



# Holmes Chapel Partnership Community Newsletter Issue 113 JANUARY 2024

## WELCOME TO THE JANUARY NEWSLETTER!

This is our first Newsletter of 2024 - what will the new year bring? It would be nice to be able to say *Things can only get better* but at the moment it's not looking that way - at least internationally, or even nationally. However we concentrate on our immediate community, where we have a chance of influencing for the good. As we always say, Holmes Chapel is a great place to live but work is needed to keep it that way and to make it even better! If you feel that way too why not get in touch via our website and join the Holmes Chapel Partnership team?

We reflect on our Christmas events and look forward to what January has to offer.



There is still time to enter our **Prize Draw** - **January 8th** is the closing date. See inside for details.

Our village centre was transformed on the evening of December 3rd! Another successful Christmas Market & Fair!



Santa gives us an insight into his experiences on the sleigh!



Harry Styles and our Station Manager Graham Blake are still in the news - not to mention Harry's dad!

The Parish Council want to make improvements too and have announced their Reclaim our Footpaths campaign. If your hedge is obstructing a footpath, why not make a resolution for 2024 to cut it back?



*Best Wishes from your Partnership Team!*

**For more information visit [www.hcpartnership.org.uk](http://www.hcpartnership.org.uk)**

# The Chairman of Holmes Chapel Partnership looks back on 2023

It has been a very busy year that has had its ups and downs but finished on a high note with another successful Christmas Market.

The start of the year **Funding** was our main challenge as Cheshire East Council said it could no longer afford to pay out the £8000 per annum to the Town Partnerships. This sum paid for the administration of the Partnership, which included our website, the printing and distribution of this Newsletter, and the administrative tasks of running the Christmas Market. Thankfully, our own Holmes Chapel Parish Council stepped in to support the Partnership and we were able to continue to plan for our 2023 Christmas Market & Fair. Believe it or not, we do make our bookings for stage and lighting in March of each year! We have subsequently been able to attract further support from business sponsors for which we are very grateful.

Early in 2023 we developed the **Harry Styles Map**. Our initial involvement was related to our **Safe Walking Routes to School** campaign as so many Harry Styles fans were visiting 'Harry's Wall' under the Twemlow viaduct, but were getting there by walking down the A535, which requires fans to cross the road just after the road bridge. If you have ever walked this route, you will know how dangerous this can be. Our idea was to create a route map from the station that featured the obvious Harry Styles Tourist attractions of Mandeville's, Fortune City and the Twemlow Viaduct, whilst guiding our visitors down Hermitage Lane, across the Hermitage Bridge.

The Print Room initially printed 100 maps, but within a few weeks of its launch, the BBC decided to do a short item in March which was broadcast on North West Tonight. What happened next is what I can only describe, as a whirlwind of TV and press interest over the next 6 months which included articles and features on ITV This Morning, BBC News, Channel 5, The New York Times, The Mirror, Secret Manchester, Cheshire Live, National World, BBC Radio Manchester, Stoke Sentinel, Congleton Chronicle and the Knutsford Guardian. As we approach the end of 2023 over 1,000 maps have been distributed and we estimate that we could have seen between 3,000 to 5,000 visitors. Spending an average of £50 per head on food and souvenirs in our village, it is clear that our businesses are benefitting from the visiting 'Harries'.

It was not until the AGM in April that I took over from Hazel Sutcliffe as the new **Chairman of the Partnership**. Hazel has become Vice Chair and still edits the Newsletter and, as a former Project Officer, I was mainly responsible for the Christmas Market so the handover has been smooth. Unfortunately Debra Cummins who had been doing a great job for the Partnership stepped down from her role as Volunteer Co-ordinator because of family pressures, but we are very happy that Gail Griggs has expanded her role to do just about everything! She does a fantastic job developing the **Holmes Chapel Partnership website** – and keeping it up to date, which is no mean feat!

In May we ran what has become our annual **Walk to School** event in support of our Safe Walking Routes to School campaign. There was a good turnout including the newly elected Dane Valley Ward Councillor Russell Chadwick. Sadly, there is very little positive to report on making Holmes Chapel a more pedestrian and cyclist friendly place.

## NEWS

We carried out many **Speedwatch** sessions until the Police called a halt to this activity in July. We campaigned through the Newsletter to try and stop HGVs travelling past the Church and westwards along Macclesfield Road.

We collaborated with the Villages Mag to get a **Safe Spaces** scheme up and running. Gail worked very hard visiting local businesses, many of which now display the Safe Spaces logo and provide a retreat for anyone who feels they need help when out and about.

