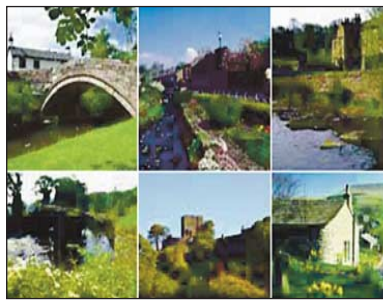


RIBBLE VALLEY News



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The newspaper of Ribble Valley Borough Council

Summer 2015

£3m boost for local economy as boroughs host Aviva Tour of Britain



RIBBLE Valley is to co-host one of the biggest free-to-spectate sporting events in the UK on Monday, September 7.

The world's top cyclists and tens of thousands of spectators will descend on Ribble Valley and Pendle for Stage 2 of the 2015 Aviva Tour of Britain.

Stage 2 will see 20 of the world's top cycling teams, including Olympic and world champions, and Tour de France stage winners, power through Ribble Valley and Pendle from Clitheroe to Colne, taking in the Nick o' Pendle climb, Dunsop Bridge, Slaidburn in the Forest of Bowland and Barnoldswick.

It will be the first visit of the Tour of Britain to the two boroughs since 2010, when the opening stage of the race

passed through on its way from Rochdale to Blackpool, and the first time that Clitheroe or Colne have been a host venue.

And the event looks set give the visitor economy in the two boroughs a £3million boost.

The Aviva Tour of Britain is the UK's premier road cycling event and broadcast internationally by 16 television channels across 139 territories in Europe, Australia and the USA.

● See the four-page supplement with this edition of Ribble Valley News for more information about this exciting event, including a pull-out map featuring spectator zones and car parks, and how local schoolchildren are taking the Stage 2 legacy to Kenya.

We're officially one of the UK's hidden gems

RIBBLE Valley has the best rural quality of life in the North West a top survey has revealed.

And Clitheroe is the eighth best market town in which to live in the UK according to a national newspaper.

Residents of Ribble Valley enjoy the best quality of life of any rural area in the North West, according to the 2015 Halifax Rural Areas Quality of Life Survey.

The survey took a wide range of factors into account, including crime rates, employment, school results, broadband access, health and wellbeing, life expectancy and the weather!

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst (pictured) said: "These results reveal what we have always known, that Ribble Valley is one of the UK's hidden gems.

"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.

"All of this is down to elected members, who draw upon many diverse talents, a committed senior management team and a loyal and dedicated workforce.

"We are delighted with these results and might have fared even better in the survey had it not been for the weather!"

The survey found that southern areas tended to receive higher ratings for weekly earnings and the weather, while northern areas scored better on education, lower house prices in relation to earnings, lower traffic flows and population densities.

Ribble Valley is the safest place in Lancashire and one of the safest in the UK, with around 28 crimes recorded annually for every 1,000 residents, which is significantly below the national average and the lowest in Lancashire.

The borough is also one of the UK's premier food destinations and in September will host Stage 2 of the Aviva Tour of Britain, the UK's largest free-to-spectate sporting event.

Clitheroe was also recently placed eighth in the UK's Top 10 Market Towns by the Times newspaper, while Whalley was named one of the Top 10 Places to Live in the UK by the Sunday Times.



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

Council tax frozen for the sixth year running

RIBBLE Valley Borough Council has announced a council tax freeze without cuts in jobs or services for the sixth year running.

The council has frozen its 2015/16 council tax without the need for compulsory redundancies or service cuts, despite a 14 per cent reduction in Government grants. Support for charities and voluntary organisations will also be maintained.

Ribble Valley Borough Council's share of the council tax on a Band D property remains at £140.69, the lowest in Lancashire and one of the lowest in the country.

Council leader Stuart Hirst praised the dedication and hard work of council staff and councillors for delivering efficient and cost-effective services in difficult times.

He said: "I am delighted that Ribble Valley's share of the council tax has been frozen and core services protected for the sixth successive year.

"This has been achieved despite a reduction in core Government funding of 14 per cent, a total of 40 per cent since 2010.

"Ribble Valley has the lowest council tax in Lancashire and one of the lowest in the

country – a significant achievement built on many years of careful financial planning.

"I am grateful to councillors and staff for their dedication and commitment in continuing to deliver efficient and cost-effective services, while maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction."

Council tax bills include precepts from Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Constabulary, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and parishes.

Full details are available at www.ribblevalley.gov.uk.

Council leader's message

We're back, but the challenges still remain

THE General Election of 2015 will be memorable for many reasons and not least for its astonishing and unforeseen outcome. Not only were the predictions of the pollsters confounded, but the victory of the SNP in Scotland was a political volte-face of seismic proportions.

In Ribble Valley, which hosted national and local elections for the first time in 20 years, the ruling Conservative administration was returned with an increased majority. I would like to thank residents for their ongoing confidence in our ability to build on past successes and extend a warm welcome to the newly elected councillors of all political colours.

