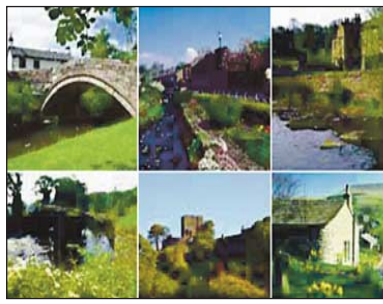


RIBBLE VALLEY News



INSIDE

- Calling all tweeters p2
- Longridge Does Shopping p3
- Public loos on a roll p7
- Community safety boost p7



The newspaper of Ribble Valley Borough Council

Autumn 2014



CIVIC PRIDE: New Ribble Valley Mayor Michael Ranson

Cricket fan Michael is Ribble Valley's new mayor

CRICKET enthusiast and captain of industry Michael Ranson is the new Mayor of Ribble Valley.

Councillor Ranson is behind an ambitious scheme to plant oak trees in Ribble Valley's 35 parishes in memory of the borough's First World War fallen.

He is also walking Ribble Valley's 85-mile boundary in 20 sections during his mayoral year.

After qualifying as a solicitor, Councillor Ranson worked at the family law firm in Accrington and Blackburn, before joining the

Anglo-American Corporation in Zambia as a legal manager.

He then returned to England and worked in the City of London for 18 months, before stints as commercial director at Edgar Pickering Blackburn Limited and Platt Saco Lowell Limited.

He subsequently worked as a business consultant for the EU in Kazakhstan, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, and in 1997 joined the Shepherd Group in York as chairman of their American group of companies in Atlanta, Georgia.

He was elected to Ribble Valley Borough

Council in 2003, became deputy leader in 2006 and was leader from 2007 to 2013.

As a young man, Councillor Ranson played for Enfield in the Lancashire Cricket League and Lancashire County 2nd XI, as well as Read Cricket Club from 1974 to 1985. He also played hockey for Blackburn and Preston, and represented Zambia in the 1968 East Africa Hockey Tournament.

Councillor Ranson's mayoress is his wife, Janette, who he met in Lusaka in 1968. His chosen charities are Home Start Ribble Valley and Crossroads Care Ribble Valley.

End in sight as Core Strategy nears decision

RIBBLE Valley's long-awaited Core Strategy is nearing completion.

The document, which sets out development in the borough until 2028, specifically how many new houses the area needs and where they might be built, underwent a series of hearings in January as part of an examination in public by a Government inspector.

Following the hearings, inspector Simon Berkeley asked for further consideration of housing levels, how houses were distributed, the treatment of

Borough hopes to adopt plan in the New Year villages and land allocation.

As a result, modifications were made to the strategy and opened for public consultation.

The final document is now in the hands of the inspector, who is expected to deliver his judgement within weeks.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "It has been a long journey, but the final Core Strategy is in sight."

"We know that challenges lie ahead. There are further difficult planning applications in the pipeline and we await appeal judgements that will significantly test the strategy."

"Nonetheless, progress on the document has been heartening and there is no reason why this protracted and testing process should not reach a successful conclusion soon."

"I would like to express my thanks to councillors and officers for their continued efforts in achieving a coherent planning policy."

It is hoped that the Core Strategy will come before council and be adopted in the New Year.



●FROM LITTLE ACORNS: The mayor with Chipping youngsters Ellen Priest (left) and Katie Morris

Digging in to mark the Great War

AN ambitious scheme to plant trees in Ribble Valley's 35 parishes in memory of the borough's First World War has taken root.

Ribble Valley Mayor Michael Ranson has planted oak trees in 31 villages and plans are in the pipeline for the remainder.

In Chipping, he was joined by youngsters from St Mary's RC and Brabin's Endowed Primary Schools.

And plans are afoot for a Royal tree-planting in the borough later in the year.

From 2014 until the 100th anniversary of the official ceasefire, or Armistice Day, on November 11 2018, communities across the world are coming together to remember those who lived, fought and died in the First World War.

The First World War was a turning point in world history, claiming the lives of 16million people across the world and having a huge impact on those who experienced it.

As Ribble Valley did not exist until 1974, precise records of the number of fallen in the borough do not exist, but it is believed to be around 1,000.

Turn to page five for more information on this ground-breaking commemorative scheme.



Stuart Hirst, Leader, Ribble Valley Borough Council

"It has been a long journey, but the final Core Strategy is in sight."

Why not visit us on the web? www.ribbonvalley.gov.uk

Council leader's message

Why I don't believe that bigger is best

THE end of the long hot summer of 1914 saw the onset of one of the most traumatic and shattering periods in our history and the commemoration of the outbreak of the First World War has been a significant feature of the borough's civic calendar.

The long hot summer of 2014 will no doubt be remembered for the Scottish referendum. Just as the events that triggered the war in 1914 were largely ignored as irrelevant at home, the idea similarly that national constitutional changes will have no relevance for Ribble Valley would be a serious misjudgement.