An appetite for road closures having been established by the success of the Christmas Market, the Parish Council, with support from the Partnership, organised **the Big Lunch** to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III. Our historic village centre was decorated magnificently by the Yarn Bombers for the occasion and a good time was had by all as they sat in the sunshine at tables set up in the road or picnicked in the churchyard. Not content with one road closure, Cllr Diane Tams, Vice-Chairman for Holmes Chapel Parish Council came up with the idea for a 3 day **Summer Celebration** which started off on a Friday evening in July when people gathered in the village centre once again to meet friends, drink, eat and dance – and visit the church tower! This was followed by a sell-out Holmes Chapel Chorus concert on the Saturday and the Village Fair at the Victoria Club on the Sunday. A successful summer festival is not only a fun-filled event but also a testament to the hard work and dedication of the organisers. Thanks also go to my own team of volunteers within the Partnership who contributed to the weekend's festivities.

December 3rd 2023 was the third time that we had closed the main road through our village and held our **Holmes Chapel Christmas Market and Fair**. It was, however, the first time in 11 years that the weather was not kind to us. But the snow was cleared, pavements gritted and the show went on. Looking back, it's incredible we were able to pull it off, when many other events in the area had to be cancelled. We then moved on seamlessly to **Santa's Sleigh Runs** which took place most evenings in December. My thanks go to our Treasurer Richard Garton for organising the schedule and dealing with the money collected.

And as I look back at the **Newsletters** that we have produced over the last year, I must thank my Vice Chairman Hazel Sutcliffe and Marie Bennett for their excellent endeavours in producing this monthly Newsletter.

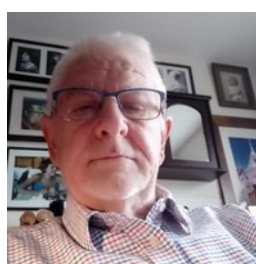
And finally I and my team would like to wish you all a healthy and prosperous New Year!



*Peter Whiers  
Chairman*



*Hazel Sutcliffe  
Vice Chair*



*Richard Garton  
Treasurer*



*Gail Griggs  
Events & Admin*



## Christmas Market & Fair 2023

Another successful Christmas Market put on by Holmes Chapel Partnership! The weather gods were not quite on our side, but the drizzle didn't put people off turning out to enjoy the occasion, so a big thank you to the community for supporting our venture. Your willingness to put your hand in your pocket means that local businesses, organisations and charities can thrive.

Thanks must go to all the people who performed on the stage and provided us with entertainment and to Dane Sound who gave us the sound track for the event.

A big thank you also to our sponsors: the Parish Council, Massey Feeds, Bayfields Opticians & Audiologists, Hurstwood Holdings, Joe White's Funfair, Sibelco, Laura Wilson School of Dance, Top Secret Furniture and the Villages Mag. Without them we couldn't stage the event.



Thank you so much **Holmes Chapel Partnership** and all the volunteers for your hard work in making the Christmas market such a huge success.





## Days Out and Meals out

3 December at 20:19 · 🌐

### 🎄 Holmes Chapel Christmas Market & Fair 🎄

Well done, Holmes Chapel, for yet another amazing Christmas Market. Our community was out in force to support local businesses and charities.

- We heard the church bells ring
- We shopped from over 50 different stalls
- We saw new interesting homemade items and bought them for friends
- We ate yummy treats from local bakers
- We cupped our hands around warming mulled wines
- We watched our children perform songs and routines on stage
- We spent far too much on the fairground rides and heard "one more go" a lot of times.
- We tried our luck at the tombola, trying to win a bottle or box of chocs.
- We got boozy hot drinks from Charlie's
- We took shelter inside St Lukes or the Scout Hut to play games or rest those feet with brew
- We climbed up onto the sleigh and told Santa an item from our list
- We bought a burger from the scouts
- We spent our pennies on the Girlguiding stalls to support the fun activities they give the girls
- We stood in the streets chatting to people we hadn't seen in a while
- We bought ice cream from Holmes Sweet Home even though we were cold to the bone

Jenny Kozyra of Days out and Meals out summed it all up in her post on Facebook and took some great photos of the event. The Beer Emporium Bottle Bank were also enthusiastic:

👶 The village looked beautiful and it was wonderful to see so many people out in high spirits, regardless of the weather, supporting local people at the markets!

Christmas has definitely arrived ❄️



If you enjoy what the Holmes Chapel Partnership do for the village:  
we put on the Christmas Market and Fair and Santa's Sleigh Run to name  
but two seasonal events, there is still time to support us by entering our Prize Draw!

