

PONTEFRACT VOICE

"Merry Christmas to all our Readers"



**1ST
PLACE
CAVALLO**



**2ND
PLACE
TOOTH &
TIGER**



**3RD
PLACE
CROMWELLS**

CHAIR'S REPORT

TRUSTEE WANTED

Based on the AGM elections, we are on the lookout for men and women of all ages to help provide direction for Ponte Fract Civic Society whilst remaining true to our constitutional objectives.

Whether you have a specific interest or skills to offer, do get in touch.

Specific roles:

- Honorary Secretary
- Talks & Tours Group Coordinator
- Heritage Group Coordinator
- Heritage Group Administrator
- Futures Group Coordinator (this focuses on our own strategy, governance, technology)
- Business Group Coordinator



If you care about Pontefract and what we do to make Pontefract a better place, then become a charity trustee. Contact Paul Cartwright for a chat.

DIARY OF A CHAIR

On top of our own internal meetings and monthly talks programme, it's been a very busy quarter where I've met with colleagues and stakeholders in a wide range of scheduled meetings, activities and events:

- Remembrance Parade (9 Nov)
- Funding Workshop for our trustees and some members (29 Oct)
- Wakefield Council Visitor Economy update at WX (3 Nov)
- Pontefract Art Club preview night (3 Nov)
- Various Design Award 2025 site visits
- Civic Voice AGM in Birmingham (8 Nov)
- Armistice at the war memorial (11 Nov)
- Society Social (11 Nov)
- NOVA AGM, Wakefield (12 Nov)
- Design Award visit (12 Nov)
- Brian Berry (RBL) funeral (14 Nov)
- Talk: D Day by Dave Hogg (18 Nov)
- The Prince of Wales Hospice Club 5 (19 Nov)
- A Christmas Carol by Chris Cade (24 Nov)
- Hosted a Wreath Making session at the town hall (25 Nov)
- Lions Santa's Grotto & Light Up (30 Nov)

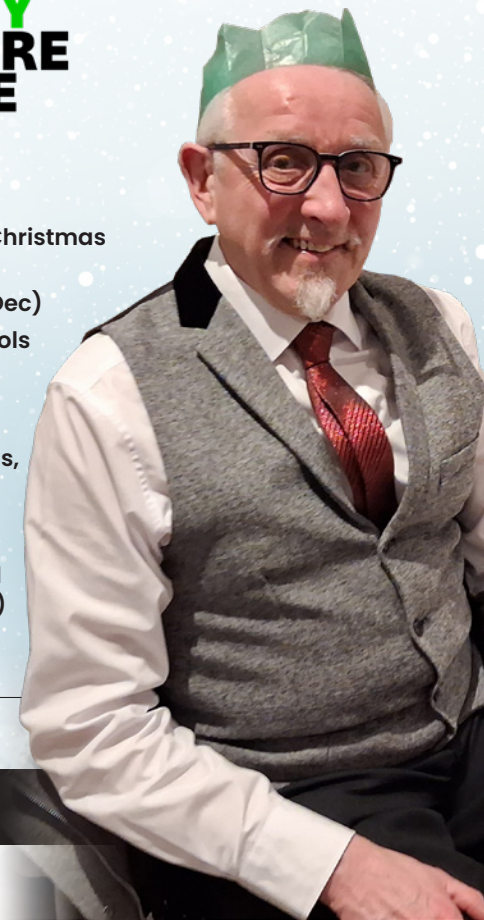


THE YORKSHIRE SOCIETY
For people who love Yorkshire

BARNESLEY CIVIC 25TH MARCH
BARNESLEY YORKSHIRE HERITAGE SUMMIT 2026

- Carleton High School Christmas Extravaganza (10 Dec)
- AI training session (11 Dec)
- King's High School Carols by the Christmas Tree (17 Dec)
- The Yorkshire Society management meetings, and much communication with Barnesley Civic Trust, Barnesley Council and The Civic (theatre) for the 2026 Yorkshire Heritage Summit

Paul Cartwright | Chair



VICE CHAIR'S REPORT

AED NEWS

I was recently contacted by Darrington Parish Council; they were looking to add to their current Defibrillator in the village.

With previous experience with St John Ambulance as Area manager and the recent campaign we ran to purchase some in the town. We were able to advise and arrange the purchase of the Defibrillator. This will be mounted on The Spread pub in the village with a possible further one to follow in the new year.

The Larks Hill Defibrillator group also contacted me to arrange for a second Defibrillator. The actual installation required a separate bespoke frame to be manufactured to install it on the Mill Hill Store. With our connections to local businesses we were fortunate that Brian Trueman was able to ask his old employer if they would be able to help. Richard and Joanne Whittaker Precision Engineers Ltd, South Baileygate, manufactured the frame and Allan Thistlewood was delighted with it and the support we have given his scheme on Larks Hill.

