

HUDSWELL & DISTRICT MESSENGER



Editor: Claire Swainston, Parish Clerk

Thank you for all your contributions; the information contained is only as good as that supplied so please keep it coming! Deadline for the next issue is 1st March 2026.

This Newsletter is published by:

HUDSWELL & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: John Dixon Tel: 01748 824631

Councillors: Ali Barker Tel: 01748 821466
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Richard Phillips Tel: 01748 824038
Heather Swettenham Tel: 01748 519604

Parish Clerk: Claire Swainston Tel: 01748 826989
clerk@hudswell-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of meetings can be found displayed on the main parish notice boards (in Hudswell and Downholme) and on the following website:

<https://hudswell-pc.gov.uk/>

THE LITTLE SHOP, HUDSWELL

Probably the smallest community shop in Britain

Summer opening hours (from 31st March 2025):

Monday – Friday	9.00am – 12 noon & 5.00pm – 6.00pm
Wednesday	<i>CLOSED ALL DAY</i>
Saturday	10.00am – 12 noon
Sunday	11.00am – 12 noon

New addition to the Little Shop!

After many years of service our old chest freezer finally gave up the ghost and was sent off to the scrap man! So we decided to take the opportunity of investing in a brand new upright freezer with a glass door.

The new freezer has allowed us to expand our range of varied items such as: a good selection of frozen ready meals (including curries, pies, burgers, fish fingers, pizzas etc), bread, more ice lollies and ice cream, ice cubes (to accompany those Gin & Tonics!) as well as the usual frozen chips peas and vegetables.

So please come along and view our exciting new range!!



Looking for new Volunteers

As always we welcome any new volunteers, whether you want a regular shift or to fill in for holiday cover and sickness. If you are interested please call in at the shop and leave your contact details.

ALLOTMENTS

There are currently 2 allotments available behind the pub, if anyone is interested then please contact Heather: h.swettenham@gmail.com

Kind regards
HCP Ltd

HUDSWELL VILLAGE HALL – Events and News

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Badminton | Mondays 7.00 pm -9.00 pm (September-April only)
Enquiries to Martin Booth 01748 451299 |
| Bridge Club – Weekly | Fridays 1.00 pm – 4.00 pm
Training session prior to games from 10.30 am – 1.00 pm
Enquiries to John Taylor 07983 869420 |
| Pilates – Weekly | Thursdays 4.00 pm – 5.00 pm <i>and</i> ;
Thursdays 5.00 pm – 6.00 pm
Enquiries to Joanna Gibson 07572 539213 |
| Yoga – Weekly | Thursdays 7.00 pm - 8.15 pm
Enquiries 07982 104144 |
| Radio Club | 3 rd Wednesday each month 7.30 pm - 9.30 pm |
| FREE Coffee Morning | 1 st Thursday each month – 10.00 am – 12.00 noon, all welcome |

Hudswell Village Hall is **available for hire** for parties, anniversaries, clubs and meetings. To make a booking or for other enquiries contact Sue Rowley – telephone: 07544 239752.



ST MICHAELS LODGE TO OPEN IN MAY

St Michael's – the first four months

It's hard to believe that it has only been four months since we opened St Michael's Lodge – four very busy months as news about what a great place it is to stay has spread and visitor numbers grow.



The Opening Event on 24th May, with the “Yorkshire Vet”, went well and some great regional and national news coverage (on Tyne Tees TV News, and in the Yorkshire Post and Sunday Express) helped to spread the word. However, with the website only just up and running and with it taking a couple of weeks to get onto “booking.com”, we were not sure if people would come to stay there. We need not have worried. Bookings have grown steadily over the last four months, with many weekends now full or almost full and group bookings becoming increasingly popular.



So, who are the people who are coming to stay at St Michaels? Our initial market research had led us to believe that our key markets would be walkers and cyclists and people on culture or nature-based holidays. Whilst we have certainly attracted people from these groups our guests have come from a much wider variety of sources.

We have had guests who are on business trips, travellers passing through the area, pilgrims on the Camino Ingles and a group of cyclists stranded in the area because their London to Edinburgh endurance ride was cancelled due to storm Floris. We had two group bookings of people visiting the area for pheasant/grouse

shooting, visitors from the Netherlands, Italy and Denmark and from all over the UK. We now have several more group bookings for family gatherings or activity weekends.