The No vote will add potency to current discussions on regional devolution in England, the Government's much-vaunted Localism agenda and the future of district authorities in two-tier local government.

The growing acceptance among many national and local commentators of the efficacy of large single-tier local authorities is based on the spurious assumption that bigger is best, which it patently is not. Ribble Valley may be a small rural authority, but we have frozen record low council tax rates for five years, maintained balanced budgets and healthy reserves despite a 40 per cent cut in Government grant and built levels of service satisfaction that have become the envy of neighbouring authorities, which is a tribute to council officers and members.

There are less tangible but no less significant achievements such as the proud and growing sense of identity and belonging among local residents and the strong marketing brand of Ribble Valley, which helps businesses to grow and encourages visitors.

Above all, perhaps is the sense of optimism for the future – a place where people want to live and work in a healthy, rewarding and safe environment.

I look forward greatly to the promised debate on decentralisation and the devolution of power to local authorities such as Ribble Valley. Any suggestion that this would be better achieved by subsuming the borough in a new monolithic pan-Lancashire authority would be a grotesque parody of any idea of localism and totally inimical to the wishes and interests of our residents.

No doubt many Scots felt that the union wasn't broken and didn't need fixing. Neither is Ribble Valley and that is a view I shall be putting forcibly and clearly wherever and whenever I can, as we continue to debate the future of local government.



Stuart Hirst, Leader, Ribble Valley Borough Council

Don't forget to follow our new Twitter account



●TWEET, TWEET: Mark Edmondson, the council's head of revenues and benefits, and customer service apprentice Charlotte Winder

CALLING all 'tweeters' – Ribble Valley Borough Council has a new Twitter account. Emergency information, such as disruption to services caused by bad weather, will now be tweeted from the council's Twitter account @RibbleValleyBC, as well as the usual channels.

The council will also be re-tweeting gritting updates from Lancashire County Council, plus information about changes to refuse collection over the festive period and events and activities during school holidays.

For those new to digital media, Twitter is an online social networking service that enables users to send and read short 140-character messages called "tweets."

Ribble Valley Borough Council chief executive Marshal Scott said: "Ninety-eight per cent of councils are using some form of

social media and three-quarters of the population now have an active Facebook account.

"There are a wide range of benefits to the use of social media, including building digital relationships with residents, providing real-time customer service and service improvement through immediate feedback.

"We are delighted to be using Twitter alongside our traditional communication channels and it goes without saying that residents are still invited to pop in our reception, phone or e-mail, anytime they wish."

The global Twitter Top 20 includes Barack Obama with 40million followers, Justin Bieber with 46million and the members of UK boy band One Direction with 12million followers each.

Dog owners warned: pick up or pay up

NEW orders requiring the borough's dog owners to clean up after their pets and keep them under control in public came into force on August 1.

The dog control orders will see pet owners face fines of up to £1,000 in a magistrates' court or fixed penalty notices of £80 for anti-social pet behaviour.

Five orders have been approved by the council's community services committee following the ongoing problem of dog poop in public places, particularly on playing fields.

The orders require pet owners to remove dog faeces from public land, including footpaths and fields, keep their dogs on leads when instructed to do so by a dog enforcement officer and prohibit dogs from sports pitches, playing fields and children's playgrounds.

The orders apply to all enclosed children's play areas and the following playing fields: Edisford and Roefield in Clitheroe, Mardale in Longridge, Durham Road in Wilpshire, Waddington and Ribchester.

Dogs must also be kept on a lead in Clitheroe Cemetery, or when directed by a dog enforcement officer, or when specifically signposted, and no more than four

can be walked in public at any one time.

Signs spelling out the new rules have been installed at relevant sites.

Ribble Valley Borough Council's head of environmental health, James Russell, said: "Complaints about dog issues are the second highest received by the council each year and residents are demanding action on the issue.

"Most dog owners are responsible and pick up after their pets, but there is an irresponsible minority who do not and the new orders will give us greater powers to deal with them.

"Ignorance of the law is not an excuse and the message is simple: The days of allowing dogs to foul in public are over, so pick up or pay up."

Ribble Valley Borough Council receives over 200 complaints about dog fouling and spends £30,000 disposing of it each year.

Dog faeces take two months to break down and can give humans a number of infections, including toxocarasis, which can cause breathing difficulties, red and painful eyes, or clouded vision, particularly in young people.

For further information or to report dog fouling, contact Ribble Valley Borough Council on 01200 425111.



●DOG SQUAD: Dog enforcement officer Adele Geraghty with PCSOs Di Bioletti (left) and Rachael Jacques

Benefit claimants set to receive new universal credit

SOME new benefits recipients in Ribble Valley will receive universal credit from November 24.

Universal credit is a single payment for people who are unemployed or on a low income.

It aims to help claimants and their families become more independent and simplify the benefits system by combining a range of benefits into a single payment.

