councillor. For further details on election matters please contact the clerk, topcliffeparishcouncil@gmail.com or Hambleton District Council electoral services.

Key Dates for District and Parish Election 2019

Publication of Notice of Election	19 March 2019
Receipt of nominations to stand for election	Wednesday 20 March to Wednesday 3 April
Deadline for nominations to stand for election	03 April 2019
Last day to register to vote	Midnight Friday 12 April
Publication of Notice of Poll	24 April 2019
Day of Poll	7am to 10pm Thursday 2 May
District and Parish verification and count	9am Friday 3 May

Sounds Better!

The sound quality during events and performances at Topcliffe & Asenby Village Hall will be much less echoey and a great deal clearer following the installation of 26 acoustic panels on walls and the ceiling.

With the help of financial donations from several local businesses, the Village Hall Committee organised the work at a cost of £3,345.



Acoustic panels installed.

Village Hall Events

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Mon	Pilates 9.30am-11am	Art Class 1pm-4pm	Yoga 7pm-8.30pm
Tues	Pilates 9.30am-10.30am	Boccia 1.30pm - 3.30pm Dance 4.30pm - 6pm Library 1.30pm - 4.30pm	
Wed	Daisychain 9.15am-11.15am	Yoga 1.30pm - 2.45pm	Beavers & Cubs 6pm-8.30pm
Thurs	Pilates 10.15am-11.15am		Pilates 6.15am-7.15am Indoor Carpet Bowls 7.30pm-10.30pm
Fri		Private Yoga 5.15pm-6.15pm	Scouts 7pm-9pm

Topcliffe Parish Council - 1st Thursday of the month (Next meeting 4 April.)

Asenby Parish Council - 3rd Wednesday of alternate months. (Next meeting 20 March.)

Village Hall Committee - next meeting in May 2019

Booking Secretary - Judith Lowe - 577911



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Army Insight for Topcliffe Pupils

Pupils of Topcliffe Academy recently had a talk about life in the Army given by Topcliffe resident Kev Young, who retired with the rank of Major last September after 43 years' service.

The talk was part of the school's 'Service Families' programme. The children were fascinated by Kev's stories, particularly when he produced a framed photograph of the day in 2015 when he met HRH Prince Harry who was making a visit to the Personnel Recovery Centre at Catterick.



Headteacher Abigail Clay said: "It was really good for all the children to hear about what it was like to be in the army and to have the opportunity to ask lots of questions. We thank Mr Young for sharing his time so generously with the school."

Three children - Madeleine and William Macauley and Alfie Young - who attended the talk had a particular interest in what was said as Kev Young is their grandfather.

Illegal Fly Tipping

There was much concern among Topcliffe residents when around 40 bags of rubbish, thought to be from an illegal cannabis farm, were found dumped in Winn Lane last month. It's understood fifteen residents lodged a complaint with Hambleton Council and the matter was also raised at our Parish Council meeting.

Hambleton Council's Fly Tipping Investigator Alan Scargill soon established that the land where the tipping took place is managed by the highway company Auto Link, and arrangements were quickly made for them to remove the rubbish.

The best numbers to call to report dumped rubbish are Hambleton Council's main number 01609 779977 or direct to Alan Scargill on 01609 788113.

Easter Services at St Columba's Church

Easter Eve Saturday 20 April 7.30pm

Easter Day Sunday 21 April 10.45am

Lent Venues (Compline) 7.30pm:

12 March at Skipton on Swale Church

19 March at Baldersby St James Church

26 March at Topcliffe Church

2 April at Dalton Church

9 April at Baldersby St James Church

16 April at Skipton on Swale Church

Lent Lunches:

Topcliffe and Asenby Village Hall (12.15pm - 1.15pm)

13, 20, 27 March and 3 April.

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CONTACT DETAILS

01845 577316
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lizanddave@the-elm-gallery.co.uk



**Mary Dickinson, a small lady
who lived life to the full**

Thirty years ago, Mary Ramsden Dickinson was a familiar figure around Topcliffe, being a lady who was often out and about, greeting everyone and always smiling. Sadly, she died late February at the age of 101, yet her life had not only been long, but also well-lived, full of experiences and wisdom and with many talents and skills acquired along the way.

She spent her childhood in Stokesley where her father worked at the National Provincial Bank (which later became the National Westminster.) As an older girl she attended St Hilda's School for Girls in Whitby. On finishing school, she went to London to train as a nurse and told stories of war-time incidents where she cared for severely injured victims of bomb raids. She continued her nursing career in Saltburn, working in the local hospital as a staff nurse, then finishing her training in Bolton.