The additional Defibrillators will mean that there are now eight that we have been involved with.



AED USAGE BY LOCATION 2024 from October			
VENUE	DEFIB USED	ACTION	
Town Hall	Nov Online		
Old Post Office	3	Deploy	Not Attached
Cartners No 5	12	Deploy	Not Attached
Michelles Flowers	1	Deploy	Not Attached
TOTAL	16		

AED USAGE BY LOCATION 2025 to 8th Dec 2025			
VENUE	DEFIB USED	ACTION	
Town Hall	12	Deploy	Not Attached
Old Post Office	7	Deploy	Not Attached
Cartners No 5	8	Deploy	Not Attached
Michelles Flowers	4	Deploy	Not Attached
Larks Hill	1	Deploy	Not Attached
Mill Hill		To be installed	
Darrington			
TOTAL	16		

Usage in 2025	Times
January	4
February	4
March	4
April	9
May	0
June	5
July	3
August	1
September	0
October	1
November	1
December	0
TOTAL	32

SOCIETY SOCIALS

The Old Tavern - Pontefract

Another new venue was visited for our November Social.

In order to allow working members to take part we met for an early bird meal at 6pm with most people enjoying the 2 course carvery that was available. Moving forward to our 2026 socials if anyone has any recommendations on local venues please do get in touch with Karen Haddock at societysocials@pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk



Christmas Gathering

On Friday 12 December 37 of our members met for our annual Christmas Gathering.

This year we enjoyed a three course seasonal meal at The White Horse in Sharlston. Their functions room was filled with Christmas tunes playing softly in the back ground which added a festive touch while still allowing people to chat.



SOCIETY SOCIALS

Wreath Making

Our first themed event took place on Wednesday 26th November with 3 Christmas wreath making sessions.

The first two took place at The Grocers on Cornmarket, where a buffet style afternoon tea was enjoyed by everyone. This was then followed by an evening session at Pontefract Town hall which included a festive nibble and refreshments.

The standard of wreaths that were made at all three of the workshops was exceptional and our thanks go out to Bernie Weston for her expert tuition.

We have already had a number of people asking if this is something that will be repeated next year.



BUSINESS NETWORKS

Club 5 & Friday Revival

Paul Cartwright and Phil Cook have continued to support The Prince of Wales Hospice Club 5 business network, most recently at Pontefract Racecourse.

Paul also attended Friday Revival celebration breakfast at Farmer Copley's following the support of businesses to the tune of £10,000 of fundraising for the hospice.



OTHER BUSINESS NEWS



JUNIOR CIVIC SOCIETY

De Lacy Primary School Christmas Festive Events

The festive season at De Lacy Primary School has been filled with joy, celebration, and wonderful opportunities for our pupils, families, and community to come together.

Throughout the term, we have enjoyed a wide range of Christmas activities and events that truly captured the spirit of the season. Below is a summary of the highlights from our festive celebrations.

Christmas Pantomime and Reception Library Visit

We began our festivities with our annual Christmas pantomime, delivered by the production team at M&M.

They transformed our school hall into the magical world of Aladdin, much to the delight of the children. As always, the pantomime was thoroughly enjoyed and concluded with the team leading everyone in classic Christmas songs to set a festive mood.



On the same day, our reception pupils enjoyed a special visit to the town library. The children watched an elf-themed movie, enjoyed snacks, and took part in Christmas craft



activities. We would like to say a huge thank you to the library team for providing such a wonderful experience, they were excellent hosts.

Community Events in Pontefract

On 3rd December, a group of our pupils and staff visited Pontefract town centre to take part in the Children's Society Christmas Carol Singing Event.



The atmosphere was extremely festive, and members of the public thoroughly enjoyed joining in with the sing-along.



The following day, 4th December, some of our pupils returned to town to assist with Christmas window judging. This involved walking around the town centre, viewing festive shop displays, and awarding points. It was a fantastic experience for the children and a great way to support local businesses.

Christmas Card Making Session

We also held an after-school Christmas card making session, where parents attended with their children to enjoy quality time together.



Families created beautiful, handmade Christmas cards while enjoying refreshments and festive biscuits. The creativity on display was impressive, many of the cards would easily rival those found in the shops!

JUNIOR CIVIC SOCIETY

Reindeer Run Fundraiser

On 5th December, pupils took part in our annual Reindeer Run, raising money for the Prince of Wales through a sponsored run.



Everyone had a fantastic time, and we are incredibly proud to announce that we raised £1,485.40, which is a brilliant achievement.

Performances and Concerts

On 9th December, our Lower Key Stage 2 pupils delivered an amazing Christmas music concert, featuring instrumental performances and singing.

