

# 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 1<sup>st</sup> September 2026.*



Our wonderful small group of volunteers recently held their 100<sup>th</sup> speed watch deployment!

We've been working hard to reduce the speed of vehicles travelling through the village for seven years now. During that time we have reported 134 drivers to North Yorkshire Police.

Keep up the good work.

This Newsletter is published by:

## **HUDSWELL & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL**

**Chairman:** John Dixon Tel: 01748 824631

**Councillors:** Ali Barker Tel: 01748 821466  
Paul Chapman Tel: 01748 823909  
Beverly Phillips Tel: 01748 824038  
Richard Phillips Tel: 01748 824038  
Heather Swettenham Tel: 01748 519604

**Parish Clerk:** Claire Swainston Tel: 01748 826989  
[clerk@hudswell-pc.gov.uk](mailto: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 Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2026):*

Monday – Friday	9.00am – 12 noon & 5.00pm – 6.00pm
Wednesday	<i>CLOSED ALL DAY</i>
Saturday	10.00am – 1pm
Sunday	11.00am – 12 noon

### **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, or email Heather: [h.swettenham@gmail.com](mailto:h.swettenham@gmail.com).

### **ALLOTMENTS – GROW YOUR OWN!**

Bored with the gym? Fed up of sitting on the sofa? Why not try a different way of getting fit.

For those of you who do not know, there are allotments at the back of the pub where you can enjoy the fresh air and the beautiful view while getting fit and growing your own organic vegetables. There is a water supply on tap – literally - a communal shed where you can keep your tools if you wish to and left over tools from previous allotment holders so you don't have to splash out on new ones. We also have a WhatsApp group so we can share tips and excess plants etc. If you, or someone you know, is interested in taking on an allotment - or half a one if you

are a beginner – get in touch. Now is the time to be getting ready for Spring planting so why not have a go?

Email Heather: [h.swettenham@gmail.com](mailto:h.swettenham@gmail.com)

## **GEORGE AND DRAGON**

When the George and Dragon in Hudswell reopened in 2010 as Yorkshire's first community-owned pub, only the second of its kind in the UK, it helped inspire a movement that has grown to around 227 community owned pubs nationwide. The pub, along with the Little Shop and the land behind the building now used for allotments, an orchard, and an apiary, stands as a local landmark and a pioneer in community ownership. National statistics show that hospitality is struggling, with around seven pubs closing each week across the country, making efforts like ours especially important. For many people, the local pub remains the heart of their community, a place to gather, relax, and connect. The challenges faced by pubs nationwide underscore just how vital our own community initiative is, not only for Hudswell but as an example for others across the country. If you've seen 'Our Yorkshire Pub with Jon Richardson' on More4, you'll recognise that this passion for preserving local pubs is shared throughout the country, and our story is part of a much larger national movement.

Thanks to the generosity and support of HCP members past and present, who have allowed HCP to reinvest their dividends, along with the rental income from the allotments and pub tenancy, we have been able to complete necessary work and significant improvements. Over £100,000 has been invested in maintenance and upgrades over the past few years, including refreshing the kitchen, toilets, improving outside spaces and adding new accessibility facilities. We are deeply grateful to everyone who's helped to build this incredible community and encourage our members to reflect with pride on the legacy they've created.

Whilst we still maintain a healthy membership, we warmly invite you to join our wonderful community, helping to keep The George and Dragon at the heart of village life. The initial minimum investment is £250, representing 250 shares. As an investor, you will receive regular newsletters, have a say in board elections, influence how funds are spent, and participate in decisions about how HCP is run. If you would like to know more, or participate in shared ownership of our award-winning pub, then please email me at [membership@georgeanddragonhudswell.com](mailto:membership@georgeanddragonhudswell.com), or pick up a leaflet from the pub or the adjacent Little Shop. If you are already a member and would like to purchase more shares, then please also get in touch.