Mary in her thirties

This was when she arrived in Topcliffe to work as a district nurse and midwife with Dr Dias in the village surgery. She delivered hundreds of babies over a period of thirty years and with a bicycle as her only means of transport, she could easily have been a forerunner of the TV series 'Call the Midwife.' It certainly took her a while to get the hang of driving as she failed seven tests and even after passing, she managed to turn her Mini upside down on a visit to the Lake District, though fortunately managed to extricate herself unharmed.

ART CONNECTIONS

Art Classes at Topcliffe & Asenby Village Hall
Artists Barry & Vivien Wilton-Middlemass take the classes
every week on Monday afternoons from
1pm to 4pm (Now in its 2nd Year)

We will be delighted if you come and join us, all are
welcome, tuition from beginners to advance artists
(Always something new to learn)

If you are not sure of your capabilities come and have a look
and chat--any Monday

Call Barry mob: 07909 690543

Email: jbm.lockwoodbeck@btopenworld.com



Mary's hobbies were many and varied. Despite her very small build she was extremely adventurous and loved rock-climbing and on one occasion met Sir Edmund Hillary. She was familiar with the Dales and the Lake District and had a fantastic knowledge of wild flowers. After determinedly walking the length of the Swale she published a book, *A Walk Beside the River Swale*, which contained her own poetry and illustrations. She also enjoyed many walking trips in the Alps.

For such a small unassuming lady, Mary Dickinson was remarkable. Known and loved by many, she slipped away peacefully in Leeming Garth Care Home where she had spent her last few years. Her funeral was held at St Columba's Church, Topcliffe last Monday.

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A Bridge With A History

There's a plaque on Topcliffe Bridge stating that the first stone bridge was erected across the Swale on this point in 1622. But there is plenty of evidence that there were earlier wooden bridges going back to 1227 and indications that there were even earlier structures.

Historical records show that it had been a constant problem keeping wooden bridges in good order. Even in 1585 a charge of £13.6s.8d was made for essential repairs. At times the bridge had fallen into a state of decay and it was never really clear who was responsible for its upkeep. In 1621 members of the important Quarter Sessions in Thirsk met on site to see the scale of the problem for themselves. They decreed that things were so bad that a new stone bridge should be erected with all urgency at a cost of £256.13s.4d.



Malcolm Morley's grandad, John, passes over the bridge in 1942

But it can't have been a very sturdy stone bridge that was built because just 20 years later it was again described as in decay and ruin. So much so that the residents of Topcliffe were charged with allowing the structure to be neglected. The records don't say exactly what came of the charges, but it's clear that repairs and maintenance were a constant issue, requiring considerable funds to be spent to keep the bridge open.

It was in 1786 that John Carr, the County Surveyor, designed and opened a much more substantial and widened stone bridge that we all easily recognise today. It cost £994 and was probably undertaken as part of the general improvement of the Boroughbridge to Durham Turnpike that was taking place at that time.

In 1922 Topcliffe Bridge briefly carried the A1 across the Swale but shortly after that the road was redesignated as the A167.

The most recent widening took place in 1954 to take the ever-increasing amount of traffic heading to and from Teesside. Then, when the new A168 dual carriageway was built in 1977, most traffic was diverted from Topcliffe Bridge and it settled back into relative peacefulness - apart from the idiots who constantly knock down the railings when they drive too fast around the corner at the western side.

Great festive spirit

Our picture shows the guests and helpers at the very successful senior citizen's Christmas lunch. A great time and meal was had by those who attended. Out thanks go particularly to those who gave up their time to ensure things went well.



A very successful senior citizen's lunch

Bollywood Comes To Topcliffe

There was a touch of Bollywood at an event held in the village hall earlier this month.

Indian dance, music and culture were centre stage with Sandhya Nadgir demonstrating Indian traditional dance and the art of henna - or mehndi - which is extensively used by women to decorate their hands and feet during marriages or other occasions and festivals.

After a curry supper the audience watched a popular Bollywood film. Organiser Karen Morley said: "We had a brilliant evening and were given a glimpse of Bollywood style and Indian culture. It was fascinating to see the art of henna close up and hear about its importance in Indian culture." The event raised £523.

MyTimeYoga

Ever fancied trying yoga but not sure where to start?
Beginners very welcome.

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