It is replacing job seekers allowance, employment and support allowance, income

support, working tax credit, child tax credit and housing benefit.

Claims should be made online at www.gov.uk/universalcredit from home, libraries, job centres and other community facilities. There is also a public computer at the Ribble Valley Borough Council Offices in Church Walk, Clitheroe, where assistance in completing the form may be available.

Universal credit is only available to single

people and couples without children, the unemployed or those on a low income, those over 18 and at least one year from state pension credit age and housing benefit claimants. Other conditions will also be checked at the time of the claim. Families will join the scheme at a later date.

Help with paying council tax will continue to be administered by Ribble Valley Borough Council.

Further details are available from www.gov.uk/universalcredit.

Clitheroe Market redevelopment moves a step closer

THE selection of a partner for the proposed redevelopment of Clitheroe Market is underway.

Ribble Valley Borough Council entered into preliminary discussions with Barnfield Construction Ltd regarding a proposed redevelopment of the market site last year.

The Nelson-based company was given six months to research the viability of a retail development at the site and its findings were

presented to councillors in June.

Now the process to select a development partner in line with the council's procurement procedures is underway.

Expressions of interest in developing the market site are being invited and a shortlist of potential development partners will soon be drawn up.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "Following an approach to the council, Barnfield Construction was given six

months to establish if there was sufficient interest in developing Clitheroe Market.

"Their research concluded that a redevelopment of the site would be viable and the council is now proceeding with the procurement process to select a partner and take a scheme forward.

Detailed proposals for the site are expected to be in place by next March, with the final plan unveiled next September.

Don't forget the smallest room when recycling

IT might be the smallest room in the house, but it generates the most waste – in more ways than one.

Now Ribble Valley Borough Council is asking residents to recycle waste paper and cardboard from the bathroom.

Recent studies show that of the households routinely recycling waste paper only 20 per cent recycle bathroom products.

Robert Thompson, chairman of Ribble Valley Borough Council's community committee, said: "Households are clearly recycling newspapers and magazines, but how many recycle toiletry packaging and loo roll inners?"

"Bathroom products make up a substantial percentage of household waste, yet studies have revealed that residents who do routinely recycle may be overlooking toiletries.

"So we are calling on Ribble Valley households to help us keep our valley clean by boosting their bathroom recycling."

Bathroom paper products that can be recycled: Toilet roll inners and packaging from soap, toothpaste and over-the-counter medicines.

Other bathroom products that can be recycled: Plastic shampoo, conditioner, bubble bath, shower gel, contact lens fluid, baby powder and mouthwash bottles (please rinse them out first).

Bathroom products that cannot be recycled: Toothbrushes, toothpaste tubes and the tops from pump-action bottles.

White sacks for waste paper recycling are available from Ribble Valley Borough Council on 01200 425111.



● **BAG IT DON'T BIN IT:** Thomas and Harriet Stott, and Harvey Hall (left), of Chipping

Loyalty scheme gets stamp of approval from shoppers

SHOPPING in Longridge has taken a retail leap thanks to a loyalty scheme backed by Ribble Valley Borough Council.

The Longridge Does Shopping scheme rewards customers with a stamp on a loyalty card every time they spend £5 or more.

When the card has 10 stamps, it is entered into a monthly draw to win a £50 shopping vouchers that can be redeemed against a wide range of goods, from hardware to toys, restaurant meals to clothing.

Carole Hart, chairman of the Longridge Business Group, said: "Every local purchasing decision helps businesses thrive, supports jobs and keeps Longridge the vibrant centre we want it to be.

"I am grateful to the town and borough councils for their support and encouragement, and delighted that the town's loyal customers are to be rewarded."

Ribble Valley councillor Rupert Swarbrick added: "The beauty of Longridge Does Shopping is that customers are not restricted to any one business for collecting their stamps or spending the winning vouchers.

"I hope Longridge residents, traders and visitors to the town will get behind the scheme and support local shops."

So far, 32 businesses have joined Longridge Does Shopping and the first prize draw is expected to take place this month.

“ I hope Longridge residents, traders and visitors to the town will get behind the scheme and support local shops. ”



● **STAMP OF APPROVAL:** Rupert Swarbrick with Carole Hart (centre) and the council's regeneration projects officer, Sarah Ravenscroft

Opposition leader's message

Let's learn from the lessons which history taught us

MANY years ago, Ribble Valley Borough Council produced a document that was much reviled by residents.

'The People's Case' was a response to the then Secretary of State Michael Heseltine's decision to reorganise local government.

Heseltine wanted to abolish certain municipal authorities, such as Humberside and Avon, and local government officers spent much time producing this unwanted plan.

'The People's Case' was eventually ignored by Heseltine and there was no change to the way local government was run.

A few years later, John Prescott wanted to

introduce elected mayors to big cities and mooted the idea of root and branch reform of local government.

Again, Ribble Valley residents were horrified at the thought of being subsumed into a Greater Blackburn or Greater Burnley Council.