**Tenancy update** – Sadly as I am writing this article, Stuart Miller, our current tenant, has been working through the last few weeks of his tenancy and is leaving the George and Dragon in March. HCP's committee would like to thank Stuart, his family and staff, on behalf of its members and customers, for continuing to offer a warm and welcoming place to meet, serving great beer and food, and wish them well in their next venture. HCP would also like to take the opportunity to

welcome our new tenants, Sam and Becky Harrison, and their two young children, they are a local family, with Sam and Becky having more than 37 years of combined experience in hospitality. They are well acquainted with the pub, having been regular customers for several years, and share the same passion for the George and Dragon as the Hudswell community and local patrons. We hope that you will come along and make them feel very welcome.

Caron Grundy  
HCP Membership Secretary

## **THE GEORGE AND DRAGON – NEW LANDLORDS**

Hudswell, meet Sam and Becky - the new people running The George & Dragon.

Some of you will know them already. They've been regulars here for a few years, and when the opportunity came up to take on the pub, it wasn't a hard decision; two people who've spent their careers in pubs, who know this one well.

Becky grew up in Gunnerside and was working at the Farmers Arms in Muker from the age of fourteen. She left to study Fine Art at Newcastle University, where she met Sam. The two of them spent their university years working in hospitality together, moved back to Richmondshire, and ran a pub here for several years before their family came along. Becky went on to manage the café at Berry's in Swinithwaite and then The Courtyard in Bedale - both well-known spots that will be familiar to many of you.

Sam trained as a chef at Yorebridge House, worked through head chef and senior management roles, and most recently ran a multi-site gastropub company. Between them, there isn't much about running a pub they haven't seen.

In 2025 they took on the Exelby Green Dragon, a community pub in need of new life. They relaunched it, built a team of friendly and committed staff, kept the cask ale standards high, and introduced a new food menu. The pub continues to grow. The George & Dragon is their second pub together. They know it, they know what it means to the village, and they know why it works.

The character and warmth of the place will remain exactly as it is. There will be some sympathetic updates to the décor going into summer - nothing dramatic, just the care and attention a well-loved building deserves. A new food menu is also on the way, built around accessible pub classics done properly alongside some seasonal specials making use of the excellent local produce this part of the world has to offer.

They look forward to welcoming you back into the pub and for a busy summer ahead!

Cheers!



## KEEP THE DATE

Mobile Skip coming to Hudswell on **Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2026**



## Upper Dales mobile HWRC Service

North Yorkshire Council provides a mobile household waste recycling centre (HWRC) service to residents in areas which are not adequately covered by a permanent HWRC.

### Dates for 2026/27

Hawes	Reeth	West Burton	Langthwaite	Aysgarth	Hudswell
18 April 20 June 15 August 17 October 16 January <b>9:00 - 13:00</b>	18 July 24 October 20 March <b>9:00 - 13:00</b>	16 May <b>09:00 - 10:30</b> the times may vary depending on location	16 May <b>11:30 - 13:00</b> the times may vary depending on location	19 September <b>09:00 - 10:30</b> the times may vary depending on location	19 September <b>11:30 - 13:00</b> the times may vary depending on location

The mobile HWRCs all operate on **Saturdays**.

Waste left at the site at any other time would be classed as fly tipping, which is against the law, so can attract an unlimited fine and up to 5 years imprisonment.

**Aysgarth** - Village Green, Aysgarth, DL8 3AH.

**Hawes** - Charcoals Way, Upper Wensleydale Business Park DL8 3QT.

**Hudswell** - Opposite Ashley House, DL11 6BH.

**Langthwaite** - Car Park, DL11 6BH.

**West Burton** - The Green, DL8 4JN.

**Reeth** - Village Green, Reeth DL11 6SY.

### Accepted wastes

Yes	No
Household waste Garden waste Wood Furniture Paper, cardboard Bric-a-brac Glass Food and drink cans Foil, scrap metal Mixed textiles and clothes Fluorescent tubes TVs and monitors, fridges and freezers Small and large electrical appliances	Hardcore and rubble Plasterboard Tyres Asbestos Hazardous chemicals Gas bottles and cylinders  To find out how to dispose of these wastes, please visit <a href="http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/hwrc">www.northyorks.gov.uk/hwrc</a>

Commercial and charity wastes are not accepted at the mobile HWRC.

