

RIBBLE VALLEY News



The newspaper of Ribble Valley Borough Council

FLOOD RECOVERY SPECIAL Spring 2016



FACING THE FUTURE:
Four-page special on flood recovery and resilience, and funds to help you flood-proof your property

#openforbusiness

THE national spotlight fell on Ribble Valley on Boxing Day, when it suffered the worst floods in 50 years.

Ribble Valley Borough Council led the relief effort and has thrown its weight behind the Government's

#openforbusiness campaign that is encouraging day-trippers from across the UK to visit flood-hit communities.

Turn inside for further information about this tourism initiative and, if your property is at risk of flooding, help and advice on safety, recovery and resilience.

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

- Campaign will help put businesses back on the map
- Council tax break for affected homes and businesses

- Professional advice for historic building owners
- Farmers have until April 1 to claim up to £20,000

£1m boost for flood-hit businesses



SHOPS and businesses in Ribble Valley affected by the Boxing Day floods are to benefit from a £1million marketing boost.

A national social media campaign, #openforbusiness, will be launched over the coming weeks.

The campaign will feature a digital map showcasing shops and businesses that are open for business with a view to attracting visitors from across the UK to flood-affected areas.

Ribble Valley businesses affected by the floods can add themselves to the map, which will be promoted in a national advertising campaign from Easter.

A promotional push abroad to reassure overseas tourists that Britain is 'open for business' will also be launched by VisitBritain at the end of March.

Culture Secretary John Whittingdale said: "We are ensuring that our tourism businesses are given as much support as possible as they recover from the floods."

"The message is clear – the North is full of world-class attractions that are very much open for business and this campaign will showcase the many fantastic places that are ready to welcome visitors in the coming weeks and months."

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "The visitor economy is crucial to Ribble Valley and we welcome this Government campaign."

"Our message to visitors is this: It is 'business as usual' in Ribble Valley, particularly in Whalley, Billington and Ribchester, so come along and see what our delightful villages have to offer."

According to official figures, Ribble Valley attracted 3.7million visitors in 2014, who spent £187million and supported 2,754 full-time equivalent jobs.

Whalley is famous for its 13th Century Cistercian abbey, 49-arch viaduct, which is considered a triumph of Victorian engineering, and exclusive shopping, while the ancient riverside village of Ribchester is built on the site of a former Roman fort and its award-winning museum features a Roman helmet discovered in 1797.

Further information about days out in Ribble Valley are available from the Clitheroe Visitor Information Centre on 01200 425566 or visitribblevalley.co.uk.

EMERGENCY LEAFLET

FIRE safety in flooded properties is the subject of a leaflet produced by the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.

The leaflet contains information on electrical safety, the use of heaters and dehumidifiers, safe cooking in rooms other than kitchens and the cleaning and testing of smoke alarms. It also advises residents in flood-risk properties to have an escape plan and keep keys and torches in a safe place.

The leaflet is available from lancsfireandrescue.org.uk.



Specialist advice to help protect historic buildings

THE owners and managers of historic buildings at risk of flooding are being offered specialist advice.

Historic England has published a free 42-page booklet, *Flooding and Historic Buildings*, providing guidance on flood prevention and how to inspect, conserve and repair historic buildings after flooding.

"Although most historic buildings are durable and resistant to flooding compared with modern construction, they can still suffer substantial damage. They are often built with permeable materials like timber, lime mortars and plasters and soft bricks which will absorb water but need to dry slowly.

"Repair works need to be considered in relation to how the building is constructed and the materials used, as one solution does not fit all."

The booklet, which features advice on types of flooding, establishing flood risk, preparing for a flood, dealing with a flood, minimising flood damage and where to get further advice, is available from historicengland.org.uk.

● Owners of historic buildings are reminded that listed building consent may also be required for flood repairs. Free preliminary advice on the care, repair and renovation of listed buildings is available from Ribble Valley Borough Council on 01200 425111.

£5,000 flood grants scheme

RIBBLE Valley households affected by the floods can receive up to £5,000 to protect their properties from future flooding.

Under the Household Flood Resilience Grant Scheme, households affected by Storms Desmond and Eva can apply for the funds to help make their properties more resistant and resilient to flooding.

The grants are intended to help homeowners put measures in place to improve their property's resistance and resilience to flooding over and above repairs that would normally be covered by insurance.

The scheme will fund resistance measures designed to help keep water out and resilience measures, which are internal modifications intended to reduce the damage caused by flood water.

Measures could include the installation of airbrick covers, sewerage bungs, toilet pan seals, non-return valves, water-resistant mortar, door guards, flood doors, raised ovens, waist-height power sockets and wall-mounted boilers, as well as the waterproofing of external walls.

Further details and an application form are available from Ribble Valley Borough Council on 01200 425111 or ribblevalley.gov.uk and householders are advised to make their application as soon as possible.

April deadline for farmers

FARMERS affected by flooding have until April 1 to claim up to £20,000 from the Farming Recovery Fund.

The cash is available for restoring productive land and farm vehicle access, repairing boundaries and field drainage.

Applications can be made online or in print and must include evidence, such as photos, maps and insurance details.

As well as the loss of livestock, flood damage on farms can include collapsed bridges, fences and dry stone walls; eroded fields, submerged lowlands and gravel and silt washed onto farmland.

Further details are available from the Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301.

Assistance in completing the application form is available from the NFU, which is also surveying the farming community about the impact of Storms Desmond and Eva.

The NFU has been contacting farm businesses to complete the survey by phone, but if you have not received a call and want to take part contact the NFU North West Office on 01695 554900 or nfuonline.com.

Council tax break for homes

HOUSEHOLDS and businesses affected by flooding will receive 100 per cent relief from council tax or business rates for a minimum of three months.

And anyone living in temporary accommodation as a result of their main property being flooded may also be entitled to council tax relief in the temporary accommodation.

The council tax relief has been automatically applied to properties that were flooded or unliveable due to the flooding, but it may be available for up to 12 months on properties other than second homes that remain unoccupied due to flood damage.