Parents and children thoroughly enjoyed the show.

Our EYFS pupils performed their nativity on 10th December, with two performances that were very well attended. The children did an amazing job and looked adorable in their costumes, well done to all involved.

On 16th December, Key Stage 1 presented their two nativity performances. Parents were extremely supportive, and everyone involved had a wonderful time watching and singing along, well done, KS1.



On 17th December, Upper Key Stage 2 held their annual Carols Around the Christmas Tree concert. Parents and carers were welcomed with a warm drink and joined the children in singing well-known Christmas carols. The atmosphere was truly magical, with Christmas spirit in abundance, a fantastic event enjoyed by all.

Christmas Fayre

Our Christmas Fayre, held on 11th December, was a huge success.



Staff and pupils worked together to create stalls around the school, offering games, activities, a café serving hot chocolate, and the ever-popular tombola and toy shop. We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who attended and supported the event. It was wonderful to see so many families, friends, and members of the community coming together to celebrate. Your support helped create such a joyful and festive atmosphere.

Christmas Tree

We would like to say a huge thank you to Enfinium and Lumby Garden Centre for kindly providing us with such a wonderful Christmas tree.



The tree looked fantastic and became a real focal point of our festive decorations around school.

KS1 Visit to the Post Office

Also on 17th December, our KS1 pupils enjoyed an exciting trip to the local post office at Willow Park to post their letters to Santa.

The children demonstrated excellent independence by purchasing stamps, adding them to their letters, and posting them into the letterbox themselves. It was a magical experience, and we are sure Santa will be delighted to receive their thoughtful letters.

We have truly had a full and festive term here at De Lacy Primary School, and we are proud to share the many wonderful events and activities that have taken place. Thank you to all pupils, staff, parents, carers, and members of our community for your continued support in making this festive season so special.



JUNIOR CIVIC SOCIETY

Carleton High School, Northfield Primary, The Rookeries, De Lacy, Cherry Tree, Orchard Head, Halfpenny Lane, St Giles, Holy Family & St Michael's, Larks Hill



PONTEFRACT CAKES LAUNCHED

With thanks to Karen Haddock, Bernie Weston and with support from Lynne Hartley, we've now added to our shop by offering you this product in a presentation glass jar, complete with a replica launch stamp on the lid.

We hope you and your friends enjoy Ponte Fract Cakes; and remember, they're not just for Christmas!



MEMBERSHIP

Welcome our new members:

- John & Jennifer McNichol
- Melanie Jones
- Mathew & Danny Pearce-Holland
- Kelvin Wilkins

It couldn't be simpler to **JOIN** online and there's no renewal needed until **1 Jan 2027**:

<http://www.pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk/product-category/membership/>

Potential Business Members

Our member offer is on the website, though if you wish to talk to us first, do please get in touch.

Membership renewals now due on 1 January 2026

RAIL GROUP

The rail industry has trumpeted the timetable change introduced on 14 December as a major change for rail passengers.

This is true for those rail users on the East Coast Mainline, but for those in Pontefract it has far less impact with no change to the half hourly Knottingley – Pontefract – Leeds timetable. However, there are more significant changes to Grand Centrals' timetable serving Monkhill with an overall increase in departures to both Bradford and London with the return of trains on Sundays to and from London. The only downside of these changes is the loss of the Saturday evening journey which allowed a day out in London.



	Mondays to Fridays			Saturdays			Sundays		
Bradford Interchange	0658	1039	1541	0658	1039	1541	1543		
Wakefield Kirkgate	0746	1123	1626	0744	1123	1626	1628		
Pontefract Monkhill	0802	1140	1640	0802	1140	1640	1642		
Peterborough	-	-	1757	-	-	1753	-		
London Kings Cross	1003	1345	1844	1003	1346	1852	1846		
London Kings Cross	1117	1317	1625	1117	1317	1625	1200	1800	2000
Peterborough	1205	-	-	1205	-	-	-	-	-
Pontefract Monkhill	1316	1516	1831	1317	1516	1832	1358	1958	2156
Wakefield Kirkgate	1338	1537	1852	1335	1537	1852	1415	2015	2213
Bradford Interchange	1423	1623	1936	1423	1623	1936	1501	2100	2259

The Rail Group hope to talk to Grand Central in the future about the rationale behind this timetable.

The other route which sees a revised timetable is Northern's Sheffield – Meadowhall – York via Baghill, which sees minor timing changes to the three journeys each way on Mondays to Saturdays, but also the restoration of two journeys each way on Sundays. Unfortunately, the opportunity to create a day return facility on Sundays to either York, Meadowhall or Sheffield has been missed.