Much officer time was spent trying to devise a Greater Ribble Valley in response, but nothing came of it and John Prescott got his mayors, and Londoners duly got Ken Livingstone and Boris Johnson.

In both cases, a lot of time and energy was wasted in producing precisely nothing, because although we may disagree with some of the

decisions made by local government the system itself works.

It would appear that some on both the left and right of the political spectrum are starting to look again at a Greater Blackburn, a Greater Burnley or even an East Lancashire Council.

But before they do perhaps they should consider politician Edmund Burke's maxim: "Those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it."

Allan Knox,
Leader of the Opposition,
Ribble Valley Borough Council



LOVE later life! That's the message from Ribble Valley Borough Council to the area's older residents.

Ribble Valley has 11,531 residents aged over 65, which is 20 per cent of the population, compared to a national average of 16 per cent.

Ageing is a natural process that brings with it a host of benefits, such as wisdom and experience, increased leisure time and a relaxed attitude to life.

Furthermore, the skills and achievements of older people are increasingly being valued and recognised in society.

Ribble Valley Borough Council values the borough's older residents and aims to be a champion for those who have reached later life.

As such, the authority has appointed an older people's champion, Councillor Sue Bibby, who said: "People are living longer and 23 per cent of the UK will be aged over 65 by 2035.

"Ribble Valley Borough Council aims to celebrate the achievements and contributions of its older residents, tackle negative attitudes and outdated stereotypes, and work with partners to ensure that the elderly can feel happy and healthy, safe and secure."

From bus buddies to seniors' forums, older people's days to dementia awareness, read on to discover how the council is creating a borough where residents can love later life.

Loving later life!

SENIOR citizens in Ribble Valley are hopping aboard a charabanc of fun thanks to the borough council's new Bus Buddy scheme.

The scheme encourages older people to use buses, shows them how to get the most out of their NOW card, make friends and overcome isolation.

It is being spearheaded by Ribble Valley Seniors' Forum member and self-confessed "bus nut" Brian Holden. Ribble Valley Borough Council partnership officer Dilys Day said: "We have developed the Bus Buddy scheme to help

older residents get out and about and meet new people.

"Brian's enthusiasm for the buses and the wonderful places they can access – all for free – is infectious and we are inviting older residents to join us for a charabanc of fun."

Brian Holden added: "Getting out and meeting people is good for everyone, including me. Without Bus Buddy, I would be sitting in front of the television doing nothing.

"I really enjoy taking the bus and this scheme is ideal for people who want to get out and about, but are unsure of bus timetables. We are here to help."

The "bus buddies" meet once a month at the Platform Gallery in Station Road, Clitheroe, for a quick briefing session, before setting off on a day trip.

Upon reaching the destination, participants are free to do as they wish, whether shopping, sightseeing, or walking, before meeting for the return journey.

Future trips include Lytham on November 26, a Burnsall to Grassington walk on November 30 and Oswaldtwistle Mills on January 15. Further details are available from Dilys Day on 01200 414549.



● BUS BUDDIES: Brian Holden and Dilys Day



● HOT WATER BOTTLE SAFETY: Eamonn Roberts

Safety alert over hot water bottles

THE days of using hot coals to heat beds might be long gone, but hot water bottles can be just as dangerous.

Ribble Valley Borough Council is warning elderly residents who use hot water bottles to make sure they are fit for purpose.

Eamonn Roberts, the council's senior environmental health officer, said: "Rising numbers of elderly people are suffering burns from cheap hot water bottles bought over the internet. The burns can be so serious that skin grafts are needed.

"We are asking residents to make sure their hot water bottle is manufactured to the correct standard and not fill it with boiling hot water straight from the kettle, which can weaken the rubber sealing.

"They are also advised to replace hot water bottles regularly and look for signs of damage to the bottle or the stopper, such as splits or holes, before use.

"Using a bottle cover will also protect against burns by preventing direct contact with the skin."

Bed warmers have been common since the 16th Century, the earliest containing hot coals. Rubber hot water bottles were invented in 1903 and have been popular ever since.

When buying hot water bottles, make sure they have a BS (British Standard) number, commonly called a Kitemark.



● Picture courtesy of the Clitheroe Advertiser and Times

Dove tree to mark start of Great War

A DOVE tree was planted in the grounds of Clitheroe Castle marking 100 years since the outbreak of the First World War.

The tree was surrounded by a garden of light comprising hundreds of tea-lights in memory of the local young men who lost their lives during the war.

Ribble Valley Mayor Michael Ranson planted the tree at a site near the castle gates, before lighting a tea-light in memory of his great-uncle, James Ranson, who died aged 22 at Ypres on October 6, 1915.

The tea-lights were allowed to burn out, before Clitheroe Castle was plunged into darkness as part of the national LIGHTS OUT campaign.