Business rates relief is also available for businesses affected by flooding as a result of Storms Desmond or Eva.

Businesses that were flooded will receive 100 per cent business rates relief for a minimum of three months, or until the business re-starts trading up to a maximum of 12 months. The relief is not automatic and must be applied for.

Further details and application forms, and information about other financial assistance for properties and businesses affected by flooding, are available from Ribble Valley Borough Council on 01200 425111 or at ribblevalley.gov.uk.

Setting out the flood claim process

WHAT to expect from insurers in the event of a flood is set out in an 18-page booklet published by the British Association of Insurers.

The booklet, called *Responding to Major Floods*, spells out the difference between loss adjusters, who are appointed by insurance companies, and loss assessors – self-appointed claims managers, who charge for their services.

It sets out the flood claims process and the six key stages to getting flood-affected properties repaired.

It also advises flood-affected households to avoid tradespeople who may not work to a decent standard and/or overcharge for their services.

If your home is badly damaged by flooding, it may take up to a year for it to be restored and become habitable again, during which your insurer or their appointed loss adjuster should maintain contact with you throughout the process.

Aidan Kerr, head of property at the Association of British Insurers, said: "When the UK experiences heavy rainfall, insurers are geared up to help customers affected by flooding as quickly as possible.

"Flooding can be traumatic and disruptive, but unexpected events like this are exactly what insurance is for. Flooding is covered as standard in home insurance policies and people affected should contact their insurer to get their claim moving."

Copies of the booklet are available from the Ribble Valley Borough council Offices in Church Walk, Clitheroe, or abi.org.uk.

● If you are a flood-affected householder unhappy with how your insurance claim has been handled, ask your insurer how to make a formal complaint.

If you are still unhappy at the end of your insurer's complaints procedure, contact the Independent Financial Ombudsman on 0800 023 4567.

Building a future as flood victims get belated presents



●LEGO LEGACY: Ribble Valley Borough Council Mayor Bridget Hilton with Whalley youngsters Kyle and Sia Gormley

TOY giant LEGO has given a belated Christmas present to children in flood-hit Ribble Valley.

Youngsters from around 25 households evacuated in the early hours of Boxing Day are to receive boxes of LEGO or Duplo.

The free toys are being delivered to children whose Christmas presents were damaged or perished during the festive floods.

Ribble Valley Borough Council chief executive Marshal Scott said: "The impact of the Boxing Day floods was devastating, with many residents forced to abandon their belongings and flee from their homes overnight.

"Emergencies can have a significant impact on children and this kind gift from LEGO will help youngsters in flood-affected households return to a normal routine by boosting their sense of play."

It is estimated that £1 million of aid passed

through the doors of the Whalley Flood Relief Centre, including £500 of bleach and cleaning products from supermarket Aldi, 250 fleece blankets from Blackburn's Tauheedul Mosque, furniture, white goods, cleaning equipment, clothing, toiletries and food.

Gillian Darbyshire, president of Whalley Lions, which coordinated the relief, added: "I am really proud of our community, who came together to care for each other in our time of need.

"So many people made a huge difference by volunteering their services and donating goods, which helped make this traumatic event more bearable for our residents."

●Children's charity Save the Children has produced a guide on helping children cope with emergencies. The guide outlines 10 tips, from limiting access to distressing images to understanding children's unique needs, and is available from savethechildren.org.uk.

Sterling effort by community

THERE was widespread concern for Ribble Valley residents and businesses as Storms Desmond and Eva coursed through the borough leaving a trail of floods behind them.



For those on hand at the scene, the trauma and distress of flooded-affected residents was acutely evident and has remained so as the long clean-up continues.

Amid the difficulties, my lasting memory will be of the incredible way in which the community turned out to help, with individuals and charitable groups offering shelter, food, advice, comfort and 'hands on' help for flood victims and their families.

I was also immensely impressed and proud of the way in which Ribble Valley Borough Council officers, led from the front by chief executive Marshal Scott, were on the scene from the outset and remained there throughout the festive period to coordinate support and help, often going well beyond their statutory duties to assist where needed.

I would like to congratulate and thank all the individuals and organisations, whose commitment and effort during this difficult period proved so crucial and effective, and demonstrated once again the incredible level of civic commitment that so characterises the people of the Ribble Valley.

Stuart Hirst, Leader Ribble Valley Borough Council

Pulling together in the true spirit of Christmas

AN army of council staff and community volunteers turned out over Christmas to help residents affected by the Boxing Day floods.

Whalley, Billington and Ribchester suffered severe flooding after the borough took a battering from Storms Desmond and Eva.

Over 40 council staff and hundreds of community volunteers coordinated by the Whalley Lions delivered skips, helped to clear houses, distributed aid, manned phones and generally assisted distressed residents.

Volunteers came from far and wide, including flood relief coordinators from Cumbria, off-duty firefighters from Merseyside and Milton Keynes, members of local churches and the Tauheedul Mosque in Blackburn, as well as hundreds of local residents

The council's chief executive, Marshal Scott, said: "The impact of the Boxing Day floods was devastating, with many residents forced from their homes and in a desperate position.

"The response of council staff and the community demonstrated a huge level of commitment and co-operation and I would like to thank everyone who gave their time so generously over the holiday period."

Ribble Valley MP Nigel Evans added: "Thanks to the tireless efforts of countless numbers of people who helped out after the floods, Whalley, Billington and



Ribchester are now back on their feet.

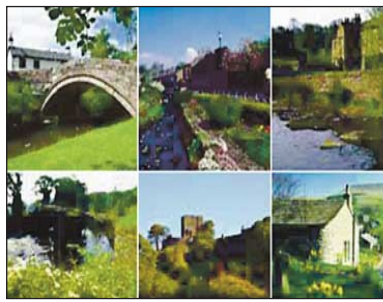
"During the time I spent in the flood-hit villages over the festive period, I witnessed the community pull together and would like to pay tribute to council staff and community groups such as Whalley Lions who were instrumental in the recovery operation."

Now that the immediate recovery work is over, the hard work begins in ensuring the borough is as safe as possible from future flooding.