The draw will be made on January 8<sup>th</sup> 2024



# WIN £250!

Enter our prize draw to  
win one of three cash  
prizes - £250, £100 or £50

## TEXT Hcpdraw TO 70970

- Each entry costs £5
- Texts are charged at standard network rate
- Your mobile number is your ticket number
- You may send multiple texts for multiple entries
- The proceeds of the draw will be split equally between The Partnership and the Santa Sleigh Fund
- Winners drawn on January 8th, 2024

 \*\* Fundraising, payments and donations will be processed and administered by the National Funding Scheme (Charity No: 1149800), operating as DONATE. Texts will be charged at your standard network rate. For Terms & Conditions, see [www.easydonate.org](http://www.easydonate.org). You must be aged 16 or over to use this service and have permission from the bill payer before sending a text message.

Platinum:

BAYFIELDS   HURSTWOOD HOLDINGS 

Gold:  SIBELCO

Silver:   



## The View from the Sleigh in 2023

When I looked out of the window on the Sunday morning of the Holmes Chapel Christmas Market and Fair, the world had turned white and the prospects for a successful day looked bleak.

"Winter drawers on!" said Mrs. Claus, as she does every year.

"Of course, my dear. And my thermal socks and vest" I replied. Again, as every year.

As the morning progressed, a slight rise in temperature began a thaw in what remained a very grey day. However, by the time I'd unhitched the reindeer behind the Scout Hut, Holmes Chapel village centre was a hive of activity with a festive array of stalls along the main road and in the car park. Thankfully, I had no need for agency elves from Elf Hire, as the National Elf Service were not on strike and my two impish helpers reported for duty on time. I inspected the tub of chocolate treats to make sure that one or two pepper sweets hadn't been slipped in for elfish amusement and we set off for the sleigh. It wasn't long before word had got around and a steady stream of eager children with parents and grandparents were snaking up the car park. As it ever was, hearts' desires were expressed along with assertions of helpfulness and good behaviour at home: occasionally with clarifications from attendant adults. Now a heads-up: from what was said, there appears to be an expanding population of domestic elves in your village. They seem to be being helpful in maintaining standards of behaviour in their households but, unsurprisingly for those of us who have been employing them for years, they get up to naughty tricks. I had reports of decorations being removed from trees, unusual ones appearing at the top, salt being found in the sugar bowl, a walnut being hidden in a Dad's slippers ... and more!

Questions concerning my authenticity were asked, as is usual. All being answered with political adeptness, hopefully leaving room for manoeuvre in future years. However, the majority of my visitors were certain. One girl had brought a list from Australia, confident that I would find my way to the address kindly left on her card. The overwhelming feeling was the magical joy of this time of the year. Children's faces, filled with delight, shining with the cold, the fairground colours, or both, are what make this Christmas Market and Fair such a wonderful occasion. That your community is able to organise such a joyful, safe event for all generations is remarkable and something for which to be truly thankful. Once again, I have been delighted to visit and meet many of you.

Thank you, Holmes Chapel.

*Santa*



## Santa Sleigh Runs 2023

Over the last 40 years, Santa's Sleigh has been a well-loved tradition of Christmas in Holmes Chapel & District. This year was no exception: on December evenings, local voluntary groups brought Santa and his Sleigh around the neighbourhood so that the young and old could meet Santa at their doorstep.

This year Holmes Chapel Partnership was kindly assisted in running the Sleigh by:

- Holmes Chapel Scouts
- Holmes Chapel Guides
- Goostrey Scouts
- Brereton Scouts
- Holmes Chapel Community Pre-School,
- Holmes Chapel Viking Explorer Scouts
- Dane Sound Radio
- Holmes Chapel Primary School PTA
- Hermitage Primary PTA, Bridge the Gap
- Holmes Chapel VELO
- Holmes Chapel 41 Club and Tangent on behalf of the Christie Hospital



The money collected is pooled and each organisation will receive a share. Looking forward to 2024, if your organisation would like to raise funds and have a bit of fun by taking out the sleigh and playing at being Santa and his elves, please get in touch at [info@hccpartnership.org.uk](mailto:info@hccpartnership.org.uk).

You may have noticed that Santa has kept up with technological advances as you can nowadays track Santa on your phone. For the first time in 2023 you could also donate by text, because Santa has become aware that many people simply don't use cash that much or have loose change at home as they used to. At the same time we also introduced the Big Christmas Draw, so even though the Sleigh is now back in Lapland, it's not too late to support our volunteer sleigh groups and have a little flutter, with the chance of winning one of three cash prizes - £250, £100 or £50.