At 11pm on August 4, 1914, Britain declared war on Germany, ushering in one of the darkest periods in history. As the moment approached, the British Foreign

Secretary Sir Edward Grey made the famous remark: "The lamps are going out all over Europe. We shall not see them lit again in our lifetime."

The First World War was a turning point in world history, claiming the lives of 16million people across the world and having a huge impact on those who experienced it. Millions of men fought on land, at sea and in the air, with modern weapons causing mass casualties.

As Ribble Valley did not exist until 1974, precise records of the number of fallen in the borough do not exist, but it is believed to be around 1,000.

The Clitheroe Castle event, attended by over 200 residents, marked the start of a commemorative campaign that will see oak trees bearing plaques in memory of Ribble Valley's fallen planted in the borough's 35 parishes by the end of the year.

Oak tree planted at site of former military hospital

AN oak tree has also been planted at the site of a former military hospital in Whalley.

The tree was planted at Calderstones Park, a modern housing development forming part of the site of the former St Mary's Military Hospital, now the Calderstones Partnership NHS Trust, a specialist unit for people with learning disabilities.

Ribble Valley Mayor Michael Ranson was joined by dignitaries and residents for the planting.

Calderstones Trust is marking the WWI commemoration with a display of images of the site during its time as a military hospital.

The exhibition features photographs and newspaper extracts provided by Whalley resident George Hardman.

Forum ensures voices of elderly are not ignored

OLDER people in Ribble Valley are putting their heads together on important issues at a dedicated forum.

The Ribble Valley Seniors' Forum was established in 2008 to tackle problems affecting the borough's older residents

The forum believes personal experience is vital in understanding the difficulties faced by senior citizens.

Over the years the forum has campaigned successfully on several local issues, including residential care facilities in Langho, Clitheroe Community Hospital, protected bus shelters, a parking facility for the post office van in Whalley and the pedestrian crossing in Gisburn.

It is currently campaigning for improved public transport and public toilets in Longridge.

Ribble Valley Borough Council's partnership officer, Dilys Day, said: "As the borough has an ageing population, the voice and opinions of older people are vital in ensuring their views and concerns are heard and addressed.

"The forum is currently considering ways of making the most of public transport and establishing a dedicated web site, with useful information and resources."

The forum meets eight times a year at different locations in Ribble Valley and meetings often include speakers on relevant issues. It also hosts summer and Christmas get-togethers, and attends the annual Pensioners' Parliament in Blackpool.

Membership of the forum is free and open to Ribble Valley residents aged over 50, or with a specific interest in older people's issues.



● SILVER SAVVY: Seniors' Forum members Mary Wilson-White, Patrick White, Dilys Day, Brian Holden, Sue Bibby and David White

The next meetings are on November 6 at Hanson Cement, Clitheroe, and December 11 at the Mytton Fold Hotel, Langho.

Further details are available from ribblevalleyseniors.org or Dilys Day on 01200 414549.

'Centre of excellence' for dementia

RIBBLE Valley Borough Council has joined forces with the Alzheimer's Society and several local businesses, community groups and public and private sector organisations to establish the borough as a centre of excellence in dementia awareness.

A network of 'dementia friends' has been established in the borough and key council staff have received training in dementia awareness.

The council has also joined forces with Clitheroe solicitors Chenery Maher to launch an identity capsule scheme for people with dementia and Alzheimer's Disease.

The capsules, which contain crucial information on the bearer, including the contact details of carers or next of kin, are available free-of-charge to people with dementia and their families.

Ribble Valley Borough Council's older people's champion, Sue Bibby, said: "People with dementia face barriers when trying to continue with ordinary life, such as shopping, using public transport and engaging in social activities, and it is likely that many do not even go out for fear of not being able to cope.

"We have been gathering evidence from people with dementia and their carers about what might help them enjoy a better quality of life, with a view to creating a network of places and organisations that are dementia friendly and educating the public to understand and deal with dementia more effectively.

"There is clearly a considerable local



● DEMENTIA AWARENESS: Sue Bibby with (left) Carol Maher and Irene Chenery of Chenery Maher (picture courtesy of the Clitheroe Advertiser and Times)

appetite for making life easier for people with dementia and we are delighted to be working with our partners to create one of the country's first dementia friendly boroughs."

Dementia describes different

disorders that trigger a loss of brain function, the most common being Alzheimer's Disease, which affects 62 per cent of sufferers. Symptoms of dementia include memory loss, confusion and problems with speech

and understanding. Dementia can occur at any age, but the elderly are particularly susceptible. The capsules are available from David Ingham, Ribble Valley Borough Council's partnership officer, on 01200 414549.

A NEW three-bedroom home in picturesque Ribble Valley for less than £70,000 might sound far-fetched, but exactly that is up for grabs thanks to the borough council.

The council has joined forces with developers and housing associations to tackle the borough's shortage of affordable homes.

House prices in Ribble Valley are way above the national average – a modest family home now costs around 10 times the average salary – and first-time buyers are being forced out of the communities their families have lived in for generations. There is also a chronic shortage of accommodation for young single people and the elderly.