Turn to our centrespread for information on flood recovery and resilience, as well as funds to help residents and businesses flood-proof their properties.



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



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Devastating impact of the Boxing Day floods

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Ribble Valley Borough Council took the lead in the flood recovery and distributed

£500,000 in flood recovery grants to over 200 households, provided 120 skips for the removal of flood-damaged property and helped many families evacuated from their homes find emergency accommodation.

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their time so generously over the holiday period."

Now that the immediate recovery work is over, the hard work begins in ensuring the borough is as safe as possible from future flooding.

Turn to our four-page supplement for information on flood recovery and resilience, as well as funds to help residents and businesses flood-proof their properties.

● In the event of further spells of unsettled weather, residents are advised to keep abreast of flood warnings from Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

£8m revamp unveiled for Clitheroe Market

AN £8million redevelopment scheme for Clitheroe Market has been officially launched.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst and Barnfield Construction chief executive Tim Webber MBE have shaken hands on the scheme, which will breathe new life into the 1.4-acre site.

The ambitious two-year scheme, which is currently being finalised, could include a 60-room hotel, restaurant, café, seven shops, 67-space car park and revamped market with a hall, 50 units, 28 cabins and 22 stalls.

Ribble Valley Borough Council's policy and finance committee agreed its intention to award the contract to redevelop the site to Nelson contractor, investor and developer Barnfield Construction in November.

Barnfield Construction, whose extensive portfolio includes The Globe Centre, Accrington; The Ace Centre, Nelson; Boundary Mill, Colne; Stanley House, Mellor, and Blackfriars, Manchester, was chosen from a shortlist of developers following a rigorous selection process.

Stuart Hirst said: "The Clitheroe Market scheme generated strong interest from first-rate developers across the country and we received

some stunning proposals for the site.

"This is a fantastic opportunity to bring modern retail and leisure facilities to Clitheroe town centre and we are delighted to welcome Barnfield Construction, which has a strong track record in schemes of this nature, as our development partner.

"This project constitutes a significant investment in Clitheroe town centre and we fully expect it to stimulate further investment and growth over the coming years."

Dan Symonds, Barnfield Construction's head of development and acquisitions, said: "The proposed scheme promises to provide a new retail and leisure experience for Clitheroe, not only with the creation of a new market, but we also hope to secure a number of high-quality retail and leisure operators not currently represented in the town."

Subject to planning approval, Phase 1 of the scheme involving the construction of the new market is scheduled to be completed by February 2017, with Phase 2 involving the remainder of the site by April 2018.

The scheme is the subject of a rolling exhibition at the Ribble Valley Borough Council Offices in Church Walk, Clitheroe, until completion.



A right royal celebration for Queen's 90th

RIBBLE Valley residents are invited to celebrate the 90th birthday of Her Majesty the Queen at Clitheroe Castle on Thursday, April 21.

Ribble Valley Mayor Bridget Hilton will light a huge beacon on the castle ramparts as the 65-strong Clitheroe Pop Choir leads a rousing rendition of Happy Birthday.

The commemoration is one of several high-profile events in Ribble Valley over the coming year.

Others include the second Ribble Valley Cycling Festival from June 3 to 12, the Clitheroe Summer Days Festival from July 15 to 17 and the Clitheroe Food Festival on August 13.

● Turn to the centrespread for further information on Ribble Valley's fabulous forthcoming summer of fun.



Register now to have your say in EU referendum

RIBBLE Valley residents who have not registered to vote are advised to do so without delay if they want to have their say in the forthcoming European referendum.

Prime Minister David Cameron has announced that a referendum on whether Britain should remain in the European Union, or EU, will take place on Thursday, June 23.

The referendum is seen as one of the most important in Britain



for many years, but residents who are not registered to vote will not be able to take part.

Elections for a new police and crime commissioner for Lancashire will also take place on Thursday, May 5.

Sweeping changes to the way residents registered to vote were introduced last year. Previously, one person in every household was responsible for registering everyone who lived at their address, but under the new system, called individual electoral registration, or IER, each person is now required to register to vote individually. Residents were automatically transferred from the old to the new register during a transition period that ended in December, since which residents not registered under IER have been removed.

To vote for a new police and crime commissioner, residents must be registered by April 18.

To vote in the EU referendum residents must be registered by June 7.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "Elections are fundamental to our democratic way of life, but if you are not registered you can't vote and if you don't vote you can't have a say in how things are run."

"The forthcoming European referendum is one of the most important in Britain in many years and I am urging residents to register to vote or they will not be able to have their say"

Further details are available from Ribble Valley Borough Council's electoral registration team on 01200 414411, or to register to vote visit gov.uk.

Council Leader's Message

Floods brought us all together

IN stark contrast to the sun and celebration of the successful Tour of Britain last September, the borough was again in the national spotlight over the festive period, when unprecedented rainfall resulted in the Boxing Day floods that affected over 250 properties.

I was overwhelmed to witness the incredible way in which so many individuals and organisations came together to help those badly affected, and was immensely proud of Ribble Valley Borough Council officers and councillors who went way beyond their statutory duties and coordinated the recovery effort.

My genuine thanks go to everyone who worked so hard during this difficult period, which reflected the community spirit and civic pride of Ribble Valley residents.

The end of 2015 also saw Barnfield Construction selected as the council's partner for the redevelopment of Clitheroe Market. This significant £8million scheme will bring to an end decades of false hopes and is an immense vote of confidence in the economic future of Clitheroe and Ribble Valley.

Ribble Valley enjoys an enviable reputation for sound finance, with the lowest council tax by far in Lancashire and one of the lowest in the UK. Satisfaction with our services continues to be high, but looking ahead the challenges of reduced Government funding will increase. The central grant reduction will be steeper than our already pessimistic forecasts and phased out completely by 2020.

As one of the best-performing councils in the country, the Government has given us the go-ahead to increase our Band D council tax by £5 and after a record six-year freeze we have reluctantly decided to do so in order to safeguard our high level of services. Residents can be assured that we will continue to work hard to balance our budgets and remain a 'low tax' authority in belief and practice.