Once again the Sleigh Runs were administered by our Treasurer Richard Garton, who did a fantastic job of ensuring our sleigh programme came together and every penny donated was counted and banked. Additionally, The Partnership would also like to thank Will Burnham for his continued support in ensuring the smooth running of the sleigh outings - and more than a few tows of the sleigh throughout December!



## The Journey to the First Christmas

We hope you agree that the expression on the faces of these little girls is just magical and that along with awe, wonderful, festive, memorable, amazing were just some of the descriptions given by those attending the Journey to the First Christmas event which was held at the Methodist Church in December. It was the tent belonging to the wise people that enthralled these girls but children and adults listened with the same wonder to potters, carpenters, inn keepers, a talking donkey, shepherds and of course, Mary and Joseph.



If you came along, thank you, we hope that you enjoyed the experience as much as these two little girls and we assure you that all the hard work and creation which many of you remarked upon, was worth it, to know that almost three hundred people had the opportunity to listen to the Christmas story and that the event was enjoyed and memorable for our Community.

As we start another New Year, Holmes Chapel Methodist Church invites you to the many activities provided through each month for **all ages** in our village.

Starting with the youngest of children for **Bumps, Babes and Toddlers** on Monday mornings.

**Messy Church** for school age children on Wednesday 10 January and **Lego Church** on the last Saturday in January.

At the first meeting of the New Year on Monday 22 January, the ladies at **More to Life** will hopefully enjoy listening to Peter Cotton speak on, Two Cheshire Lads and an Everest obsession'.

**Memory Café** has touched many lives of those living with dementia since opening and has recently spread its wings by welcoming people living with Parkinsons. 10.00am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January is our first meeting of the year, do come along, or encourage others, if you think Memory café may be of benefit – you may be surprised by the fun and friendship!

The following week is the increasingly popular **Tuesday Friends**, 9 January at 2.00pm. This month, there won't be any monologues from Pete, but Roy and Ray on guitars and Steve on the keyboard will entertain us; with that combination, no doubt there will be a few Beatles numbers. A quote from one lady recently moved to the area, 'I am so pleased I came to Tuesday friends. It is certainly the place to make new friends'. Do come along, on your own or with family or friends.

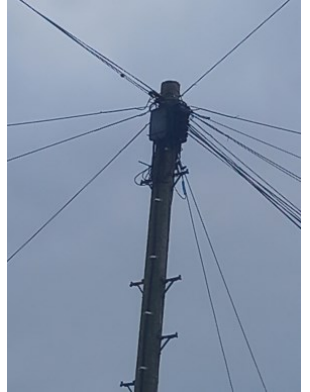
It is good that '**Keep Singing**' encourages new people every month and we look forward to welcoming any who just enjoy singing on Saturday 13 January, remember no musical talent necessary!

Of course, our doors are always open on a **Sunday morning at 10.00am** for worship and fun activities around a Bible story for young people at Xplorers.

Please keep your eye on the diary in the Partnership news letter and on the village notice boards for the dates of our activities each month. More details of our activities: [dedavidson1@ol.com](mailto:dedavidson1@ol.com) . Tel: 01477 537679

## Airband - a Sequel

Local resident John Mcilwaine spotted an article online about “the installation of broadband poles in Hedon and elsewhere in the East Riding of Yorkshire”. It seems that Airband is not the only company upsetting householders in the name of faster broadband – in Hedon it is a company called MS3. According to the article the issues in Hedon are exactly the same as those in Holmes Chapel:



*Broadband companies, including MS3 in Hedon, have sparked a backlash in recent months with installations done under permitted development rules which allow installations to go ahead without usual planning permission. Companies instead only have to inform councils and give nearby households 28 days' notice and a route for legitimate complaints, after which they can begin work. Installations under current rules saw protests break out in Hedon in September and residents turn out to try and block MS3 installations the following month.*

*MS3 has said it always complies with legal requirements and the operators' code of conduct during installations and it was committed to providing cheaper broadband options for the area. But campaigners with the Going Underground group have said they do not want the poles regardless.*

*A central issue raised by campaigners was the unnecessary duplication of telegraph poles.*

The campaigners from Hedon went to Westminster on November 8th to call for a change in the rules around broadband installations. They were supported by their MP Graham Stuart who said he had received assurances from Digital Infrastructure Minister John Whittingdale that there were plans to tighten regulations around installations and that companies would also be encouraged to share infrastructure. Mr Stuart concluded: "We don't want ugly and unnecessary poles in Hedon. The proper place for broadband infrastructure is underground wherever possible, as it clearly should have been in Hedon. I'm delighted the Government is taking this seriously. The tenacity of campaigners has been the best of East Yorkshire."