By any assessment Ribble Valley is a high performing council, with a record of nationally recognised achievements over the last four years that compares with the best performing authorities in the country. While acknowledging what has been achieved, the new council is now looking to address the serious challenges that lie ahead.

Over the forthcoming year, we will have to balance the budget for 2016/17, despite further inevitable grant cuts. We want to see the contract for the Clitheroe Market re-development signed and ready to go, and we will be building on the success of the borough's Core Strategy, by completing the land allocations work.

In the longer term, sweeping changes to local government in England have been given legislative flesh in the Queen's Speech, which will speed up the process of devolution to our city region combined authorities.

The Northern Powerhouse is a growing reality, as is the stark reality that Lancashire is currently well behind the curve of our metropolitan neighbours in Manchester and Liverpool.

We should embrace these changes as an opportunity, not a problem, and seek to build a leadership role for Ribble Valley. As such, not only will we have an equal say at the top table, but will secure that other paramount objective for the long term – the preservation of the independence of Ribble Valley and the end to calls for our abolition within a unitary 'super council' in East Lancashire.

I have no doubt that this will be the emphatic wish of residents throughout Ribble Valley.

Market revamp moves closer to completion

THE proposed redevelopment of Clitheroe Market took a step closer this week after the shortlist of six potential developers was reduced to two.

Research into the viability of a redevelopment of the market site was presented to Ribble Valley Borough Council last year.

The selection of a development partner in line with the council's procurement procedures started and a shortlist of six potential developers was drawn up.

Now the shortlist has been reduced to two, who were due to make their final submissions as Ribble Valley News went to press.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "This is a fantastic opportunity to bring modern retail and leisure facilities to Clitheroe town centre, and the proposed scheme has generated strong interest from developers across the country.

"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.

"Along with hosting the Tour of

Britain in September, the redevelopment of Clitheroe Market reflects the ambitious and confident way in which the council is promoting and developing the borough's economic potential."

Colin Hirst (pictured left), Ribble Valley Borough Council's head of regeneration and housing, added: "The final submissions will be evaluated with a view to making a recommendation to the council's policy and finance committee in September.

"We will then select a partner, who will work up a detailed scheme and submit a planning application for a retail-led mixed-use market development and car park.

"This is a fantastic opportunity to bring modern retail and leisure facilities to Clitheroe town centre, and the proposed scheme generated strong interest from developers across the country.

"We expect a planning application will be submitted and approved by next March, with work starting in the summer.

"We will be holding discussions with market tenants and businesses who may be affected by the proposed redevelopment over the coming months."



Free advice on renovation of listed buildings

FREE preliminary advice on the care, repair and renovation of listed buildings is available to Ribble Valley residents.

And residents are warned that putting their stamp on listed buildings without permission can cost them dearly or land them in jail.

Anyone buying a listed building is acquiring a piece of the country's national heritage, as well as a new home, so it's vital they understand what they are taking on before they start knocking it about.

Carrying out unauthorised alterations to a listed

building is a criminal offence that can lead to costly restoration work, court fines and even imprisonment.

But help is at hand thanks to free advice from the borough council on the care, repair and restoration of listed buildings.

Sue Bibby, chairman of Ribble Valley Borough Council's planning and development committee, said: "Historic buildings are an important aspect of the character and appearance of our towns, villages and countryside.

"Conservationists and planners have a duty to

protect the built environment and if you look around Ribble Valley you can see just what a good job they have been doing.

"Well-informed advice is a premium and the key is to work with planners from the outset, which can save a lot of heartache and expense down the line. Our officers are just a phone call away."

The free advice is also available to workmen who have been asked to undertake work on what they suspect might be a listed building.

Further details are available from Ribble Valley Borough council on 01200 425111.



Stuart Hirst,
Leader,
Ribble
Valley
Borough
Council

New homeowners are urged to travel by rail



● **JUST THE TICKET:** Colin Hirst, Ribble Valley Borough Council's head of regeneration and housing; Clitheroe Interchange technical support officer Sue Harrison, Marjorie Birch and Stuart Hirst

A WELCOME pack promoting local rail transport could prove just the ticket for new homeowners in Ribble Valley.

The pack, devised by Community Rail Lancashire and supported by Ribble Valley Borough Council, features a host of information and advice, including train timetables, local rail history, a Rail Ramblers guided walks programme and how to get involved in local rail support groups.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "Ribble Valley is a happening place. It is one of the most desirable places in which to live and work in the UK, with a reputation for fine food and great days out.

"We want people to visit the borough and what better way to enjoy our stunning scenery than travelling by train.

"We also want the borough's new homeowners to make the most of rail travel in their daily commutes to Blackburn, Preston, Manchester and beyond, as well as enjoy the leisure opportunities that local rail travel has to offer."