The future possibilities and potential of the proposed Lancashire Combined Authority, which you can read about on this page, also lie ahead.

The proposed authority will be a model of collaborative working with other councils, while guaranteeing our continued independence. It is emphatically not another tier of local government and has much to recommend it. We will be working through the process as the year progresses and, as with other aspects of our future planning, the prosperity and independence of Ribble Valley will be our paramount concern.

**Stuart Hirst, Leader
Ribble Valley Borough Council**



Decision soon on council 'link-up'

RIBBLE Valley Borough Council will decide next month whether to press ahead with plans for a proposed Lancashire Combined Authority.

A public consultation has given the proposed authority the thumbs-up and 14 out of the county's 15 councils will decide in the coming months whether to set up a preliminary shadow combined authority.

Almost 2,000 residents and businesses took part in the consultation, with around 75 per cent saying yes to the plans.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "Residents throughout Lancashire have given their views on the proposed combined authority and the majority of them support the idea.

"The next step is for each council to reconsider the proposal and decide whether they want to be part of a formal bid to the Government for the creation of a combined authority in Lancashire."

Momentum

Councils will consider the issue over the next two months, with Ribble Valley set to discuss it at a full council meeting on Tuesday, April 26.

Stuart Hirst added: "We want to keep up the momentum, but it is important to tread carefully to ensure that any deal is in the best interests of Ribble Valley.

"A full report prepared by the leaders of all Lancashire councils will contain detailed proposals and all councillors will have the opportunity to have their say.

"A combined authority working in the interests of the whole county could result in significant new investment, with the prospect of further devolved powers, giving Lancashire councils an even greater say over the economic future of the county, to come, and I am keen that Ribble Valley plays a leading role this process.

"This could be a once-in-a-generation opportunity for us to show that Lancashire means business and ensure the county is a driving force in the Northern Powerhouse."

Residents urged to act now over threat to buses

RESIDENTS in Ribble Valley have until the end of March to make their views known on proposed County Hall cuts that could see bus services in the borough axed.

Plans by Lancashire County Council to withdraw subsidies for dozens of bus services will leave the elderly, workers and students across the borough without public transport.

Over the next five years County Hall must find savings of £262million and cuts to bus services are among proposals to find the cash.

Residents in Ribble Valley villages affected by the proposed cuts have been out and about campaigning.

In Chipping, a Facebook page has received 10,000 likes from across the UK and Chipping villagers are considering a legal challenge.

Chipping councillor Simon Hore said: "Ribble Valley is one of the largest

geographical boroughs in the country, with the smallest population, and has poor access to services, such as public transport, pubs and shops.

"Many of our residents are entirely reliant on the bus services under threat and these proposed cuts will have a significant and disproportionate impact on the elderly, youngsters going to school and college, and workers.

"I am calling on residents, whether they are affected by the proposed cuts or not, to make their views known."

You can make your views known at lancashire.gov.uk in the tab, Budget proposal consultation.

●STOP PRESS: As Ribble Valley News went to press, it has been announced that some bus services may be saved, but residents are still asked to make their views known on others.



●ON THE BUSES: Simon Hore (front), with members of the Ribble Bus Action Group

Victory for campaigners as Jobcentre Plus is saved

A VITAL public service has been saved following a hard-fought community campaign backed by Ribble Valley Borough Council.

Clitheroe Jobcentre Plus is to relocate to the Ribble Valley Borough Council Offices later this year in a move that will safeguard the employment service and five jobs.

It will mean that the 200 Ribble Valley residents who use Jobcentre Plus in person each week will not have to travel to Blackburn 11 miles and a £6.10 return bus fare away.

Ribble Valley Borough Council chief executive Marshal Scott said: "Locating the centre at the council offices has advantages for both organisations and will be convenient for service users.

"Rural residents sometimes get a raw deal and we have worked hard with the Department for Work and Pensions to make sure the job centre remains in Clitheroe.

"The strength of feeling about this issue has been immense, as has the level of public response, and I would like to thank everyone who took part in the consultation."

DWP customer services operations manager Emma Smith said: "Locating the centre at Ribble Valley Borough Council presents opportunities for closer working, which will improve how we deliver services to the people who need them, while providing the best value for money for taxpayers.

"The accommodation at the council offices is much more suitable than our current building



● **JUST THE JOB:** Marshal Scott and Emma Smith (Photograph courtesy of the Clitheroe Advertiser and Times)

and the fact that it will be a one-stop shop is a real plus."

Jobcentre Plus is a Government employment agency and social

security office run by the Department for Work and Pensions that helps people find employment. Ribble Valley Borough Council

handles housing and council tax benefit claims, as well as housing provision.

Work to change the layout of the

council offices will be undertaken prior to the move, which is expected to take place later this year.

'Happiness' poll shows we have the feelgood factor

A top destination for loving couples

LOVEBIRDS are flocking to Ribble Valley to tie the knot thanks to the council's latest tourism initiative.

Ribble Valley Wedding Heaven is a partnership between the council and 18 venues licensed for marriage ceremonies and civil partnerships that have come together to promote the borough as a premier wedding destination.

Ribble Valley boasts a large number of wedding venues, among them hotels, manor houses, stately homes, historic churches and the iconic Clitheroe Castle. It also offers an abundance of accommodation, as well as artistic and creative wedding suppliers.

Robert Thompson, chairman of council's community services committee, said: "The council recognises the economic importance of wedding tourism, the value of which goes way beyond the income generated by venues and specialist services.

"The impact of wedding guests staying, dining and shopping in the borough is significant and there is evidence that attracting first-time visitors as wedding guests results in repeat visits."

Further details about Ribble Valley Wedding Heaven are available from ribblevalleyweddingheaven.com.

RIBBLE Valley residents are the happiest in the country, according to a top new survey.

And Clitheroe and Longridge have been named in the top 20 places in the UK in which to raise a family.

Furthermore, residents have given Ribble Valley Borough Council the thumbs-up in a recent satisfaction survey.