Sheffield - Pontefract - York	
Mondays to Saturdays	
Sheffield d	0725 1142 1532 1532
Meadowhall	0732 1148 1538 1538
Rotherham Central	0738 1156 1544 1544
Swinton (S.York)	0748 1207 1552 1552
Moorhouse	0804 1216 1602 1602
Pontefract Baghill	0814 1225 1612 1612
Sherburn-in-Elmet	0829 1238 1629 1629
Church Fenton	0833 1243 1635 1634
Ullersall	0837 1247 1640 1639
York a	0849 1258 1653 1653
Sundays	
Sheffield d	1144 1558
Meadowhall	1150 1606
Rotherham Central	1156
Swinton (S.York)	1207 1616
Moorhouse	1216 1625
Pontefract Baghill	1225 1635
Sherburn-in-Elmet	1240 1649
Church Fenton	1244 1654
Ullersall	1248 1658
York a	1301 1709
York - Pontefract - Sheffield	
Mondays to Saturdays	
York d	0859 0901 1311 1311 1658
Ullersall	0909 0911 1322 1322 1709
Church Fenton	0914 0916 1326 1326 1713
Sherburn-in-Elmet	0918 0920 1331 1331 1718
Pontefract Baghill	0931 0932 1344 1344 1731
Moorhouse	0942 0946 1357 1355 1742
Swinton (S.York)	0958 0958 1410 1411 1758
Rotherham Central	1005 1006 1420 1420 1806
Meadowhall	1012 1012 1426 1426 1812
Sheffield a	1021 1021 1435 1435 1821
Sundays	
York d	1334 1728
Ullersall	1344 1738
Church Fenton	1349 1743
Sherburn-in-Elmet	1353 1747
Pontefract Baghill	1405 1800
Moorhouse	1417 1812
Swinton (S.York)	1428 1828
Rotherham Central	1440 1840
Meadowhall	-
Sheffield a	1452 1853

Again, this will be a subject which the Rail Group will be raising with Northern at our regular Rail User Group meetings.

The one continuing disappointment the Group faces is the ongoing saga of the installation of a new footbridge and lifts at Monkhill. We now understand that the commitment by Northern, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Wakefield District Council remains and the necessary funding has been secured but the earliest date for completion of the project is likely to be 2027.

The Rail Group continues to meet regularly through the year when these issues and other rail related topics are discussed and we would welcome anyone interested in rail travel to join us.

Anthony Dee - Rail Group Administrator



HERITAGE GROUP

Mary Lucy Turner blue plaque installed

Following 10 months of delays, we were able to install the final blue plaque of eight in the series funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and was to Mary Lucy Turner who died after poisoning at the Barnbow factory. Mary represents so many "Barnbow Canaries" who gave their lives so that others could be free at a time of war.



ML Turner - Beasfair



Violet Pritchard
Bridge Street



Featherstone Rovers
Post Office Road



West Yorkshire Astronomical Society - Back Northgate



The Perfects of Pontefract
Micklegate



Liquorice Lasses
Micklegate



Victoria Cross
Minden House



J.S. Fletcher
Darrington



Charles Pears
Beasfair



Barbara Castle
NEW College

You will have also read in earlier issues of Pontefract Voice that we did add two self-funded blue plaques courtesy of the West Yorkshire Astronomical Society and the Featherstone Rovers Foundation.

CHRISTMAS WITH THE LIQUORICE SINGERS

As we began the run up to Christmas, with approaching 100 guests plus a 40-strong choir, we got off to a great start thanks to Rowena, Irene and the Liquorice Singers, plus the staff team at King's Croft Hotel for our annual Christmas concert.

With a varied programme of ensembles, fine soloists, carols and other Christmas songs, the highlight was probably The Char Ladies routine complete with its constant costume changes on every verse.

We also thank Pontefract Racecourse, Boutique 38 and King's Croft Hotel for contributing raffle prizes, which went some way to supporting the work that we do.



PLANNING GROUP

November meeting

- 5 Market Place (Barclays) - Self-contained apartments and retail units - Support.
- 24 Mill Hill Road - retrospective - Neutral.
- Salter Row removal of telephone kiosk and replacement with large digital screen monolith - Object. This has subsequently been refused.
- 41 Newgate - Dance studio to private house with large extension - Support.
- Off Colonel's Walk - 24 shipping containers - Support.
- 24 Market Place - 5 apartments and commercial units - Support.
- 27 Market Place - Change of use - Support.

You are all invited to our Design Awards ceremony on Mon 26 Jan 2026.

2026 THEME: EVERYDAY HISTORIES OF WORKING LIVES



The butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker – what did your ancestors do?

From factory floors to kitchen counters, school desks to sailors' docks, serving halls to vegetable gardens. The exploration of the daily routines of different jobs, the skills required, the people that did them and the places that housed them all.