Marjorie Birch, vice-chairman of the Clitheroe

Community Rail Partnership and chairman of local support group Ribble Valley Rail, added: "Lancashire's community railways provide an excellent means by which to explore the county and provide vital links for students and commuters travelling across the region.

"There has been an increase in the use of local rail services in recent years, particularly the Clitheroe to Manchester rail line, and we anticipate further increases in passenger traffic in the future.

"Improvements will be taking place this year to all four Ribble Valley rail stations as part of the major scheme upgrade for the Clitheroe to Manchester line, including the provision of real-time information screens and new passenger waiting shelters.

"Through joint initiatives with Northern Rail and other partners, excellent value tickets are available that help travelers go a bit further for their money, and now these packs are bringing comprehensive information to the doorsteps of potential new rail users."

The packs are being distributed to new homeowners by housing sales offices.



Health service champ is our new mayor

A FORMER health service director and public health champion is Ribble Valley's new mayor.

Born and brought up a stone's throw from the famous Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland, Bridget Hilton trained as a nurse and midwife at Birch Hill Hospital in Rochdale.

It was during midwifery training that Bridget witnessed the effect of poor social conditions on people's health and wellbeing, which sparked a lifelong interest in public health.

Bridget then undertook further professional training at Bradford University, before working as a health visitor in South Kensington. Two years later, she took up her first management post and spent the rest of her career in health sector management.

After working in London for 10 years, she moved to Guildford in Surrey and in 1981 took up a senior management post with the then Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley District Health Authority.

Following NHS reorganisation, she was appointed director of operational services at the newly-established Communicare NHS Trust, which became the Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Primary Care Trust in 1995, where Bridget was appointed executive director of service provision.

It was at her retirement presentation that former Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Chris Holtom suggested Bridget should stand as a borough councillor and she was duly elected to represent the Waddington and West Bradford in the local elections of 2007.

In 2013, Bridget was appointed chairman of Ribble Valley Borough Council's health and housing committee and nominated to sit on the statutory health and wellbeing board at Lancashire County Council.

She has been a co-opted member of the county council's health scrutiny committee since 2006.

Bridget has one adult son who lives and works in Manchester. Her mayoress is Mrs Kathleen Hill and her chosen charities are Dementia Care and Macmillan Cancer Support, both for services in Ribble Valley.

Success on a plate for community groups

A TASTY £800 is on the menu for Ribble Valley community groups looking to start or improve luncheon clubs.

The money can be used to start a new club, develop an existing one by buying new crockery or cookware, or providing activities. It can also be used to support other projects that engage older residents on a regular basis, such as coffee mornings and afternoon teas.

Luncheon clubs, sometimes called lunch clubs, provide older people with the opportunity to socialise over a regular hot nutritious meal.

They can have a membership of a few up to dozens and operate in a range of venues, such as pubs, restaurants, community or church halls.

Ribble Valley Borough Council's partnership officer, Dilys Day, said: "Luncheon clubs keep older people engaged in local life, giving them a sense of involvement and belonging.

"They provide an essential service in rural areas, by offering a friendly meeting place for those who cannot readily leave their village and consequently suffer isolation and loneliness.

"They also help in the identification of underlying problems that may contribute to a decline in health, thus helping to make the lives of older residents safer and healthier."

The popular Mellor Luncheon Club has been meeting at the Mellor Methodist Church Hall for 10 years and receives annual funding from Ribble Valley Borough



● **TASTY OFFER:** Dilys Day and Stella Brunskill (right) with members of the Mellor Luncheon Club

Council.

An enthusiastic team of volunteer cooks and helpers serve a hot two-course meal made from fresh local produce followed by tea or coffee every Friday.

For just £4, participants can enjoy a range of dishes, including salmon hollandaise with new potatoes and vegetables, followed by peaches and cream, or a club favourite, sausage

casserole with Yorkshire pudding.

Cook Jean Walmsley said: "We have about 16 members, who really look forward to attending. They don't just receive a hot meal, but get to socialise, too."

Mellor councillor Stella Brunskill added: "The Mellor Luncheon Club is an invaluable part of village life and the committed team of volunteers who run it are to be

congratulated for providing such an essential and much-loved service."

Community groups interested in starting or improving a lunch club are invited to a meeting in the Ribble Valley Borough Council Chamber in Church Street, Clitheroe, on Thursday, September 17, from 10.30am to noon.

Further details are available from Dilys Day on 01200 425111.



RIBBLE Valley went to the polls on Thursday, May 7, in a unique triple election.

It is the first time since 1979 that Ribble Valley has hosted Parliamentary, borough and parish elections simultaneously, and voters turned out in their droves.

Over 52,000 residents, nearly 68 per cent of the electorate, cast their votes at 83 polling stations across Ribble Valley and parts of South Ribble included in the Parliamentary constituency.