The 2016 Halifax Rural Quality of Life Survey found that Ribble Valley residents had a 'happiness rating' of 8.2, significantly higher than the UK average of 7.5.

The survey, compiled from a wide range of key indicators, including employment, housing, the environment, education, health and personal wellbeing, also found that Ribble Valley was one of the top 50 rural areas in the UK for quality of life.

Clitheroe and Longridge have also been named as two of the best towns in England and Wales in which to raise a family.

The mutual OneFamily has compiled its top 20 postcodes using 71 sets of data on education, property, safety, childcare, amenities and population.

The survey saw Longridge some sixth and Clitheroe 13th, topping towns in Devon and Oxfordshire.

And in the 2016 Perception Survey 94 per cent of Ribble Valley residents said they were satisfied with life in their local area, one of the highest satisfaction rates in the North West, while 74 per cent of respondents said they were satisfied with the way Ribble Valley Borough Council ran services.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "The council works hard with its partners to keep crime rates low and ensure the borough remains one of the best places in the country in which to live, work and raise a family.

"Although only a small rural authority, the council has an excellent record of success, enjoying a level of customer satisfaction that is the envy of neighbouring authorities, as well as healthy reserves and one of the lowest council tax rates in the country.

"We are delighted with these results that reveal what we have always known, that Ribble Valley is one of the UK's hidden gems."



RIBBLE Valley is riding high after the success of the Tour of Britain, which brought 180,000 spectators and a £1 million boost to the borough.

Now the stage is set for another year of fantastic events that will see pop and soul legends Simply Red perform at Clitheroe Castle and the best food and drink in the county showcased at the sixth Clitheroe Food Festival.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "The Tour of Britain was an ambitious undertaking by the council and residents pulled out the stops to make the event a success.

"The Tour attracted a spectacular number of spectators and showcased the borough to a national and international audience.

"Indications are there have been repeat visits to the borough and visitor enquiries from across the world, and we are looking forward to putting Ribble Valley on the map again with yet another year of fantastic events."

From the Queen's 90th birthday to the best bangers in Lancashire, read on to see why Ribble Valley is the place to be this summer.

This is the place to be!

Memorial vigil will mark centenary of the Somme

PLANS are afoot to host a series of events at Clitheroe Castle marking the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme.

Fought between July 1 and November 13, 1916, the Somme was one of the bloodiest military battles in history. On the first day alone, the British suffered 58,000 casualties and by the end more than 1.5 million men had lost their lives.

A proposed dawn to dusk vigil will take place at the castle's war memorial in memory of the hundreds of Lancashire men who died during the battle.

The vigil is still in the early stages of planning, but it is proposed that participants will pose in the stance of the memorial's Unknown Soldier.

Ribble Valley Mayor Bridget Hilton said: "The Battle of the Somme had a profound impact on Lancashire people and the loss of life was devastating

"For many, the Somme epitomised the horrors of World War One and futility of trench warfare, while for others it symbolised the bravery and sacrifice of our young men and their communities.

"We are looking for residents to register their interest in the proposed vigil, particularly teenagers who share their age with those who were swept up in the First World War in all sorts of ways."

The centenary of the Battle of the Somme will also be marked at the castle with an exhibition called Lost Generation from October 29 to January 29.

Artist Andy Farr will be working with school pupils to help them create artwork, film and writing inspired by the lives and experiences of teenagers during the First World War.

Throughout 2014, Ribble Valley Borough Council planted oak trees at 41 sites in memory of the borough's First World War fallen, with the final tree planted at Clitheroe Castle by His Royal Highness The Duke of Kent. As Ribble Valley came into being in 1974, precise records of the number of fallen in the borough do not exist, but it is believed to be around 1,000.

Further details about Ribble Valley Borough Council's Battle of the Somme centenary commemorations will be available at ribblevalley.gov.uk over the coming months.



RIBBLE Valley received a £1.1m boost from Stage Two of the 2015 Aviva Tour of Britain.

Shops, hotels and travel companies reaped the benefits from the event hosted by Ribble Valley Borough Council and Pendle Council last September according to an independent analysis carried out on behalf of Tour organiser SweetSpot.

An estimated 180,000 spectators attended the event, 25 per cent of them from outside the North West, with 11 per cent staying overnight.

Day visitors spent about £45.66 per group and overnight visitors about £72.24 per group on food and drink, entertainment, local travel and shopping.

Thirty-eight per cent of spectators came with their families and 67 per cent were inspired to cycle more often, while 91 per cent gave the event a rating of 4.5 out of 5.

The race, described by Tour of Britain

We're in a winning cycle following Tour success

organisers as having the most exciting finish of all of the 2015 stages, was broadcast in 129 countries around the world, featured in the local, regional and national media, national cycling magazines and on regional television and radio.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "The Tour of Britain was an ambitious undertaking by Ribble Valley and Pendle Councils, and our respective communities pulled out the stops to make the event a success.

"The event attracted a spectacular number of spectators and showcased the two boroughs to a national and

international audience.

"As these figures show, we are reaping the benefits in terms of a significant economic boost and indications are that there have been repeat visits to our two boroughs from spectators, as well as visitor enquiries from across the world.

"Our thanks go to everyone who helped to make the event such a fantastic success."

Nick Rudge, managing director at Welcome Cottages, headline sponsor of Stage Two, said: "We are already seeing the longer term benefits of welcoming the Tour of Britain to Lancashire, with increased interest in holiday

accommodation in the area. "It was a truly fantastic event and we were extremely proud to join the local community and visitors in cheering on the riders as they passed through our beautiful boroughs."

Stage 2 of the 2015 Aviva Tour of Britain saw the world's top cyclists, including Sir Bradley Wiggins and Mark Cavendish, power through Ribble Valley and Pendle on a tough 162km circular route from Clitheroe to Colne amid glorious sunshine.

The stage was won by Czech national champion Petr Vackoc, after the ride of his life in a thrilling finish in Colne, with Edvald Boasson Hagen of MTN Qhubeka winning the overall Tour of Britain following the final stage in London.

Marketing Lancashire said there was a 153 per cent increase in traffic to the Ribble Valley page on the Visit Lancashire web site during August and September.