To our regular partner venues, hosts and tour guides, this announcement gives you plenty of time for planning your HOD2026 event or activities.

Paul Cartwright – Interim Heritage Group Coordinator



St Giles', Pontefract

Is Delighted to Launch

Pontefract Jr. Singers

We Warmly Welcome children between 6 - 12 years old

Launch Date - Wednesday 15th October 2025

Every Wednesday During Term Time
5.00 p.m. - 6.00 p.m.

Free Refreshments are Provided
at St Giles Church, Market Place,
Pontefract, WF8 1AT



For more information contact
Scott Senogles Tel: 07900 996854
E-Mail: DoM.stgiles@cofe-pontefract.co.uk

Pontefract Jr Singers is part of St Giles Church and is covered by our Safeguarding Policies, all adults who are involved are subject to DBS Checks

The Parochial Church Council Of The Ecclesiastical Parish of St Giles', Pontefract is a charity registered in England and Wales (1135106)

WHY NOT BECOME A MEMBER

Business, individual, family, or community group

AND SUPPORT OUR GROUPS AND PROJECTS

JOIN NOW AND RECEIVE 3 MONTHS FREE MEMBERSHIP
MEMBERS BENEFITS INCLUDE FREE ATTENDANCE TO OUR TALKS AND DISCOUNT AT SOME OF OUR ACTIVITIES






RAIL

Funded by
2025 UK Government
BARBARA CASTLE
(Lay's BEP'S) (1940-2002)
Executive Chair of Blackburn, Labour MP
from 1997-2001, President of Pontefract & District
for 10 years, and a member of the Pontefract & District
primary education at Every Lane, Pontefract
in 1960-61. Her family home in Pontefract was
inspired by the use of Venetian glass and
was the inspiration for the design of the
PonteFract Museum.

HERITAGE

1940's
Ropergate
WHEEL
FEST

COMMUNITY



TALKS



PLANNING



HIGHWAYS

pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk LESS THAN A £1 A WEEK

WHEELFEST26 & 1940S ROPERGATE

This is our fifth annual classic and vintage vehicle display in the town centre, run by Pontrfract Civic Society and licensed by Wakefield Council, with support from the markets team, KLH Events, The Old Post Office and Want 2 Jive.

In June 2025, around 110 vehicles were exhibited including cars, bikes, a fire engine, old police cars, vintage trucks, 'celebrity vehicles' from TV and the movies; it was amazing, the town centre was busy, and we had positive feedback from exhibitors, local businesses, the council and the public. The library had children's activities, which tripled their Saturday footfall, and the indoor market hall doubled their normal visitors

Sponsorship opportunities.

As a charity, we intend this event to benefit both businesses and the public alike, though we need funds to cover external support costs. We invite you to help make this another success for the town by sponsoring an element of the event for everyone's benefit, sharing in the success.

WheelFest26 Stage Sponsor (£195)

will have your name and logo displayed at the WF26 stage during the event, and have your name announced at least four times by Rhubarb Radio to the event audience. There will be an opportunity to be interviewed on the day at the main stage; the sponsor's name or logo will be used on our main WF26 PR for the event via social media and on posters; see the attached from 2025.

Ropergate1940's Stage Sponsor (£175)

will have your name and logo displayed at the Ropergate stage during the event, and have your name announced at least four times by We Want 2 Jive to the event audience. There will be an opportunity to be interviewed on the day at the 1940's stage; the sponsor's name or logo will be used on our Ropergate1940's PR for the event via socials and on posters; see the attached from 2025.

Both stage sponsors will have your name and logo displayed on the event map (approximately 14 some double-sided large A boards) around the event areas and on socials.

Zone Sponsors (£85)

will have your name or logo displayed on the event map boards (approximately 14 large double-sided A boards) around the event areas, and on socials; in addition, you will have signage at each entrance & exist in the sponsored zone clearly showing the respective business. There will be promotion on our socials and business names will be announced at least twice by Rhubarb Radio to the event audience.

The event will cover various locations in town each displaying different vehicle types:

Cornmarket: HGV commercial, food vendors, further entertainment, some children rides

Beastfair: Performance/custom cars, some children rides

Shoemarket: Classic and vintage cars around the library

Town Hall/Market Place: Emergency – vintage and modern, plus military post 1950

Salter Row: Motorcycles around the Windmill pub, with some in Salter Row itself

Ropergate: Military up to 1950, along with military displays and 1940s entertainment

Character Parade sponsorship (£75)

will have your name or logo displayed on the event map boards (approximately 14 large double-sided A boards) around the event areas; in addition, you will be promoted in our socials and your name will be announced at least twice by Rhubarb Radio as the parade forms and departs for a tour of the town centre.