Shared ownership houses currently start from as little as £68,000 for a 40 per cent share, with £233 rent on the remainder, and rented properties from as little as £340 a month are also up for grabs.

If you are a working Ribble Valley family, read on to find out how a new home might not be as far-fetched as you think.



● **SNUG AS A BUG:** Kirklands resident Sally Smith and (below) her delighted neighbours

Why shared ownership is key to a brand new home

SHARED ownership could be the key to a brand new home for Ribble Valley house-hunters with a large deposit and low income, or higher income and no deposit.

The scheme allows payments to be split between mortgage and rent, with ownership starting from a 30 per cent share and rising incrementally to 100 per cent.

Shared ownership is an ideal way to get a foot on the housing ladder and over 60 properties are waiting to be snapped up in Ribble Valley.

Properties ranging from one-bedroom apartments to four-bedroom family homes, as well as two-bedroom bungalows, are currently available at Lune Road and Low Moor Gardens in Clitheroe; Petre Wood, Langho; Brown Leaves Grove, Copster Green; Water Meadows,

Challenges

Longridge; Whalley Road, Billington, and Barrow Brook Grange, Barrow.

Rachael Stott, Ribble Valley Borough Council's housing strategy manager, said: "The provision of affordable housing is one of the biggest challenges facing the council and we are working closely with housing associations to address this problem."

"Shared ownership is an ideal way for some residents to access the housing market and the standard of the properties is usually very high."

Working mum-of-two Joanne Simkin purchased a 55 per cent share of a new three-bedroom house at Low Moor Gardens, Clitheroe, and pays just £175 per month rent on the remainder.

She added: "Shared ownership allowed me to purchase a three-bedroom house, which I could not have done on the open market. We love our new home, which is on a nice development and perfect for my children."

Anyone interested in a shared ownership home should contact Ribble Valley Borough Council's housing team on 01200 414567.

Home sweet home!



HOUSEHOLDERS in a hard-to-heat cul-de-sac are happy as toast thanks to a £500,000 home insulation scheme backed by Ribble Valley Borough Council.

Cutting-edge external wall insulation has been fitted to 30 properties at Kirklands, Chipping, as part of the Green Deal.

The three-month project was brokered by Ribble Valley Borough Council and managed by energy efficiency company Firefly.

Ribble Valley Borough Council housing officer John Barber said: "The properties at Kirklands are off-grid and hard-to-heat, but as well as looking fantastic they are now extremely energy efficient resulting in significantly lower fuel bills for the householders."

"Even though the funding

situation is constantly changing, we are hopefully of brokering similar schemes in the future for the borough's hard-to-heat and isolated homes."

Kirklands resident Nicole Cook, who championed the project, said: "We are all delighted with the scheme. Our homes are much warmer, quieter and cheaper to heat."

"The external finish is to a very high standard and the properties look fantastic. I would highly recommend this scheme to anyone considering external wall insulation."

Further information about energy efficiency and funding for hard-to-heat homes is available from Ribble Valley Borough Council on 01200 425111.

Why not attend housing forum?

THE next Ribble Valley Housing Forum will take place on Wednesday, November 12, at 10am.

The event, in the Ribble Valley Council Chamber in Church Street, Clitheroe, will include talks and presentations on the Core Strategy, universal credit and the National Landlords' Association.

The forum starts at 10am and finishes at noon, after which lunch will be provided.

Everyone is welcome and further details are available from the council's housing strategy officer Rachael Stott on 01200 414567.

Low cost rented homes now available

NEW homes are available for rent by working families in Ribble Valley at 80 per cent of the market value.

At least 30 per cent of each new development in the borough is set aside for affordable housing comprising a mix of shared ownership and rented properties. And at least 50 per cent of the rented properties are now earmarked for working families.

Rent can be as low as £340 a month for a one-bedroom house and from £550 a month for a four-bedroom house.

Rachael Stott, Ribble Valley Borough Council's housing strategy manager, said: "There is a common misconception that affordable rented properties are only for out-of-work



● **KEY TO THE DOOR:** Gemma Woodward with Ribble Valley Mayor and Mayoress Michael and Janette Ranson, and Richard Houghton, director of operations at registered housing provider Adactus families, but nothing could be further from the truth.

"They are fast becoming the ideal option for working families looking

for a brand new home, but without the resources to buy one.

"As well as discounted rent, affordable rented homes offer long-term security and fast repair response rates."

Mum-of-five Gemma Woodward, whose partner Chris works in a warehouse, added: "We pay £130 a week rent on our new four-bedroom home in a lovely development in Clitheroe. A property like this would have been beyond our reach on the open market."

Further information about affordable rented properties is available from Ribble Valley Borough Council's housing team on 01200 414567.