...now bike fans saddle up for cycling festival

CYCLING enthusiasts are invited to get on their bikes for the second Ribble Valley Cycling Festival.

The festival, from June 3 to 12, will feature a host of activities, including led cycle rides, a pop-up 'Velodroom' and a Clitheroe town centre bike race.

The Clitheroe Castle bandstand will host a bike-powered concert on the evening of Friday, June 3, while events will take place throughout the week at various locations.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "Ribble Valley is one of the UK's premier visitor destinations, with a national reputation for fine food and drink, outstanding independent shops and stunning countryside.

"Ribble Valley is fast becoming a hotspot for cycling enthusiasts due to its beautiful and varied landscape. "Hosting Stage Two of the 2015 Aviva Tour of Britain brought the borough a tremendous boost and now we are looking forward to another fantastic cycling event."

A brochure detailing the festival's events will be available from the Ribble Valley Borough Council Offices, Clitheroe Visitor Information Centre, Longridge Community Gym or online at www.ribblevalley.gov.uk from April.



● SADDLE UP: Peter Fletcher, with Ribble Valley Cycling Festival organisers



Castle lights up to mark the Queen's 90th birthday

RIBBLE Valley residents are invited to celebrate the 90th birthday of Her Majesty the Queen at Clitheroe Castle on Thursday, April 21.

Ribble Valley Mayor Bridget Hilton will light a huge beacon on the castle ramparts as the 65-strong Clitheroe Pop Choir leads a rousing rendition of Happy Birthday.

The beacon is one of 600 being lit across the country, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man marking the Queen's birthday.

The beacons will be lit in a chain starting in London, with the Clitheroe Castle beacon scheduled to be lit at 7.30pm.

Ribble Valley Mayor Bridget Hilton said: "There is a long and unbroken tradition in our country of celebrating landmark events with the lighting of beacons on top of mountains, hills, churches and castle ramparts.

"The last major beacon lighting marking the Queen's diamond jubilee in 2012 attracted thousands of well-wishers to Clitheroe Castle and we are looking forward to a similar turnout on April 21.

"Her Majesty has strong links with Ribble Valley and I invite residents to join us for what promises to be a rousing celebration."

Further details will be available at ribblevalley.gov.uk over the coming weeks.

● The Clitheroe Pop Choir will also take to the stage at the Ribble Valley Civic Suite on Thursday, March 24, at 7.30pm. The event, in aid of Dementia Care and Macmillan Cancer Support, will also feature Swing Commanders frontman Peter Riley and tickets are available from Olwen Heap on 01200 414408.



Food festival cooks up a treat

OVER 20,000 food enthusiasts and some of the best food producers in the country look set to descend on Ribble Valley in August for the sixth Clitheroe Food Festival.

The free event, supported by Ribble Valley Borough Council, takes place on Saturday, August 13, from 9am to 4.30pm, and will feature some of the country's finest food producers, street food and entertainment, world cuisine, cookery demonstrations and pop-up bars.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "The Clitheroe Food Festival is a free family event that champions the best of Lancashire food and attracts thousands of visitors who enjoy tasting and buying great food. "The council has been at the

forefront of promoting local food over the past several years and is delighted to be a principal partner of this fantastic event, which is considered one of the best food festivals in the country."

Over 120 food producers are expected to take part in the festival and there will be plenty of activities for children, including a cookery workshop by the Royal Academy of Culinary Arts and a funfair in the grounds of Clitheroe Castle.

New for this year will be interactive cookery demonstrations with Pauls Kitchen, Lancashire's only boutique cookery school, where members of the public will be able to make healthy dishes using fresh ingredients.

Further details and information are available from clitheroefoodfestival.com.



Elderly residents now safe and secure thanks to council initiative



● **SAFE AS HOUSES: Dilys Day (right), with Homewise case worker Tracie Hamilton**

ELDERLY residents in Ribble Valley can live more safely in their homes thanks to a new initiative, Homewise Safe and Secure.

The project, backed by Ribble Valley Borough Council and the Ribble Valley Community Safety Partnership, is offering a range of home security measures at a low cost and in some cases free.

Items on offer include door bolts, chains and viewers; mortice, snap and sashlocks; door and window alarms.

Costs start from as little as £3 for a mirror plate or £2 for the over-70s up to £45 for a mortice lock, which includes fitting, or just £20 for the over-70s.

And the service is subsidised or even

free in some wards, including Longridge, Chipping and Ribchester, and those in the north-east of the borough.

Ribble Valley Borough Council's office Dilys Day said: "Ribble Valley has an above average number of elderly residents living in isolated rural areas that are often targeted by travelling criminals and unscrupulous traders.

"This initiative will improve the security of their properties, helping them to live safely and securely in their own homes."

Home improvement charity Homewise offers a host of advice, support and assistance to elderly residents to help them live more safely and comfortably.

It offers a handyman service for a small charge and in some cases free, advice on all aspects of home improvements,

adaptation, repairs and maintenance; a list of trusted tradesmen, assistance with raising funds to pay for work, recycled disability aids and the provision and installation of low-energy lightbulbs for the over-70s.

Homewise staff are trained by Lancashire Police to undertake crime prevention checks and security surveys of homes, as well as install security measures and anti-distraction burglary kits to help elderly householders tackle unscrupulous door-to-door salesmen and rogue tradesmen.

For further information contact Homewise on 01254 232249 or Ribble Valley Borough Council on 01200 425111.

Helping hand to end rural isolation

RIBBLE Valley Borough Council has backed a community campaign to tackle rural isolation.

It has joined forces with the Ribble Valley Village Hall Association to launch the Good Neighbours scheme, which funds activities in village halls and community centres aimed at helping rural residents overcome isolation and loneliness.

Good Neighbours funded a range of activities in 14 villages that attracted over 700 participants in 2015, including local history, IT skills, art, dancing, exercise sessions and drop-ins.