Early bird discounts

10% until 31st March

2026 Civic Society business members will receive an additional 5% discount on WheelFest26 sponsorship until May 31st

Contact: If you would like to discuss sponsorship opportunities, please email

info@pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk

or ring 07931 700021 where we would be happy to discuss further, and we can send you a sponsor booking form.

PONTEFRACT TOWN CRIER

OYEZ: November is not my favourite month of the year, for many reasons, but as soon as the calendar page turns to December there is a change.

I see a change as I walk into town via Horsefair. As I don't drive & I wobble on a bicycle my main way of getting around is on foot. On a Wednesday in my Town Crier garb, I say "Good Morning!" to everyone I pass. If I pass a worker engaged in their construction of the new pavements, I'll say "Great Work". I know there has been disruption for drivers & also pedestrians having to do a zigzag crossing the road, but I can see a positive change. Wider walkways & eating outside. Pontefract has its own Yellow Brick Road!



The month of December started with me giving a Talk to the Yorkshire & Humberside branch of the Urostomy Association. The talk was entitled 'From a Frog to a Prince Town Crier'. The talk was well received & the promotion of Pontefract continued after the talk had ended.

Christmas started early in December with Pontefract Civic Society presenting The Liquorice Singers and then at the end of the first



week Pontefract Choral Society gave a Christmas Concert at St Giles Church.

The annual Christmas 'shopfront' display competition took place & I just had to make an impromptu proclamation for the schoolchildren who were the judges, school staff and chaperones & not forgetting Paul Cartwright & Phil Cook who organised the event. It was a cold morning but thankfully the rain stayed away & the event was a great success.

My latest proclamations included the following:

The Elizabeth Love Museum. A Christmas Carol with Chris Cade. PCS Talk – A Visit to Normandy Beaches. Vote for your Favourite Lantern in the Market Hall. Pontefract Christmas Light Up. The Liquorice Singers. Pontefract Choral Society. Liquorice Santa at Pontefract Museum.

**I thank you
God save the king**

John Turner – Pontefract Town Crier
towncrier@pontefractcivicsociety.org.uk

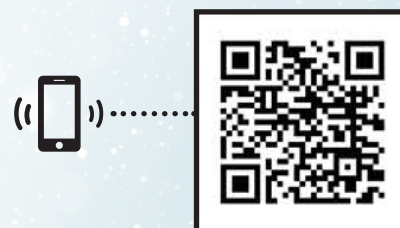


EVENTS CALENDAR 2026

All PCS Talks take place at Pontefract Town Hall

PCS Talk & Events	Other Events
January	
16 Wakefield Theatre Royal Katie Town	11-17 Pantomime Pontefract Town Hall
26 2025 Design Awards Town Hall	
February	
17 Tiny Tickers (charity) Linda Atkins	
March	
21 Community Showcase Annual General Meeting St Giles Church	7 KLH Events St Giles Church
April	
21 Just 3 Words (performance) Chris Cade	7-21-29 Pontefract Races
May	
19 Model Villages Eric Jackson	22 Pontefract Races
June	
13 WheelFest/1940's Ropergate Town centre	2-8-21-29 Pontefract Races
16 Performance What's that got to do with the price of fish? Ray Roberts (magician)	13 KLH Events St Giles Church
	20-21 Proms Weekend Pontefract Castle
July	
Liquorice Shoots Town centre	4 Armed Forces Day Pontefract Park
11 Friends of Waterton Wall Barbara Phipps	11 KLH Events Pontefract Town Hall
21	12 Liquorice Festival Pontefract Town Centre
	7-17-26 Pontefract Races

PCS Talk & Events	Other Events
August	
Talk 18	1 Yorkshire Day Friarwood Valley Gardens
	8 Friarwood Festival Friarwood Valley Gardens
	5-18 Pontefract Races
September	
Heritage Open Days TBC	12 KLH Events St Giles Church
World War II Spy from Fryston Dave Smith	17-24 Pontefract Races
15	
October	
The Mobile Police Museum David Hardcastle	17 KLH Events - Pontefract Town Hall - Halloween
20	5-19 Pontefract Races
November	
Setting Up The Commonwealth War Graves Commission David Jones	8 KLH Events - Kings Croft Hotel - In aid of the Prince of Wales Hospice
17	8 Remembrance Sunday Town Centre
Performance of A Christmas Carol Chris Cade	11 Armistice Day Town Centre
30	29 Pontefract Light Up Town Centre
December	
Christmas with the Liquorice Singers King's Croft Hotel	5 KLH Events Ackworth Quaker School Dickensian Christmas
TBC	



Scan the QR Code to go to the Pontefract Civic Society website

COMMUNITY GROUP NEWS

RECRUITMENT NIGHT FRIDAY 16TH JANUARY

We are holding a recruitment night at Wilson Street Methodist Church (off Station Lane) Featherstone (WF7 5BH) on Friday 16th January starting at 6:45 pm

FMVC have been singing songs, laughing, talking & drinking tea for more than 60 years (although not always in that order). We meet twice a week (Wednesday & Friday 7pm to 9pm) and always welcome new members and all we ask is a love of singing and willingness to learn. We don't audition or expect new members to be able to read music, just turn up and have a go.