Council staff worked flat out for over 24 hours out to administer the triple election covering 23 wards, 11 parishes and one Parliamentary constituency. Read on to find out what became of your all-important vote and who your new councillor is.

How your vote shaped our borough

RIBBLE Valley Borough Council has 40 councillors representing 24 wards.

The election saw the ruling Conservative group gain one seat taking their tally to 35, with the remaining five seats split between the Liberal Democrats with four and one Labour.

The Conservative Group is led by Stuart Hirst, who is known as the council leader, and the Liberal Democrats by Allan Knox.

Ribble Valley councillors are generally approachable people, with the best interests of the community at heart. If you are concerned about a local issue, they will be happy to hear from you. Please see their details below.

Contact your councillor

AIGHTON, BAILEY AND CHAIGLEY
Janet Alcock (01254 822990)

ALSTON AND HOTHERSALL
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BOWLAND, NEWTON AND SLAIDBURN
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CHATBURN
Gary Scott (01200 441775)
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CHIPPING
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Staff work flat out as poll attracts voters in droves

VOTERS turned out in their droves to choose borough and parish councillors, as well as a Member of Parliament, in Ribble Valley's unique triple election.

The Parliamentary election attracted eight candidates and sitting MP Nigel Evans representing the Conservative Party was elected with 25,404 votes.

There was a 67.74 percent turnout in the Parliamentary election and 168 spoilt ballot papers.

All seats on Ribble Valley Borough Council, apart from two in Waddington and West Bradford, were also contested and there were parish elections in Clitheroe, Longridge (Dilworth and Derby wards), Gisburn, the Sawley and Gisburn Forest wards of Bolton-by-Bowland, Gisburn Forest and Sawley, and the Rimington ward of Rimington and Middop.

Council staff worked flat out to administer the triple election that last happened in 1979.

The council's chief executive, Marshal Scott, in his capacity as returning officer, said: "Staff in polling stations worked from 6.30am until at least 10pm, with those involved in the count continuing until past 5am, which is a 24-hour shift.

"It was a mammoth effort, with some staff back in work at 10am on Friday for the borough election count.

"It was a tremendous effort by all involved ensuring that local voters enjoyed an efficient, open and transparent election."

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "It is the first time since 1979 that the borough has administered three elections simultaneously, which placed a tremendous amount of work on officers. "I would like to congratulate the returning officer and his team for their magnificent efforts in helping to deliver an efficient and successful election."

Election results for each ward are available at ribblevalley.gov.uk.



Our constitution ensures your council runs smoothly

RIBBLE Valley Borough Council has a constitution, which sets out how the organisation operates, how decisions are made and the procedures that ensure those decisions are efficient, transparent and accountable.

Although the council's day-to-day business is overseen by a corporate management team comprising chief executive Marshal Scott and two directors – resources director Jane Pearson and community services director John Heap – important decisions are made by councillors via four committees, namely planning and development, community, health and housing, policy and finance.

Their work is supported by a licensing committee and accounts and audit committee that deal with regulatory business.

Committee meetings are held in the Ribble Valley Civic Suite in Church Street, Clitheroe, and usually start at 6.30pm. Members of the public are welcome

to attend and will find a warm welcome, as well as the opportunity to speak, or ask a question.

Residents wishing to speak or ask a question and requiring an immediate response are asked to contact the council's committee services team no later than two days before the meeting. Residents not requiring a response can contact the committee services team as late as noon on the day of the meeting.

Only Ribble Valley residents may speak at meetings and contributions are limited three minutes and one person per agenda item.

Public participation lasts for 15 minutes at the beginning of each meeting and speaking slots are allocated on a first-come-first-served basis.

A meetings calendar and committee agendas are available at ribblevalley.gov.uk and further details about public participation are available from the council's committee services team on 01200 425111.

So are you registered to vote?

CHANGES to the way Ribble Valley residents register to vote are now in force.

Before individual electoral registration, or IER, one person in every household was responsible for registering voters at their address, but under the new scheme each resident registers individually.

Ribble Valley households will soon receive a household enquiry form, or HEF, asking whether or not members of the household are registered to vote. Details on the form must be verified and the form returned to the council.

Residents not on the electoral register may also receive an invitation to register, or ITR, which also must be completed and returned. Alternatively, they can register to vote online.

Individual electoral **More secure**

registration is the biggest change to electoral registration for over a century and aims to make registration more secure, while protecting against voting fraud. The Electoral Commission believes it will modernise voter registration and make it easier, simpler and faster for people to register to vote.

Ribble Valley Borough Council's electoral and licensing officer, Jane Horsfield, said: "Voting is our democratic right and individual electoral registration gives electors control over their registration.

"The new online application process means it is now no more difficult to register to vote than shopping online and provides a secure, convenient and modern way of registering in as little as three minutes."