John Mcilwaine contacted his MP Fiona Bruce about this issue. She replied on 29<sup>th</sup> November :

*"I regret that an MP does not have a role in the planning systems, that being, in the most part, devolved to local government, however I intend to raise the matter with Government colleagues to ask what the Government position is regarding overhead wire versus underground installation."*

On 14<sup>th</sup> December two residents of Ravenscroft attended the full Parish Council meeting at the Community Centre. They thanked the Parish Council for their support and wanted to share a proposal to be considered at a future meeting.



## What's Going on at Cheshire East Council?

We have been bombarded with consultations - what do we think about bringing in universal car parking charges? What do we think about looking after our green spaces a little less? What do we think about shutting down Leisure Centres? What do we think about closing Waste Recycling sites? There is a reason for this. As we know Cheshire East Council is desperate to reduce its budget deficit. How did we get here?

### Background in numbers

*Central government grants were cut by **40%** in real terms between **2009/10** and **2019/20**, from **£46.5bn** to **£28.0bn** (2023/24 prices). This downward trend was reversed in **2020/21** and **2021/22** as central government made more grant funding available to local government in response to the pressures of the pandemic. Even including Covid grants, the fall in grant income was still **21%** in real terms between **2009/10** and **2021/22**; without, the fall was **31%**. (Information from the Institute for Government website)*

Cheshire East Council is clearly not alone in its financial predicament: data compiled by Unison, the trade union, found there were **114** councils in England, Scotland and Wales – almost a third – facing shortfalls of more than **£10m**. It said **15** councils were likely to be in the red by more than **£40m** next year.

### Cheshire East Council

The Council has a current deficit of £18.7 million. Two thirds of the Council's budget is spent on adults' and children's social care. Higher costs for energy, wage increases and inflation have made these services more expensive. They are statutory services which the Council has no choice but to deliver. Cuts can only be made in non-statutory services like green waste recycling, car parking provision and leisure services - to name but a few issues we have been "consulted" on. According to a report in the The Guardian newspaper, CEC spent £11 million preparing for HS2. This sum will probably now have to be written off, although the Council is seeking compensation from the Government, as Crewe did not benefit from the "network north" proposals offered in mitigation when the cancellation was announced by Rishi Sunak. Low reserves: £14 million which is more than the £10 million reserve in 2019, but still dwarfed by the annual net expenditure which is £372 million.

### New Chief Executive

Rob Polkinghorne has been confirmed as the new Chief Executive of Cheshire East. Given the financial situation of the Council it doesn't sound like anyone's dream job, but no doubt £180,000 per annum will be some compensation! Rob was previously Chief Executive at Southend-on-Sea City Council but his tenure there was very brief. He was appointed in October 2022 but by July 2023 he had left! Local newspapers speculated about a toxic atmosphere at the Council in Southend. Will he be the best person for the job? Let's see.

### Deputy Council Leader resigns

Independent Councillor Craig Browne is to become chief executive of Citizens Advice North Staffordshire and as such is stepping down as Deputy Leader and Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee. He will remain as Ward Councillor for Alderley Edge. According to The Sandbach Chronicle his reasons for moving on are financial too, as being a Cheshire East Councillor is nowhere near as lucrative as being the Chief Executive!

## Parish Council News



### The Parish Council wants to Reclaim our Pavements!

One of the priorities of the Parish Council for the next 4 years is to ensure the pavements around the village are safe and easy for pedestrians to use.

We receive many complaints from residents about footpaths and accessibility, with overgrown hedges being a major culprit.

### What does this mean in practise?

We are surveying footpaths throughout the village and noting down the following:

1. **Overgrown hedges which are reducing the footpath width.**
2. **Weeds/Grass invading the footpath.**
3. **Streetlights obscured by vegetation.**
4. **Issues that might affect disabled users getting around the village.**

Where we come across problems, we will be writing to the owners responsible and asking them to work with us to deal with the issue. Often this will be the house owner but could sometimes be Cheshire East Council or other bodies.