It granted £750 to the Clitheroe Cookery Club, which meets weekly at the Trinity Community Centre, offering courses in food preparation and hygiene. The six-week courses, facilitated by Clitheroe Churches Together, with support from Tesco, are open to all residents and include free childminding.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "We are delighted to support Good Neighbours, which is helping communities start activities for vulnerable and isolated neighbours, allowing them to engage with others

and overcome isolation.

"Village halls are the heart of rural life, binding communities together, sustaining the health and wellbeing of residents and providing services and activities essential for those without access to transport."

Good Neighbours coordinator David Ingham added: "Village halls in Ribble Valley have a rich cultural history. Many were originally memorials to those who gave their lives in the First or Second World Wars, or were converted from former schoolhouses.

"People are living longer and, if they continue to live independently in their own homes, will increasingly need to access services and activities locally.

"Good Neighbours allows us to explore using village and community halls to deliver cost-effective services aimed at maintaining quality of life, particularly for rural dwellers disadvantaged by lack of transport."

Good Neighbours offers grants for hall hire and the cost of a trainer or facilitator for the first 12 weeks of an activity. Further information is available from David Ingham on 07803 930830.



● **GOOD NEIGHBOURS: David Ingham (right), with Anne Huson of the good Neighbours scheme and Hylda Emsden of the Clitheroe Cookery Club**

'Right to rent' law

LANDLORDS in Ribble Valley are reminded that they now have a duty to ensure their tenants have a 'right-to-rent'.

New legislation means landlords can be fined up to £3,000 for renting property to people who do not have permission to be in the UK.

The right-to-rent rules came into force on February 1 and require private landlords to check the immigration status of prospective tenants before contracts are signed.

And it is not just those named on the tenancy agreement that need to be investigated.

Everyone aged 18 and over who will be living in a property must be checked, regardless of nationality, and checks are only valid if carried out within 28 days before the tenancy agreement starts.

Landlords now have to see and make a copy of every tenant's passport or residence permit, with a fine imposed for failure to do so.

Further details are available from gov.uk.

'HAPPI' homes available soon for older residents



● **HOME SWEET HOME: The Elker Meadow scheme is designed specifically for older dwellers**

NINETEEN two-bedroom 'HAPPI' homes are up for grabs by the over-55s on a shared ownership basis at an innovative Billington housing scheme backed by Ribble Valley Borough Council.

HAPPI homes, derived from the Government think-tank, Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation, are designed specifically for older dwellers.

They are spacious and open, highly energy-efficient, secure, adaptable and 'care ready'; have high levels of natural light and green space, and are digitally connected.

Additional features at the Elker Meadow scheme, which is being developed by St Vincent's Housing Association, include easy-access parking and storage facilities, individual balconies and a communal lounge, where residents can meet for social, recreational and

leisure pursuits. There is also a shared garden and allotments, and private courtyards and storage spaces.

Simon Hore, chairman of Ribble Valley Borough Council's health and housing committee, said: "The provision of affordable housing, particularly for younger and older residents, is one of the biggest challenges facing the council.

"We are working closely with housing associations to address this problem and are delighted to have supported this excellent scheme, which will bring much-needed high-quality accommodation for older residents to the borough."

Building work has started on the scheme and the first new homes are due for completion this autumn.

To register your interest, contact Ribble Valley Borough Council's housing team on 01200 414567 or St Vincent's Housing Association on 0161 772 2165.

Residents urged to adopt 'can do' policy on metal recycling

MAKE Metals Matter is the name of a new recycling bid backed by Ribble Valley Borough Council.

Residents are being encouraged to recycle their share of the estimated 30million cans, aerosols and foil trays, and over 3.5million metres of wrapping foil, used in the UK every year.

The council has leafleted the borough's 25,529 homes and put signs on the side of its refuse collection vehicles.

Metal packaging can be recycled numerous times, saving money and the environment, but research has shown that many consumers are not aware of it.

Now Ribble Valley Borough Council has joined forces with Lancashire County Council and the metal packaging manufacturing industry to raise awareness of metal recycling and increase the amount collected from households.

Robert Thompson, chairman of the council's community services committee, said: "If all the metal packaging used in Ribble Valley each year was recycled, it would save around 1,796 tonnes of carbon dioxide, the equivalent to the annual emission from 440 cars.

"We are calling on residents to recycle more of their metal packaging and every recycled can saves enough energy to run a television for four hours, so putting them in the blue wheeled bin can make a big difference."

The campaign is funded by Metal Matters, a partnership of the UK's producers, users and recyclers of metal packaging, along with Lancashire County Council, and run by Global Renewables Lancashire and aluminium packaging recycling organisation Alupro.



● IN THE CAN: Robert Thompson, chairman of Ribble Valley Borough Council's community services committee

Did you know?

- In 2010/11, 250,000 tonnes of metal cans were recycled in the UK with a value of £27 million and the weight of 35,700 adult bull African elephants

- Metal cans are 100 per cent infinitely recyclable and can be back on the shelf in just 60 days

- The UK produces over nine billion drinks cans every year, of which 80 per cent are made of aluminium



Make sure wheelee bin handles 'face highway'

'HANDLES facing the highway' is the new refuse collection message to Ribble Valley households.

Ribble Valley's refuse teams empty up to 1,000 wheeled bins daily, each weighing up to 100 kilos.

And householders are being asked to give them a hand by ensuring the bin handles are facing the roadside.

Robert Thompson, chairman of Ribble Valley Borough Council's community services committee, said: "We are asking householders to ensure the handles of wheeled bins are facing the highway, which allows the refuse collectors to empty the bins safely and quickly.

"Our recycling and refuse collection service is highly efficient, but we want it to be even better and with the help of residents can do this.

"A simple thing such as ensuring bin handles are facing the highway will speed up our refuse collection times significantly and ensure our service is safer for refuse collectors and more efficient for households."

Dog owners told 'chip your dog or face fine'

DOG owners in Ribble Valley are advised that they must microchip their pets by April 6 or face a £500 fine.

And Ribble Valley Borough Council has launched a new clampdown on dog fouling in public places.

Dog owners are now required by law to microchip their dogs and register them on a database and if the dog is transferred to a new keeper the new keeper must update the database.