### Contact us

Online: [northyorks.gov.uk/contact-us](http://northyorks.gov.uk/contact-us)

By telephone: **0300 131 2 131** and say 'mobile waste recycling' when prompted.

North Yorkshire Council, County Hall, Northallerton,  
North Yorkshire, DL7 8AD

You can request this information in another language or format at [northyorks.gov.uk/accessibility](http://northyorks.gov.uk/accessibility)

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## **ST MICHAEL'S LODGE GETS EXCELLENT REVIEWS AND AN AWARD!**

St Michaels Lodge has been open for nine months now and its facilities, services and the village of Hudswell itself, continue to be very much appreciated by the guests who stay there. The St Michaels Lodge Business Plan assumed that it would take between 18 months and two years build up custom to a sustainable level. We are currently on track to achieve this, and the reviews left by customers provide the strongest evidence that the Lodge will prove to be successful venture that is loved by its guests and is also an asset to the village. A small sample of these reviews are reproduced below.

***“St Michaels Lodge is beautifully appointed and renovated, with incredible attention to detail. It’s a peaceful haven and I can guarantee you’ll sleep very well there! The facilities and the kitchen are spotless with everything you could need. The breakfast was fab and rooms gorgeous. Highly recommended. This is a great stop for the Coast-to-Coast walk. It deserves to be full every night and with a fabulous pub down the road what more could you want?” - Helen.***

***“What a gem of a place! A lovingly restored and repurposed village church to a very high standard throughout. Super comfortable with a well-equipped kitchen. A perfect place to rest and recover after a long day cycling. Also highly recommend the village pub. Will return for sure.” - Phillippa.***

***“Brilliant place to stay. Staff so kind and helpful. Community owned made it extra special. Beautiful decoration and renovation, bed comfy and great location near Richmond. Well priced too” - Anna.***

Not only is St Michael's Lodge appreciated by those who stay there, but we have also won an award, from the Richmond and District Civic Society. The award was



presented at their Annual General Meeting on the 12th December last year.

Pictured here are trustees Annie Sumner and Martin Booth and Lodge Manager Melanie Sadler with the Civic Trust Chair, Colin Grant. The award was given in recognition of ***“the work carried out at the redundant, Grade 2 listed, St Michael and All Angels Church by Hudswell Community Charity.”*** The commendation stated that work to convert the church into a hostel ***“was sensitivity carried***

***out to a high standard, with innovative additional features and preserving much of the historic fabric. It provides much needed overnight accommodation at a modest cost for walkers, cyclists and other visitors to the area.”***

It is pleasing to receive this external recognition of our achievement and the excellent customer feedback demonstrated in the reviews quoted above that have been left in the comments book at the Lodge and online are very encouraging. Of course, as these comments reflect, not only is it important to have an attractive and comfortable building but the welcome and care provided by our staff, Mel, Phil, and Brooks, are also appreciated by the guests and central to the Lodge’s popularity. As most of you will know, two of our three staff live in Hudswell (Brooks lives in Richmond) and their commitment and hard work is very much appreciated by the trustees of Hudswell Community Charity.

One area of hospitality that has been more popular than we anticipated has been bookings for the whole lodge for group activities or family occasions. In December, for example, we had a family group hire the Lodge for four days over Christmas and a walking group for three days over New Year. Once again, we have had great reviews from groups who have booked the entire Lodge. The person who organised the Christmas family booking, for example wrote:

***“Just back from the most wonderful Christmas at St Michaels Lodge in Hudswell. The welcome, facilities and atmosphere of the beautifully restored church was delightful. It was comfortable, warm, with amazing attention to detail. Thanks to Mel and the team we had a most memorable family Christmas.” - Sue H and all the family, including dogs of course. “PS I love the soap dispensers”.***



Two of the children and one of the dogs from this group are pictured left warming themselves by the log burner.