### What can you do to help?

1. **If you have a hedge on your boundary bordering a footpath, please make sure that it is cut back to your boundary every year to prevent problems for pedestrians**
2. **Report overgrown hedges, weed intrusion, light issues or problems for disabled users to the Parish Council. You can do this by emailing the Clerk with the location and problem: [clerk@holmeschapelparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@holmeschapelparishcouncil.gov.uk) (a photograph would also be useful)**

### What we can't do!

1. **We cannot resurface pavements – that is Cheshire East Council's responsibility. However, if there are specific obstacles for people using wheelchairs or pushchairs such as an absence of a dropped kerb, then please let us know and we can raise it with Cheshire East Council.**

### We cannot provide resources to trim your hedge.

This is a long-term project. It won't happen overnight, but our hope is that we can all work together to 'Reclaim our Pavements' and improve the safety of pedestrians using them.

Thank you for your cooperation and support!



## Cheshire East Council Strategic Leisure Review

Further to the decision of Cheshire East Council's Environment and Communities Committee on 9th November to undertake a public consultation on achieving the budget savings proposals under the MTFS 90 Strategic Leisure Review and following the required consultation with the Members of that committee as to content, please note that this consultation is now live and can be accessed via the link below:

[https://surveys.cheshireeast.gov.uk/s/Strategic\\_Leisure\\_Review\\_Consultation\\_2023/](https://surveys.cheshireeast.gov.uk/s/Strategic_Leisure_Review_Consultation_2023/)

**The consultation will run for 6 weeks closing at midnight on Sunday 7th January 2024**

## Holmes Chapel Community Centre celebrates 8 Years!

On 28<sup>th</sup> November 2015, the Holmes Chapel Community Centre opened! Owned by the Parish Council and run by Everybody Health & Leisure, the Community Centre is a vital asset for the village and has gone from strength to strength over the last 8 years.

Representatives from the Parish Council were delighted to celebrate these 8 years with Everybody Health & Leisure.



## Happy New Year!

The Parish Council wishes all our residents a very Happy New Year and our best wishes for a joyful 2024!

# England International Cricketer Re-Launches Workshops for Talented Athletes in Holmes Chapel

Everybody Health & Leisure welcomed Ellie Threlkeld, Manchester Original and Lancashire Thunder Captain to Holmes Chapel Community Centre, to deliver an interesting introduction to sports psychology workshops to members on the Everybody Talented Athlete Support Scheme.

On the 28th November, Everybody were delighted to relaunch their Talented Athlete Support Scheme workshops and have Ellie deliver the first one. These workshops support athletes and the sessions with experienced athletes enhance their membership of the scheme.

The workshop was focused on understanding the 'who am I' question. Ellie Threlkeld, spoke about her own journey and how to create the best version of yourself to perform successfully.

England International cricketer, Ellie Threlkeld shared:

*"The first sport psychology workshop seemed to be successful and it was brilliant to engage with athletes from different sports. It is also an opportunity for athletes to connect with each other and meet new people. The group had limited experience with sport psychology and hopefully this was a good introduction and there is now a better understanding of how it can help them to perform."*

Everybody recognise the importance of supporting local talented athletes enabling them to pursue sporting excellence. Members of their Talented Athlete Support Scheme can use local Everybody facilities and expertise to achieve their sporting goals. Everybody are busy planning future workshops to be scheduled in for the new year, to support their athlete's growth, experience and positive mindset. To find out more about Everybody Health & Leisure's Talented Athlete Support Scheme visit:

[www.everybody.org.uk/membership-packages/talented-athlete-support-scheme/](http://www.everybody.org.uk/membership-packages/talented-athlete-support-scheme/) or if you have any questions please contact the team on, [EBTalented@everybody.org.uk](mailto:EBTalented@everybody.org.uk).



England International cricketer  
Ellie Threlkeld, Manchester Original and  
Lancashire Thunder Captain



## Harry Styles Visitor's Book

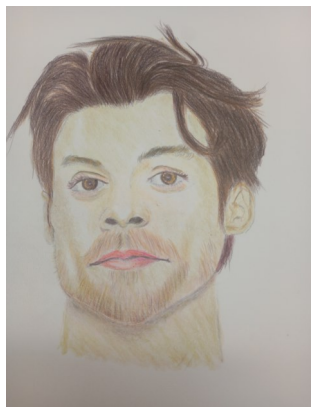
Holmes Chapel Station is the place where very many Harry Styles fans first set foot in his home village. Several months ago a fan left a note for Harry with Graham Blake, the Station Manager, "just in case Harry passes through." The fan came from Bogota in Colombia! This gave Graham the idea of creating a Visitor's Book for other fans to write messages. It also gave him an insight into where all these fans come from and an opportunity for the rest of us to wonder what expensive, long journeys they were prepared to undertake in the name of fandom!