Over 100,000 dogs stray or are lost or stolen in the UK each year, resulting in £57million in kenneling costs to local authorities and welfare charities.

Around 60 dogs are lost and 25 stolen in Ribble Valley each year, which are returned, or re-homed.

Simon Hore, chairman of Ribble Valley Borough Council's health and housing committee, said: "Microchipping is a simple, safe and quick procedure that makes reuniting dogs with their owners more likely.

"A microchip is the size of a grain of rice and the procedure, which is carried out by a vet or trained microchip implanter, takes only a few minutes and lasts a lifetime.

"Although many dog owners already microchip their pets, our dog enforcement officers are now



● ON THE GROWL: Ribble Valley Borough Council dog enforcement officers and police

equipped with microchip scanners to ensure residents are complying with the new law.

"We are also asking dog owners ensure their pets are tagged, so that we can contact them without delay, if their dog is found."

Ribble Valley Borough Council has also stepped up its perennial campaign against dog owners who allow their pets to poop in public.

Council staff and the police will be involved in impromptu "pick up or pay" poop swoops over the coming months, with offenders receiving £80 on-the-spot fines or a ticking off.

And parents are asked to ensure their youngsters are carrying poop

bags when they walk the family pet.

Simon Hore added: "Complaints about dog issues are the second highest received by the council each year and residents are demanding action on the issue.

"Our officers will be out and about with the police over the coming months making sure the message is understood loud and clear by any pet owner flouting the law."

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

To report dog fouling in complete confidence, contact Ribble Valley Borough Council on 01200 425111.

One click away from a thriving art scene



● IN THE FRAME: Langho artist Peter Hopwood at the launch of the website

A NEW website aims to put Ribble Valley's arts scene in the frame.

The website, rvarts.co.uk, aims to boost the borough's arts sector and attract visitors to the area by offering comprehensive information on a broad range of arts activity.

The site, devised and funded by Ribble Valley Borough Council, includes a directory of arts practitioners, an events diary, information on places to visit and workshops, and regular e-newsletters.

Artists featured on the web site represent the broad range of arts activity in Ribble Valley, including music, visual art, craft, photography, poetry, theatre and film.

Ribble Valley Borough Council's arts development officer, Katherine Rodgers, said: "There are many talented artists and creative businesses based in Ribble Valley and this web site will give the public direct access to them, as well as the broad programme of events they provide. "We hope residents and arts enthusiasts will visit and spread the word about rvarts.co.uk, thus helping the borough's arts scene to grow and thrive."

Platform Gallery WHAT'S ON



HUMOROUS busts of a celebrated ceramic artist are turning heads at the Platform Gallery.

Graham Hough, whose work has been exhibited by Saatchi Art, is featured in the gallery's popular Craft Open, which runs until April 16.

Graham's Heads, as they are known, depict demons and ghouls inspired by Arthur Rackman, Charles Dickens and William Hogarth.

The Craft Open features the work of the finest craftspeople from the North of England, including textiles, ceramics, jewellery, metalwork, woodwork, furniture and glass, as well as two and three-dimensional pieces.

Visitors to the exhibition are able to vote for a People's Choice Prize and there is a Selectors' Prize for Innovation offering the winning exhibitor their own showcase at the gallery in 2017.

The exhibition includes work by 2016 Selectors' Prize for Innovation winner and sewing machine whizz Diana Barrett, as well as Clitheroe sculptor Nicola Harper, who uses driftwood and reclaimed objects to produce unusual sculpture in a bricolage style favoured by Picasso and Dali.

Platform Gallery supervisor Stephanie Hibbert said: "The Craft Open is a fantastic opportunity for craft enthusiasts to see the work of the finest craftworkers in the North and some fantastically talented artists are joining Graham, Diana and Nicola in this superb exhibition."

Forthcoming exhibitions

Until April 16

Craft Open

Popular annual open exhibition featuring the best craft makers from across the North of England. A vibrant and eclectic exhibition featuring ceramics, glass, jewellery, textiles and wood. Vote for your favourite piece in the People's Choice Award.

April 30 to July 9

Inside Out

A touring show curated by the Crafts Council featuring work by some of the most significant furniture makers in the UK from the 1970s to present day. The exhibition offers insight into making processes and the history of the Crafts Council via archive material, oral histories and drawings. Accompanied by an exciting programme of educational events celebrating furniture making in Ribble Valley.

July 23 to October 8

Clay Collective

In association with the Northern Potters Association, a showcase of the best ceramic work in the North. The gallery's education room will host a pop-up ceramic studio and visitors are invited to try their hand at the potter's wheel.

Cash puts new pitch in a league of its own

A CLITHEROE sports pitch is top of the league thanks to a £50,000 boost from Ribble Valley Borough Council and Sport England.

The new 3G pitch in Edisford Road were officially opened by Preston North End striker Joe Garner and Ribble Valley Mayor Bridget Hilton.

The £50,000 pitch has been funded by Ribble Valley Borough Council and Sport England's Inspired programme, which is part of the London Olympics legacy

The new 3G pitch has a surface made from synthetic fibres and rubbers that look like grass, but unlike many artificial surfaces do not contain sand, so can withstand heavy use and inclement weather.

Ribble Valley Mayor Bridget Hilton said: "Ribble Valley has a rich sporting heritage, with not one but two Olympians from London 2012, as well as several professional footballers and a host of community clubs.

"Our thanks go to Sport England for their kind support and our community clubs, who work tirelessly to develop the borough's young sporting talent.

"We are delighted to open this facility, which local residents can be proud of and enjoy for years to come."



Joe Garner, League One's Player of the Year in 2014 and a former pupil of Ribblesdale High School in Clitheroe, played for Clitheroe Wolves FC and trained on the pitches.

He said: "I have many fond memories of playing on these pitches and this new facility will give local sport a fantastic boost."

As well as football, the new Edisford Road pitch will be used for junior rugby and other sports.



● SPORTING TRIUMPH: Ribble Valley Mayor Bridget Hilton opens the purpose-built pitches in Clitheroe

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