Singing in a choir releases oxytocin, which makes you feel good whilst singing in a group increases trust and bonding. In a society increasingly divided by taste, politics and technology, singing together represents a timeless honesty and resonates as an antidote to today's cynicism and fragmentation so why not give it a go?

Find your Voice

Many people (men especially) respond with "Me! I can't sing a note" when asked about being in a choir.

Maybe that opinion is forged in some late-night karaoke session when thrust to the front with a microphone in their hand they've felt uncomfortable with the noise coming out of some DJ's speaker system. Choral singing couldn't be more different. For a start you're surrounded by a load of people all singing the same thing and you're in a supportive environment where you can learn how your voice sounds naturally and you soon find yourself singing along.

In some ways choral singing has some similarities with a football or rugby crowd (even some of the songs we sing will be familiar like "you'll never walk alone"). It's liberating and exhilarating when you find your voice and learn how it blends with colleagues in your section. Rehearsals focus on improvement and enjoyment, obviously learning a new song takes some work and repartition, especially as we like to sing without musical copy in concerts, however the learning process is always better for being shared (we are all learning together) and people often remark how after a few run throughs the words & music just come to them

What do we sing?

FMVC sing a very varied repertoire of songs which include songs made famous by Elvis Presley, Cold Play, Westlife and Frank Sinatra as well as songs from the shows and many male voice choir classics.

Traditionally male voice choirs were most strong in the Industrial cities & towns across the country and especially in the valleys of Wales & here in West Yorkshire. Some of our songs reflect this history and culture so pieces like "Take me Home" & "Working man" reflect on the mining heritage of our local area.





Learn a New Skill

Make New Friends

Have a chat, a cup of tea and some snacks

You don't have to read music

Support from our professional musicians

We would love to see you at our informal Open Evening. You will be very welcome.

Claim a FREE GIFT

Join our Choir

Come and meet Featherstone Male Voice Choir

In Friendship and Harmony

Open Evening

[Friday 16th January 2026 @ 6:45 pm](#)
 Featherstone Methodist Church
 Wilson Street
 Featherstone
 WF7 5BH




SCAN ME

COMMUNITY GROUP NEWS

FRIENDS OF FRIARWOOD VALLEY GARDENS

Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens have had a successful year, for the second summer in succession achieving the prestigious Gold Award from Yorkshire in Bloom.

All the 14 park benches damaged by fire last year have been replaced with an all metal version, produced by DC Fabrications. The small team of volunteers have been active all year with gardening and general maintenance; the Rose Garden did especially well this summer. We held two very successful events in August:



Yorkshire Day and Friarwood Festival. The proceeds from Friarwood Festival have paid for additional playground equipment, and more are ordered for the New Year. Friarwood Bowling

Club folded last year but Friends of Friarwood Valley Gardens has been given a temporary licence by the Council to look after the green and pavilion. We have found that there is significant interest in continuing crown green bowling in the Valley Gardens and next spring we will be helping a group of bowling enthusiasts to set up volunteer run recreational bowling for two days each week. We welcome new members to help with the gardening, events, or to get involved with the bowling green initiative.



FRIENDS OF PONTEFRACT PARK

There is a regular litter picking session every Wednesday at 10am, throughout the year, weather permitting, and there is a litter picking station located in the foyer of Aspire for park visitors who want to litter pick at other times.



Friends of Pontefract Park



Friends of the Park are happy to provide equipment for group litter picks – contact us by email: friendsofpontefractpark@gmail.com. We continue to maintain the two large flower beds near Aspire, which are planted spring and autumn with bedding plants. The lakeside rowing boat planters have been replaced with three large raised beds, constructed with sleepers, and planted with perennials for easier maintenance. More spring bulbs were planted in October, as we do every autumn to boost the spring display of crocuses and daffodils. Our planting efforts have been supported by the Council's Neighbourhood Improvement Fund and donations from Pontefract Racecourse Company.

PONTEFRACT IN BLOOM

Pontefract in Bloom summer 2025 delivered 29 planters and 50 hanging baskets, including 16 impressive tiered planters and the two Jubilee planters outside the Museum.