Two Visitor Books have been filled and Visitor Book number 3 is filling up too! Graham got in touch with Harry's father Desmond Styles wondering if Harry would like to see these adoring messages from his fans. In November Desmond visited the station to collect the first two Visitor Books and for the occasion Graham invited a few of Harry's keenest fans. They visit Holmes Chapel regularly travelling from Liverpool and Warrington to demonstrate their loyalty!

Will Harry get to see the Visitor Books? The promise is he will receive them as part of his birthday present when he turns 30 on February 1st 2024.



And don't forget your Harry Styles calendar! The u3a Art Group have produced a calendar with original paintings of all the "Harry Styles places" in and around Holmes Chapel! Available from the Print Room for the modest price of £6.50



## NEWS

### St Luke's Cheshire Hospice Chocolate Morning

In aid of St Luke's (Cheshire) Hospice

**Will you please help us?**



We need any unwanted chocolates  
boxes, bars, biscuits etc  
anything chocolatey for our

*Chocolate Morning*

To be held in February at St Luke's Church Hall,

We would be very grateful for any donations

To	Ruth Roberts	07794 495847
	Jan Rayner	01477 537554

### News from our PCSO, Pam Graham

**My January 2024 surgeries are: –**

06<sup>th</sup> Jan 6pm Holmes Chapel Council Office

11<sup>th</sup> Jan 12:30 Goostrey Village Hall

20<sup>th</sup> Jan 10am Holmes Chapel Council Office

27<sup>th</sup> Jan 6pm Goostrey Village Hall





## u3a Update



Happy New Year from Holmes Chapel & District u3a!

I am delighted to share the good news that we have a new Chair to lead our u3a in 2024. **Ruth McNeil**, who has worked in many senior leadership and management roles in her professional career, will chair our Committee from the New Year, and I will be very happy to support her as Vice-Chair. **Martin Elliott**.

The Christmas Monthly Meeting on December 7th was extremely well-attended, and our u3a group '5 For Christmas' did an excellent job of getting us to sing along to their songs with help from the words on the screen. We had a lot of really favourable feedback. This was followed by coffee and mince pies. It was a very successful meeting and thank you to '5 For Christmas' for all their hard work.

Our u3a's first Monthly meeting in the New Year **on 11th January 2024** will welcome **Ian Wallace**, whose talk is entitled: **'The Journey up the Shropshire Union Canal'**. His address is about the history and changing places of the Shropshire Union canal from the Nantwich basin to Ellesmere port. He will show us some 60-year old pictures of buildings which have since been demolished. This meeting, which will be held at 10 am at the Holmes Chapel Methodist Church, is open to Members and Non-Members alike.

February brings Philip Harrison, who was involved in the design and construction of 'Paddy's Wigwam' - Liverpool's Roman Catholic Metropolitan Cathedral.

Our meetings are generally held on the 2nd Thursday of the month at Holmes Chapel Methodist Church, starting at 10am, followed by coffee and biscuits.



## Holmes Chapel Station Railway Corner - January 2024 by Tony Wright

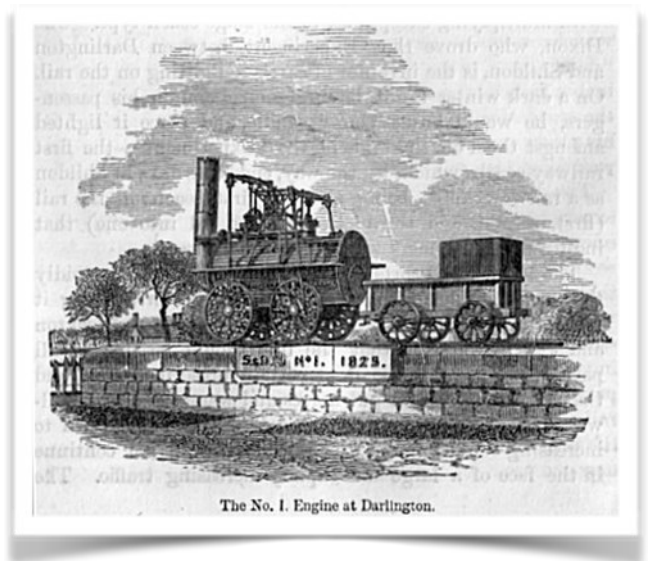


In just twelve months time, in 2025, it will be the year in which the world's first passenger train travelled along the Stockton and Darlington Railway – this marked the birth of the modern passenger train travel.

The No. 1 engine developed by George Stephenson for the Stockton and Darlington Railway, called 'Locomotion'.

Samuel Smiles - Lives of the Engineers, 1862, digitised by Project Gutenberg 27710.