So, what is it that these people have in common? The answer would appear to be very little, apart from the fact that they love the place! They like the Lodge, the George and Dragon and Hudswell! The evidence for this is on the reviews that they have left in the visitors' book and online. You can see the online reviews on booking.com, google and trip advisor for yourself. They are almost universally full of praise for the facilities, the ambiance, the service and the area. Below are some recent examples from the visitors' book:

"As a group of nine friends we had a fantastic time at your Lodge. What a great conversion. You have made us very welcome, and we found your place a great find. Thank you for your hospitality. We shall try to make it a yearly event. Everything you have done is just perfect. Thank you and arrivederci."
Angelo and the gang

"Wonderful host, wonderful hostel with every need catered for. Well done to the village community for pulling together and restoring such a valuable asset!"
Gaza

"What a find! You can feel the dedication in the restoration. Every little aspect has been carefully considered. Hudswell itself is a kind and well-knit community. Will be recommending this place to everyone and imagine I'll be back."
John

"Wonderful place, wonderful stay, wonderful staff. Special thanks to Melanie who has gone above and beyond. Wish there were more communities that used their resources as Hudswell has done."
Joe Kund and the Old Danish Painters

There are many, many more like this and several guests have already been back for second visit, which is perhaps the best evidence that they enjoy staying there.

We are only four months in and there is a long way to go yet to ensure that the Lodge is a sustainable business. Despite the success outlined above we yet to reach the occupancy level required to break even. We knew this would take time and have assumed that the Lodge will not begin to generate any surplus for the Charity until year two or three. Please encourage anyone you know to come and stay there we know they will enjoy it.

Fulfilling its aims

Whilst it is too early to judge yet, we can reflect on whether the Lodge is beginning to fulfil its aims. When we set off down the road of acquiring and converting St Michaels the trustees of Hudswell Community Charity had three key objectives.

These were:

- To restore an important historic building and conserve it for future generations to enjoy.
- To keep St Michaels in the ownership and control of the local community thus ensuring access to it for local residents.
- To create a sustainable business that would generate sufficient income to maintain the building and support the other community owned business in the village.

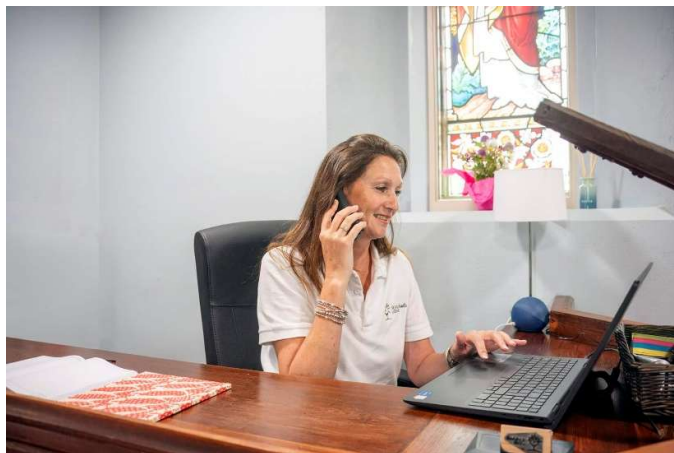
We can say with confidence that the first aim has been met, as the restoration has been widely praised for its sympathetic nature. Hudswell Community Charity owns St Michaels on behalf of the village and access to it is guaranteed. However, we want to do more to enable local residents, not just visitors to the area, to benefit from it want to encourage village events to be held there. There are three such events coming up in the near future. These are:

- **28th Sept 12.30 pm - St Micheals Day Pilgrimage Walk** from Round Howe car park to St Michael and All Angels Church Downholme, stopping for lunch at St Michaels Lodge around 1.15pm.
- **28th October 4pm - Burying of Time Capsule/Halloween Party** We already have a number of items to be placed in the capsule, but if you have ideas for others please get in touch will Cath Ross.
- **9th December 6.15pm** Wreath making workshop, please book you place with Melanie Sadler.