● **ON A ROLL:** Ribble Valley Mayor Michael Ranson at the Clitheroe Castle Field toilets (above) with (from the left) works foreman Craig Rowlinson, mayoress Janette Ranson, surveying assistant Alan Coar and principal surveyor Tim Lynas, and (right) at the Chipping toilets with Chipping Parish Council chairman David Slater and council cleaner Patrick Johnson

It's six of the best for county's poshest loo

RIBBLE Valley Borough Council is on a roll after one of its public loos was named the poshest in Lancashire for the sixth year running.

Chipping's environmentally friendly loos were opened in 2009 following a £76,000 council revamp and have been named the best toilets in Lancashire in the prestigious Lancashire Best Kept Village competition ever since.

The toilet block was constructed from reclaimed local stone and features state-of-the-art water and energy-saving technology.

The toilets are kept spick and span by council cleaning operative

Patrick Johnson and opened and closed each day by sprightly 92-year-old villager Bob Parker. Flower displays and hanging baskets are provided by Chipping in Bloom.

Chipping councillor Simon Hore said: "The loos are a superb facility made possible by the hard work of Patrick, Bob and the Chipping in Bloom team, who are to be congratulated for this outstanding success."

Ribble Valley public loos are no stranger to awards. In 2007, the Slaidburn toilets received a Green Apple Award from environmentalist David Bellamy.

The toilets, used annually by thousands of fell walkers, cyclists and the Ghurkhas, who train in the area, are also constructed from reclaimed local stone and are energy and water-efficient, with anti-vandal sensory taps and flushes, and energy-saving light bulbs.

The popular Clitheroe Castle Field toilets also recently underwent a £30,000 overhaul.

They have received new baby changing facilities in the gents and ladies, recycled light fittings, water-efficient and motion-controlled flushing mechanisms, energy-efficient hand-dryers and new



tiling, ceilings and internal and external doors.

And the large clock on the front of the toilet block, much-loved by residents and visitors, has had a spruce up, too.

Robert Thompson, chairman of Ribble Valley Borough Council's community services committee, said: "The Clitheroe Castle Field toilets are one of our most popular

public conveniences used by thousands of residents and visitors each year.

"The refurbishment is part of our continued investment in public facilities and was undertaken in-house, to budget and on time. "We are delighted with the outcome and feedback from users has been very positive."

£5,000 boost for community safety campaign

COMMUNITY safety in Ribble Valley has received a £5,000 cash boost from Clitheroe businessman and borough councillor Kevin Horkin.

The Ribble Valley Community Safety Partnership has received the cash from the former Clitheroe mayor's charity fund.

The cash has been earmarked for Clitheroe's successful "safe glasses" scheme that saw 3,000 indestructible polycarbonate glasses featuring the message 'Drink sensibly and enjoy your night' handed out to hostellers across the borough.

Funds will also be given to the Clitheroe Youth Zone, which provides activities for youngsters on Friday nights, for extra police and Trading Standards patrols at underage-drinking hotspots and for the provision of drugs wipes for use



● **COMMUNITY SAFETY:** Kevin Horkin (left) with Clitheroe licensee Peter Ellis, community beat manager Kath Towler and PubWatch chairman Tony Brocklehurst

in town centre pubs.

Kevin Horkin, who is chairman of the Ribble Valley Community Safety Partnership, said: "Ribble Valley is the safest place in Lancashire and one of the safest in

the UK, and a great deal of hard work is going on behind the scenes to ensure this remains the case.

"Thanks to some innovative work on a shoestring budget, the partnership and its members have

contributed significantly to a reduction in crime in the borough in recent years.

"These are fantastic projects and I am delighted to be supporting them from my mayor's fund."

The Ribble Valley Crime and Disorder Partnership, comprising Ribble Valley Borough Council, the Lancashire Youth and Community Service, Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Police and Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, is responsible for developing a crime and disorder reduction strategy for the borough every three years outlining key priorities and a detailed plan of action.

Lock it or lose it! Ribble Valley motorists are reminded that theft from vehicles is one of the most common crimes in the borough.

They are urged to lock their cars and not leave items such as mobile phones, satnavs, tablet devices or laptops on view.

Free childcare offer for parents

PARENTS of two-year-olds in Ribble Valley may be entitled to 15 hours of free childcare each week.

The childcare is available to families receiving working tax credit and earning up to £16,190 a year.

Parents just need to take their working tax credit award letter to their preferred childcare provider to check availability.

Funding is also available for children with additional needs and those who have previously been cared for by a local authority.

Further information is available from the Family Information Service on 0800 195 0137.

Information points set to draw in the tourists

A HOST of top VIPs are coming to Ribble Valley thanks to the borough's latest tourism initiative.

A network of visitor information points or VIPs is currently being established across the borough.

Ribble Valley Borough Council and the Ribble Valley Tourism Association are establishing 20 VIPs at key locations in the area.

The VIPs will contain a raft of

useful information and be situated at busy public locations close to popular visitor routes that are accessible and open as often as possible.