On the 27th of September 1825 the world's first passenger train pulled by Stevenson's Locomotion Number One carried over 400 people along the Stockton and Darlington Railway. This landmark event drew crowds of up to 40,000 people.



The Rail Delivery Group say it is a chance for Britain to celebrate its rail history and look to the future. The partners of Railway 200 include Network Rail, the Stockton and Darlington Bicentenary Festival, the Great British Railways Transition Team, the National Skills Academy for Rail, the Rail Delivery Group, the Rail Forum, the Railway Industry Association, the Heritage Railway Association, the National Railway Museum and the Community Rail Network will be taking part in the celebrations across the country. Plus partners highlighting the impact

on culture, art and Society. Each has its website but the lead website is [rail200.co.uk](http://rail200.co.uk) if you are interested.

The origins of the railway line running through Holmes Chapel today date back to the Manchester and Birmingham Railway Company which existed from 1837 to 1846. The first ground was broken at Ardwick on the 14th September 1838, the Holmes Chapel Viaduct was completed in 1841 and the whole of the Manchester to Crewe line was opened on the 27th July 1842.

How the trains (and the times) have changed!

## News from Goostrey Station

### Please vote for our photo!

Great news! Friends of Goostrey Station are excited that our work has been recognised again. A photo of Goostrey Beavers Doing Their Best could win the award for a picture that captures the essence of Community Rail.

But we need votes! Please use this link now : <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CRA2024>

In 2019, we were proud to win this category and last year we were runners up. Please encourage your friends and family to support our enthusiastic volunteers by choosing our photo. **Voting is open until 29th January.**

This year, FoGS also achieved enough points to be in the platinum section for **It's Your Station**. This reflects everything that we do throughout the year. Credit is given for gardening, sustainability, artwork and engagement with the community. The Community Rail Awards recognise the important work carried out by a vast number of people who work across Britain's rail network to make stations welcoming spaces for passengers and visitors alike. The winners will be announced at a ceremony in Swansea in March.

Meanwhile **Goostrey Art Studio** has been on tour. Professional artist Debbie Goldsmith declared that November was 'super busy'. She was preparing for two events at the end of the month, one in Crewe and the other in Bury.

On Saturday 25th, crowds were wowed by Crewe's first lantern parade which the Town Council had organised to celebrate the switching on of the Christmas lights. During half term, Debbie led lantern making workshops at Crewe Heritage Centre. Participants made star lanterns and helped Debbie to create a huge showpiece owl lantern. On the day, the effect was magical.

Children and families in Bury made 200 pyramid lanterns from willow and paper during workshops that Debbie led in schools and in the community. On Sunday 26th, over 500 people paraded through Bury and the spectacular creations lit up the town centre. The event included live music, street entertainment and a fire display staged by an organisation called Walk the Plank.

Friends of Goostrey Station are proud that Debbie is making such good use of her art studio in the station building. As well as pursuing her own interest in painting and rug making, she gets so many other people involved in creative activities.





# Holmes Chapel Library

## Holmes Chapel Library **Gardening and Cookery Group**



Join us every month for  
chats, hints and sharing tips!

### **Next meeting:**

Thursday 4th  
January 2.30pm



### New library opening hours

Starting from Friday 1st December  
our new opening hours will be:

Monday - 10:00-17:00

Tuesday - 10:00-17:00

Wednesday - CLOSED

Thursday - 10:00-18:00

Friday - 10:00-17:00

Saturday - 09:30-13:00

your Library

Cheshire East  
Council



Holmes Chapel Library, London Road, CW4 7AP 01477 689550  
holmeschapel.library@cheshireeast.gov.uk www.cheshireeast.gov.uk

Cheshire East  
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# WHAT'S ON



## Next Film Showing... January Film



### The Miracle Club

**Certificate 12A 90 Minutes**

Location: Holmes Chapel  
Community Centre

Date: Thursday  
11<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Tickets: £6  
Doors Open 6:30 p.m.  
**For 7:30 p.m Showing**

Places are on a first come basis,  
Seats cannot be reserved

**Taste for Life Café & Bar available pre performance**

There's just one dream for the women of Ballygar to taste freedom: to win a pilgrimage to the sacred French town of Lourdes.

Starring: Maggie Smith, Laura Linney. Kathy Bates



Tickets also available on the door

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<p>YOU COULD HAVE YOUR LOGO HERE</p>	<p>YOUR BUSINESS NAME</p>	<p>Anything you want here. It could be a picture or promotion with a hot link to something you are running that month.</p>

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Holmes Chapel Partnership – Working with the whole community