If you are not on the electoral register, you cannot vote in elections or referendums, including the forthcoming referendum on whether or not Britain should remain in the European Union, which is scheduled to take place by the end of 2017, but expected to take place by the end of 2016.

Residents who voted in the May elections are already on the electoral register, but are still asked to return their HEF. Those who are not can register at gov.uk/register-to-vote.

LEISURE and fitness in Ribble Valley is top of the league thanks to Ribble Valley Borough Council. From health schemes tailored to residents with specific needs, to cycling festivals for all the family, to the forthcoming Tour of Britain, sport and leisure in Ribble Valley is racing to success. Nearly 5,000 residents have signed up to the council's successful healthy lifestyles scheme since it started in 2001. The programme, run in conjunction with Public Health Lancashire and the East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning

Group, offers a range of classes for people with specific health needs and enjoys a satisfaction rating of 97 per cent.

And as well as recently facilitating the first Ribble Valley Cycling Festival, the borough is also hosting Stage 2 of the 2015 Aviva Tour of Britain, the UK's biggest free-to-spectate sporting event, on Monday, September 7, one of the biggest events in the borough's 40-year history. Read on to find out why sport and leisure in Ribble Valley is in a league of its own.

Tai chi to help those with mobility issues

RIBBLE Valley Borough Council has joined forces with a local tai chi expert to offer courses in the ancient art for residents with mobility or balance problems.

Tai chi, which originates from ancient China, is famed for its health benefits and can help improve posture and flexibility, strengthen muscles and joints and reduce pain and stress.

Recent research suggests its straightforward, slow-moving and coordinated exercises can reduce the risk of falls among older people by improving balance, strength, flexibility and mobility, as well as calming the mind.

Regular practice of tai chi can help people move, stand, balance and walk with greater confidence through a greater understanding and sensitivity of the body."

The council's healthy lifestyles team has been delivering tai chi for a number of years, but has now joined forces with Clitheroe tai chi expert Bill Wilkinson to offer 12-week courses aimed specifically at residents with mobility or balance problems.

Bill has been practising Chen-style tai chi, the oldest and original form of tai chi, for over 15 years and teaching it for 10.

Tracy Balko, Ribble Valley Borough Council's health and fitness officer, said:

"Bill has a wealth of experience and has worked with people with a variety of health problems. He shares our philosophy that everyone, no matter what their age or ability, can benefit from tai chi.

"We plan to start a class initially for our healthy lifestyle clients struggling with mobility and balance, and if successful the scheme will be expanded and continued."

Around 30 per cent of adults aged over 65 and living at home will experience at least one fall a year, rising to 50 per cent of adults aged over 80. Most falls do not result in serious injury, but five per cent do, such as broken bones.

Tracy Balko added: "Falls are usually more serious and expensive to manage in the elderly, due to the cost of in-patient and residential care.

"They can also have an adverse psychological impact on sufferers, who can lose confidence, become withdrawn and feel as if they have lost their independence.

"Tai chi can help those at risk improve their strength, balance and confidence, and we are delighted to be working with Bill Wilkinson on this new initiative."

The course is open to residents with balance and mobility issues by referral from their GP or health professional and further details are available from Tracy Balko on 01200 425111.



Stepping out for a summer of top walks

AN award-winning walking scheme that has helped Ribble Valley residents take great strides in health and fitness for over a decade has launched its 2015 summer programme.

Stepping Out was set up by Ribble Valley Borough Council in 2004 to promote walking as an effective and low-risk form of physical activity for those who are inactive.

Started with a handful of volunteers and two treks a week, it now offers a bustling programme of weekly walks of varying lengths and difficulty facilitated by an enthusiastic team of over 30 specially-trained volunteer walk leaders.

It attracts over 130 weekly participants, 80 per cent of who have been attending Stepping Out for over two years.

Stepping Out co-ordinator Barrie Williams (pictured) said: "Evidence is increasingly showing walking's many benefits. You don't have to be fit to walk and the elderly, as well as those recovering from illness, can enjoy it – and it's free.

"Stepping Out encourages people who might not otherwise be active to enjoy the benefits of walking in a friendly, welcoming and non-competitive environment.

"It is now one of Lancashire's most successful health programmes and we are delighted that it is going from strength to strength.

"I would like to thank our team of dedicated and hard-working volunteers for helping to make the scheme such a success."

Stepping Out includes evening and weekend walks, as well as short, gentle treks for residents with restricted mobility, all taking in some of Ribble Valley's most scenic spots. There are also Nordic walking sessions on Tuesday mornings at Longridge Community Gym and "prambles" for people with prams and pushchairs, also on Tuesdays.

Further information and a Stepping Out programme are available from Ribble Valley Borough Council on 01200 425111.



Bikers saddle up for area's first cycling festival



●ON THEIR BIKES: Peter Fletcher, with colleague Zainub Ukadia and 'Dr Bike' Jim Nolan

OVER 2,000 cycling enthusiasts got on their bikes for the first Ribble Valley Cycling Festival.