The first VIP has just been opened at St John's Church, Hurst Green, where in addition to obtaining information visitors can use the new eco-loo and even make themselves a drink.

Robert Thompson (pictured),

chairman of the council's community committee, said: "The idea behind VIPs is to give visitors to Ribble Valley a friendly and informative welcome, as well as boost footfall to facilities such as shops, pubs and churches.

"The feedback from St John's Church has been excellent and we are keen to see a vibrant network of VIPs across the borough."

The VIPs will be sited at locations

accessible to passing traffic, fully accessible and open seven days a week.

VIP hosts receive a branded brochure rack for up to 10 publications, display sign and map, regular stock of brochures, external signage and promotion on the Visit Ribble Valley web site.

If you would like to host a VIP, contact Tom Pridmore on 01200 414496.



Artworks to celebrate beautiful Bowland

THE trunk of a 150-year-old oak tree has been used to make one of four spectacular public artworks celebrating 50 years of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Light Catcher by Blackburn-based international sculptor Halima Cassell (pictured) has been installed at Jeffrey Hill as part of the Bowland Revealed project, along with works by Salina Somalya at Gisburn Forest, Philippe Handford at Langden Intake and Geraldine Pilgrim at Beacon Fell Country Park.

Bowland Revealed is a £62,000 project funded and supported by Ribble Valley Borough Council, Lancashire County Council, the Forest of Bowland AONB and Arts Council England.

It will run until the end of 2015 and involves three strands: 50 Years in the Making, a series of workshops involving local residents, visitors, schools and artists; Landmarks, a series of outdoor

visual arts commissions inspired by the landscape of the Forest of Bowland; Explore and Engage, a programme of creative participation events targeted at communities living in the Forest of Bowland.

Katherine Rodgers, Ribble Valley Borough Council's arts development officer, said: "Landmarks has seen ambitious new artworks commissioned from four outstanding artists, each using their own distinctive approach to create a landmark in a spectacular location.

"Halima has used the trunk of a 150-year-old local oak tree to carve a strong geometric design carved into the heart of the wood creating a compelling and thought-provoking work, where ever-changing light interacts with faceted surfaces to create its own unique drama.

"Bowland Revealed is a great opportunity to experience contemporary art in some beautiful locations, while encouraging people discover their own artistry."



Platform Gallery WHAT'S ON

THIS year's festive exhibition at the Platform Gallery is Treat and be Treated, which runs from October 18 to January 10.

The exhibition will feature unique work from over 100 artists and makers from across the UK, including jewellery, ceramics, textiles and many items for children.

On weekends in December, members of the public can buy direct from the craftmakers, who will be in residence.

The new-look Platform Gallery and Clitheroe Visitor Information Centre is a one-stop shop for visitors and art and craft enthusiasts, with the latest information on events and accommodation, a shop selling maps, souvenirs and craftwork by local and national artists, and a gallery exhibiting the best contemporary art, and hosting workshops throughout the year.

All purchases between £100 and £2,000 can be purchased through Own Art, an interest-free purchasing scheme.

The gallery is open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm and on Saturdays 10am to 4.30pm.

Forthcoming events

October 18 to January 10
Treat and be Treated

Unique handmade gifts and items from over 100 of the UK's best craftmakers.

January 24 to April 11
Bowland Revealed - Creativity within the Beauty

Arts and crafts inspired by the Forest of Bowland by professional artists living within the AONB area.

April 25 to July 4
Craft Open

The gallery's annual open exhibition featuring craftmakers from across the North of England and a wide range of vibrant and eclectic exhibits, including furniture, textiles, jewellery, ceramics, glass and mixed media. Vote for your favourite piece in the People's Choice Award.

First step for orienteering at Clitheroe Castle



AN orienteering course looks set to be up and running at Clitheroe Castle in the New Year.

Orienteering, the outdoor adventure sport that exercises the mind and body, is gaining popularity across the UK.

The aim is to navigate in sequence between points marked on a map. It does not matter how young, old or fit you are, as you can run, walk or jog the course at your own pace.

The Clitheroe Castle course will have several routes ranging from easy with seven points to difficult with 16 points, including a route that is fully accessible with eight points.

The course covers the whole of the castle grounds and takes in many well-known features and some that are not so well known.

Ribble Valley Borough Council's sports

development officer, Peter Fletcher, said: "Orienteering is a great sport for runners, joggers and walkers, and anyone who loves the outdoors.

"It is suitable for all ages and fitness levels, families, the elderly, those with restricted mobility and anyone who wants to get more active, as well as groups and team-building.

"The castle grounds and parkland are rich and varied, and a fantastic venue for orienteering."

Work is underway to install the control points and the course is on track to be up and running by the New Year.

Maps costing £2 will be available from the Ribble Valley Borough Council Offices, Visitor Information Centre and Ribblesdale Pool, Clitheroe, over the coming months and further details are available from Peter Fletcher on 01200 414435.