We also provide bedding plants for Pontefract Park, St Giles' Church and Friarwood Valley Gardens, spring and autumn. The annual cost of Pontefract in Bloom is over £10,000. We are supported by grants from the Council's Neighbourhood



Improvement Fund and Vico Homes, but most of our funding is sponsorship from local businesses and community groups, including Pontefract Civic Society. This autumn we took the initiative to tidy up the town centre wooden planters which have been looking neglected. These were installed in 2022 by the Council with a Covid recovery capital grant but funding for maintenance was not included. We were fortunate to receive a donation of plants from B&Q which we have used to fill the gaps in the planters. We are a very small group of community volunteers and would welcome help with our activities.

Colin White – Chair

COMMUNITY GROUP NEWS

PONTEFRACT LANTERN FESTIVAL COMPETITION

For the second year running Castleford & Pontefract District Lions Club ran the Pontefract Lantern Festival Competition which was open to adults and children of all ages.

The theme for 2025 was your favourite book and there were 95 entries on display in Pontefract Market Hall for everyone to see. The public were invited to vote for their favourite entry in each age group and the winners were as follows:

0-8 Years	Dotty Boswell
8-11 Years	Eli Gosling
12-15 Years	Jasmine Carter
16+	Amy Charlotte

Each winner received a £50.00 gift voucher as well as a certificate and everyone who took part has been able to collect their lanterns to take home as a keep sake.

Lantern Festival Co-ordinator Jeannette Morgan said 'it is a shame that we can no longer hold the parade but the logistics of organising this became almost impossible however thanks to the support of the Civic Society all was not lost as they suggested we ran a competition instead and the decoration squad support us by hanging all the lanterns in the Market Hall for everyone to see.

As we head into 2026 we will be starting to plan the next competition so keep checking the Pontefract Lantern Festival Facebook page for more information.



0-8 Years - Dotty Boswell



8-11 Years - Eli Gosling



12-15 Years - Jasmine Carter



16+ - Amy Charlotte

SANTAS GROTTTO

Castleford & Pontefract District Lions club were once again pleased to work with the Civic Society and the Hammerhead Explorer Scouts to host the Santas Grotto in Pontefract Town Hall for the Turn on of the Christmas Lights on 30th November 2025.

Over 300 children came to see Santa on the day helping us to raise funds to support the local community.





PONTEFRACT CIVIC SOCIETY

Shop



£13

The J.S. Fletcher G.P. Rhodes Collaboration
by Roger Ellis

£11

Ponte Fract's Chequered History
by Roger Ellis

£12.99

Ponte Fract - Celebrating the Past; Looking to the Future
by Martin Lodge



£10

The Railways of Ponte Fract in Days of Steam
by Peter Cookson

£8.50

Ancient Routes through Ponte Fract (2nd edition)
by Eric Houlder

£7

The Prince of Wales Colliery
by Sir Bill O'Brien

£1

Ponte Fract Castle; Through the Eyes of a Child



£10

Ponte Fract: Its Name, its Lord and its Castle

£10

Memorials of a Yorkshire Parish Darrington

£10

Please show your support for Ponte Fract Civic Society...

Let's get noticed!

Our local heritage publications are available for sale online, via email and phone.

www.ponte fractcivicsociety.org.uk/shop alternatively phone: T: 01977 708658 or E: info@ponte fractcivicsociety.org.uk for further information.

Ponte Fract T-Shirts

Direct supplier contact for Ponte Fract T shirts
<https://dnbsports.co.uk/product-brand/ponte fract-civic-society/>

Other colours are available.



Tote Bag



£5

Ponte Fract Buttercross

For our new model of the Buttercross, mugs and much more check our Online Shop on the website:
[https:// www.ponte fractcivicsociety.org.uk/shop](https://www.ponte fractcivicsociety.org.uk/shop)

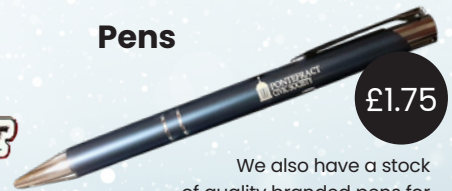


Lapel Badges



£3

Pens



£1.75

We also have a stock of quality branded pens for just £1.75, and lapel badges at £3.

Ponte Fract Cakes



NEW

Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 
Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	Gold Member 	
Silver Member 	Silver Member 	Silver Member 	Silver Member 	
	Silver Member 	Silver Member 		
Bronze Member 	Bronze Member 	Bronze Member 	Bronze Member 	Bronze Member <p>Mark R Cawthorn Accountancy Services</p>

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Editor: Paul Cartwright

Proof Reader: Mollie Garbett

Photographs courtesy of:

Paul & Christine Cartwright
Phil Cook, John Turner, Colin White
Jeanette Morgan,
De Lacy Primary School
Featherstone Male Voice Choir



With thanks to Pontefract Print and Design for the design of Pontefract Voice

MEMBERSHIP & PARTNERSHIPS