Over the New Year period the Lodge was hired by a walking group, who wrote:

***“We were a group of 16 and had a fabulous time over the New Year. Really clean, comfortable and such a wonderful building. Some beautiful walks, lovely community pub and a great location. Thank you. We hope to see you again soon.” - York Outdoor Group.***

And more recently another walking group who hired the Lodge for a weekend wrote:

***“Thank you for an enjoyable stay. The church has become a real holiday home for us to enjoy in the lovely part of the country. Great walking, clean and comfortable accommodation!” - Stockport Walking and Outdoor Group.***

As hiring the whole Lodge has become increasingly popular, we took the decision to advertise through cottages.com who only advertise for bookings of the entire Lodge, but who have a worldwide reach. We have already begun to receive bookings via this website. However, it is much better for us, if families and organisations book directly with us via our own website (stmichaelslodge.com), or by phone (07521 158338 or 01748 343022) as this saves us the considerable fee that we have to pay to booking companies. So, if you would like to book the Lodge for a family occasion or group activity or know anyone who might want to please do get in touch directly to discuss your request. Mel will be delighted to talk to you about your needs and how St Michaels Lodge can meet them.

### **Hudswell Community Charity Trustees**

## **NEWS FROM THE WOODS**

National Trust ownership at Hudswell Woods has just got a little bit larger! Residents and regular visitors that walk from Hudswell will have noticed a new National Trust boundary sign (Omega) below the playing field. This triangle of land was kindly gifted to the National Trust by David and Mark Horseman, in memory of their late father, John, who passed away in 2021. Horseman Meadow is an ecologically valuable addition to the top of Calfhall Woods. A scrubby northern and eastern edge provides good habitat for birds and invertebrates, whilst grassland to the southwest is still rich in the flower species associated with a traditional Dales hay meadow, a nod to its former use when John was still actively farming. Perhaps most significant of all on a largely north facing site, is that this sheltered pocket is a real suntrap (when it shines) and correspondingly the food on offer attracts migrant warblers returning to our patch in the spring and getting ready to leave in the autumn. There are no great plans to change this new acquisition, it already offers great conservation value, so our objectives are to ensure nature continues to thrive and that existing public access is maintained.

Elsewhere in the woods, Rangers, or contractors on our behalf, have completed further tree safety work. In February, several ash dieback infected trees adjacent to Public Rights of Way were felled both in Calfhall Wood and adjacent to Round Howe, the latter requiring the moving of the Highland cattle slightly earlier than usual in case their curiosity got in the way of operations. Where possible some ash trees have been reduced to monoliths, effectively a tall standing stump, whereby branches posing a risk have been removed but the vertical trunk remains to provide standing deadwood habitat in the future. Standing deadwood is a valuable and underrepresented habitat in UK woodlands as dead trees are often ‘tidied’ for firewood, or aesthetic or safety reasons. They are however crucial for many invertebrate lifecycles, and related food chains; think of woodpeckers searching for grubs.

We have also made safe several windblown trees that have fallen on paths or fences over this past winter, especially where saturated ground has reduced soil and slope stability. Several large veteran beech trees have also fallen over, but they haven't been 'lost', their presence still serves a valuable function on the woodland floor. Given the opportunity woodland recycles itself. As ancient semi natural woodland the current standing trees in Hudswell Woods all grow on the decayed remains of trees that have grown and died since the last ice age. It is this continuity of woodland over thousands of years, and the associated complex biology that evolves, which makes ancient semi natural woodland, and especially soils, irreplaceable in the UK.

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 Mankelaw**

**Ranger, National Trust Yorkshire Dales**

[seb.mankelow@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:fionagh.bennet@uw.partners)  
<https://uw.partners/fionagh.bennet> 07802 442551

### **Richmond Sash Windows:**

Sash Window Renovation Specialists. Restoration, refurbishment, upgrading and draught proofing of traditional timber sliding sash windows. We now also free up and service spiral balanced windows and provide secondary glazing solutions. For free advice or to request a survey, call Will on 07944 161040.

[www.richmondsash.co.uk](http://www.richmondsash.co.uk), email: [will@richmondsash.co.uk](mailto:will@richmondsash.co.uk)

### **Travel Agent:**

Designer Travel by Tracy Charlton - Local, award winning, self-employed Independent Travel Agent, with over 40 years experience with full ABTA & ATOL protection for peace of mind.

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*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.