The festival, coordinated and funded by Ribble Valley Borough Council, featured a host of activities, including family bike rides, a pop-up velodrome, a bike-powered concert and an evening with cycling celebrity Ned Boulting.

The festival started with a free bike clinic, giveaways and refreshments, in the Ribble Valley Borough Council Car Park.

There was a bike-powered concert featuring Good Foxy, The Ragamuffins and The Remedy at the Clitheroe Castle Bandstand that attracted a 600-strong crowd and a mini-velodrome at the

Edisford Road Car Park that attracted over 200 participants.

The council's sports development officer, Peter Fletcher, said: "We are delighted with how the festival went and the excitement it created has been fantastic. It attracted over 2,000 participants over the course of the week and gave us a great platform on which to build in the future."

The festival was a prelude to the 2015 Aviva Tour of Britain, which will see 20 of the world's top cycling teams power through Ribble Valley from Clitheroe to Colne via the Nick o' Pendle, Whalley, Longridge, Dunsop Bridge and Forest of Bowland on Monday, September 7.

A NEW three-bedroom home in 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 can cost as little as £68,000 for a 40 per cent share, with around £235 rent on the remainder, while rented properties are available from as little as £340 a month.

Read on to find out how Ribble Valley Borough Council has the key to the door for the local residents with the most pressing housing needs.

A helping hand for our young homeless

HELP is at hand for young homeless people in Ribble Valley thanks to a collaboration between the borough council, Clitheroe Christians in Partnership and YMCA Blackburn.

The three organisations have joined forces to purchase and run a house in Clitheroe town centre that will be used as supported accommodation for young homeless people taking their first step into independent living.

According to Government figures, 52 per cent of homeless people are under 25 and one in 100 young people will experience homelessness in their lifetime, usually due to family breakdown.

Homeless young people have poorer mental and physical health than their peers, are more likely to have alcohol or drug problems and many are not in education, employment or training, purely because of their homelessness.

Ribble Valley Borough Council's housing strategy manager, Rachael Stott, said: "The provision of housing for the young and elderly is one of the biggest challenges facing the



● **KEY TO THE DOOR:** Jake with (from the left) Ruth Haldane of Clitheroe Christians in Partnership, Lorraine Prentice of YMCA Blackburn and Rachael Stott

council, which is working closely with housing partners to address the problem.

"Local young people commonly deal with homelessness by spending a night here and a night there, called sofa-surfing, and have no

regular place to stay.

"Although youth homelessness is more prevalent in urban areas, Ribble Valley is not immune and we are delighted to work with our partners to bring this much need facility into use."

Ribble Valley joinery student Jake, 19, became homeless after family breakdown and said living at the house for 18 months had enabled him turn his life round.

"There is two of use in the house at the moment and it has been great living near my gran.

"Being settled has helped me deal with my problems and turn my life around, and I will soon qualify as a joiner.

"The house has been brilliant and I would encourage any young person in Ribble Valley facing homelessness to reach out for help."

Ribble Valley Borough Council is at the forefront of several housing initiatives, from the provision of affordable properties in partnership with the housing sector to cutting-edge energy efficiency.

Affordable homes up for grabs in Barrow

TWENTY-EIGHT affordable homes will be up for grabs in Barrow by local residents from October.

The two and three-bedroom houses will be available on a shared ownership or affordable rented basis at the former Pendle Garage site, now called Barleyfields.

Barleyfields is being developed by North West housing association Great Places Housing Group and affordable home ownership company Plumlife in partnership with Ribble Valley Borough Council.

Shared ownership allows residents to buy from 35 to 75 per cent of a new home and pay rent on the remainder, with the option of increasing their share as their circumstances change.

The council's housing strategy manager, Rachael Stott, said: "We are delighted to have supported this excellent scheme, which will make much-needed high-quality rental and shared ownership properties available to residents with a local connection."

Tom Johnson, neighbourhood coordinator for East Lancashire at Great Places Housing Group, added: "Ribble Valley residents struggling to get onto the property ladder will be delighted with

what's on offer at Barleyfields, which will provide new high-quality affordable family homes in a desirable area, where the need for such properties is high."

The provision of affordable housing is one of the biggest challenges facing Ribble Valley Borough Council, which is working closely with housing partners to address the problem.

Ribble Valley Borough Council is at the forefront of several housing initiatives, from the provision of affordable properties in partnership with the housing sector to cutting-edge energy efficiency.

As well as Barleyfields, shared ownership properties featuring one-bedroom apartments, four-bedroom family homes and two-bedroom



● **Rachael Stott and Tom Johnson with (left) Christine Grimshaw, managing director of Ribble Valley Homes**

bungalows are currently available in Whalley, Billington and at other sites in Barrow.