Whilst we have no desire to compete with the village hall, if there are local events that could be hosted at St Michaels, in particular making use of our fire pit and barbeques, do let us know.

Finally, the Lodge is on the road to sustainability, thought we are not there yet. Two of the three Lodge staff are Hudswell residents, and we know that our guests are making good use of the community owned George and Dragon and using the Little Shop, so it is making a positive contribution to the village economy. We believe that it is a project of which the whole village van be proud.

Hudswell Community Charity
Trustees



You can contact the Lodge on 07521158338 or via our website
stmichaelslodge.com

NEWS FROM THE WOODS

What a rollercoaster for butterflies! From good numbers in 2023, a terrible year in 2024, and then a bumper summer just gone, populations have lurched from one extreme to the other. Surveying this year on a sunny day in July, Round Howe's scrub and rough grassland was quite literally humming with invertebrate life, a rewarding experience as we have been working hard for several years to improve this habitat. Nationally, our butterfly numbers have responded positively to the dry and sunny spring, conditions that in recent weeks have also resulted in a bumper sloe crop. No doubt gin enthusiasts have already spotted the blackthorn bowed beneath an abundance of almost translucent blue fruits.

The drought however has also prompted challenges, our hay meadow at the top of the woods grew little and was so short it wasn't worth cutting, and I know farmers across the Dales have only managed to cut a fraction of the winter feed they require. The Highland cattle will now graze off our meadow before returning to the riverside this autumn.

Our woodlands have responded to drought stress with early autumn colour and by dropping leaves early. Beech trees have dropped limbs through the summer and the decline of some ash trees, already struggling with ash dieback, has accelerated. Although the summer weather has been enjoyable for some of us it physically demonstrates some of the future challenges associated with climate change, reaffirming the urgency for land management that encourage resilience and adaptation.

Annoyingly the growth of Himalayan balsam has not been slowed down and our volunteers have again been busy helping to clear the usual areas on the riverside. Although having an attractive pink flower, Himalayan balsam is an invasive, non-native plant that swamps habitats, especially on riversides, cutting out light and outcompeting our native flora. It readily spreads and colonises with seedpods which 'explode', flinging seed over a wide area. Unfortunately, balsam is now locally abundant throughout much of Swaledale, and this was very much the case on Underbank (not National Trust), below Hudswell village. Recent work to reduce the balsam in this area has had promising results, but more work is needed including on watercourses leaving Hudswell. It's too late in the season now, but if you spot balsam in your garden next year, and it is safe to pull it out or cut it down to prevent flowering, it would be a big help, especially if you live on or near a watercourse where seed will wash downstream.

As always, please contact me if you have any questions about our work in the woods, or if you have any suggestions or interesting observations. You can also follow our work across the Dales using Facebook
<http://www.facebook.com/YorkshireDalesNT>

Seb Mankelow

Ranger, National Trust Yorkshire Dales

seb.mankelow@nationaltrust.org.uk | mobile 07876 138354 | Office 01729 830416

LOCAL SERVICES

Fionagh Bennet:

Composer, organist/pianist, tutor.
www.fionagh-bennet-music.co.uk 07802 442551

Save on all your household bills and get discount on your shopping, with Utility Warehouse, “Which” recommended Best Provider.

Contact fionagh.bennet@uw.partners
<https://uw.partners/fionagh.bennet> 07802 442551

Richmond Sash Windows:

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www.richmondsash.co.uk, email: will@richmondsash.co.uk

Travel Agent:

Designer Travel by Tracy Charlton - Local, award winning, self-employed Independent Travel Agent, with over 30 years experience with full ABTA & ATOL protection for peace of mind.

Tracy Charlton
Professional Travel Expert
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Contact me to help you plan and book your next holiday, either phone or email me: tracy@designertravel.co.uk, follow me on Facebook is Designer Travel by Tracy Charlton

To place an advert in the next issue of the Hudswell & District Messenger please contact the Editor. Your support will help with printing costs, a copy is delivered to each house in Brokes, Downholme, Hudswell, Stainton and Walburn (200 copies in all).

- “Local Services” adverts cost £20 per annum (2 editions).
- Inside Front/Back Cover Full Page: £50 for Black & White / £75 for Colour.