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



Keeping the elderly safe in their homes

ELDERLY residents in Ribble Valley can live more safely and comfortably in their own homes thanks to a partnership between the borough council and home improvement charity Homewise.

Homewise offers a host of advice, support and assistance, including protection from rip-off contractors and a handyman service for a small charge plus materials, or in some cases free.

The scheme offers comprehensive advice on all aspects of home improvements, adaptation, repairs and maintenance, a list of trusted tradesmen, assistance with raising funds to pay for work, energy-efficiency grants and subsidies, recycled disability aids, a free security scheme for residents over 60 and the provision and installation of low-energy light bulbs for residents over 70.

Homewise staff are trained by Lancashire Constabulary to provide crime prevention advice, undertake security surveys of homes, provide and install security measures to doors and windows, and anti-distraction burglary kits to help residents tackle unscrupulous door-to-door salesmen and rogue tradesmen.

They also make referrals to the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service for fire safety checks and advice on the installation of smoke alarms.

The council's housing strategy manager, Rachael Stott, said: "Ribble Valley has an above average number of elderly residents and we are working hard to address their specific housing needs, thereby helping them live independently and safely in their homes.

"Homewise can offer a wealth of housing advice and support to elderly residents, as well as protect them from the rip-off tactics of unscrupulous contractors."

Sue Sinclair, manager Homewise, added: "We are delighted to be offering our service to elderly residents in Ribble Valley and while we may not be able to solve every problem we will certainly do our best to try."

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

Take the plunge with Swimtag



RIBBLE Valley residents are invited to take the plunge in a free new fitness scheme currently making waves across the country.

Ribblesdale Pool in Clitheroe is to host Swimtag, which offers swimmers analytical data via a unique wristband.

The Swimtag wristband feeds detailed information from a swimming session to a dedicated web site, featuring a profile page with a colour-coded graph outlining average pace, rest times and stroke rates.

The page also includes a swim summary, personal best, training plan progression and information from the user's swimming pool.

Colin Winterbottom, Ribble Valley Borough Council's culture and leisure services manager, said: "A

gentle swim can burn over 200 calories in half an hour and a fast front crawl can burn as many calories as an eight-mile run.

"Swimming can support up to ninety per cent of the body's weight in water, meaning those with disabilities, injuries or illnesses, such as arthritis, can also take part in sport in a comfortable and safe environment.

"Swimtag is a valuable aid to swimmers by motivating and encouraging them to reach their goals, and it's free."

A recent survey has revealed that 52 per cent of swimmers had been motivated by using Swimtag and 62 per cent said it had helped them improve their swimming.

Further details about Swimtag are available from Ribblesdale Pool on 01200 424825.



2015: 'an exciting year for tourism'

DAYTRIPPERS and weekenders are flocking to Ribble Valley in their droves, latest figures have revealed.

And Ribble Valley Borough Council has published its 2015 visitor guide, Discover Ribble Valley.

The new-look guide was redesigned in a coffee table magazine style two years' ago, following consultation with customers and advertisers. It has been a great success, doubling in size from previous editions and attracting significant interest.

This year's guide features sections on food, shopping, heritage, outdoor activities, particularly cycling and

walking; weddings, the arts, a What's On and comprehensive accommodation listings.

It also features recipes from top local chefs Gareth Bevan of Food by Breda Murphy and Ryan Greene of the Foxfields Country Hotel, Billington.

Ribble Valley Borough Council's tourism and events officer, Tom Pridmore, said: "2015 is an exciting year for tourism in Ribble Valley, which is hosting Stage 2 of this year's Tour of Britain and, as well as being a premier food destination, is now an emerging wedding destination.

"Discover Ribble Valley focuses on businesses with a real story to tell offering authentic visitor experiences around the themes of food, outdoor pursuits and weddings.

"The guide has been very well received since undergoing a revamp and demand for it is increasing year-on-year."

According to national figures, visitor numbers in Ribble Valley increased by 1.6 per cent in 2012, from 3.6million to 3.66million, with an increase in tourism spend of 4.4 per cent, from £169.6million to £177.1million.

Ribble Valley Borough Council spearheaded the multi-award-winning Ribble Valley Food Trail, is a principal partner in the Clitheroe Food Festival and is at the forefront of Ribble Valley Wedding Heaven, a partnership between the council and 15 venues licensed for marriage ceremonies and civil partnerships aimed at promoting the borough as a premier wedding destination.

Discover Ribble Valley has been distributed to tourism exhibitions and visitor information centres across the UK. It is also available from the Visitor Information Centre and Platform Gallery in Station Road, Clitheroe (01200 425566).



● Ribble Valley Borough Council's tourism and events officer, Tom Pridmore, with tourism interns Zsofi Varhegyi (left) from the International Business Academy in Denmark and Alexandra Nagy from the Budapest University of Technology and Economics, who have joined the authority for four months.

A new-look Freedom card!

SPRIGHTLY silvers and servicemen and women in Ribble Valley can grab a gym-swim membership for just £21 per month.

Ribble Valley Borough Council has joined forces with Ribblesdale Pool and Roefield Leisure Centre to offer a new-look Freedom card.

The card now offers unlimited daytime classes and gym access at Roefield Leisure Centre in Clitheroe, along with unlimited swimming at nearby Ribblesdale Pool.

Classes include Pilates, tai chi, aqua aerobics and stretch clinic, as well as active life and circuit sessions.

The Freedom card is also available to residents in receipt of income support benefits.

Further details are available from Ribblesdale Pool on 01200 424825.

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

**THANK YOU
TO OUR
STAGE 2
SPONSORS:**



PEDAL POWER

The Tour is coming to town!

RIBBLE Valley is to co-host one of the country's biggest sporting events in the UK on Monday, September 7.

The world's top cyclists and tens of thousands of spectators will descend on Ribble Valley and Pendle for Stage 2 of the 2015 Aviva Tour of Britain.

Stage 2 will see 20 of the world's top cycling teams, including Olympic and world champions, and Tour de France stage winners, power through Ribble Valley and Pendle from Clitheroe to Colne.

It is one of the most significant projects to be undertaken by Ribble Valley Borough Council in its 40-year history, reflecting the ambitious and confident way in which the council is

promoting and developing the area's economic potential.

There be significant benefits from the tens of thousands of spectators expected to descend on the two boroughs for the event, bringing with them an economic boost of around £3million.

The event will be broadcast internationally by 16 television channels across 139 territories in Europe, Australia and the USA. ITV will screen three hours of live coverage every day and a one-hour highlights programme at night.

Join us in giving the elite cyclists, their teams and visitors a warm Ribble Valley welcome.



Stunning scenery will greet cyclists



Real benefits from the tour

THE 2015 Aviva Tour of Britain is one of the most significant projects to be undertaken by Ribble Valley Borough Council in its 40-year history, reflecting the ambitious and confident way in which the council is promoting and developing the area's economic potential.

Not only will there be significant benefits from the tens of thousands of spectators expected to descend on Ribble Valley for Stage 2 of the Tour, but we anticipate an economic boost of around £3million across the two host boroughs.

At 300 square miles, most of which is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Ribble Valley is one of the largest boroughs in the UK, with the smallest population – around 54,000. Its two towns, Clitheroe and Longridge, and 44 villages are set in unspoilt countryside.

But stunning countryside is not Ribble Valley's only claim to fame, as Tour of Britain spectators will discover. The borough is one of the UK's premier destinations for food and drink, award-winning independent retailers, walking and cycling, and is a popular wedding destination.

The Tour of Britain attracts a huge following, as well as an international television audience, so is the ideal showcase for Ribble Valley's many attractions.

I would encourage our towns and villages to get involved in what I have no doubt will be a truly spectacular and landmark event.

We would like to thank our partners and sponsors for helping us host Stage 2 of the 2015 Aviva Tour of Britain and look forward to giving the elite cyclists, their teams and visitors a warm Ribble Valley welcome.

Stuart Hirst, Leader, Ribble Valley Borough Council

STAGE 2 of the 2015 Aviva Tour of Britain will showcase some of Ribble Valley's most breathtaking scenery.

The race starts in Castle Street, Clitheroe, at the foot of the town's historic Norman castle, before heading for the first King of the Mountain at the Nick o' Pendle via Barrow, Wiswell and Pendleton.

After dropping into Sabden, the race will head to Whalley, where the riders will turn left into King Street and head for the famous hairpin bend opposite the Judge Walmsley pub in Billington, which will bring the cyclists to a near standstill.

The race will then speed through Wilpshire, Clayton-le-Dale and Salesbury Common – the site of the race's first sprint – before crossing the A59 into Ribchester, then heading for Longridge.

The cyclists will power through the centre of Longridge, before heading for Chipping via Inglewhite Road. After Chipping, the race will take in the picturesque Trough of Bowland, including Whitewell, Dunsop Bridge,

Newton-in-Bowland and Slaidburn.

From there, the race heads for the borough of Pendle via Gisburn and the A59, where it encounters the second of three sprints, from West Marton to Barnoldswick, before the second King of the Mountain at Earby.

The race then heads for the third King of the Mountain at Barley, before briefly re-entering Ribble Valley at picturesque Downham.

After passing through Downham and Chatburn, the race will enter Clitheroe for the second time, powering down Chatburn Road for the last of the Stage 2 sprints, before leaving Clitheroe and entering Whalley for a second time, before the final stretch to the finish in Colne, via Read, Simonstone, Fence and Nelson.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Stuart Hirst said: "This is going to be a must-see event for local people and visitors.

"Cyclists weaving through the borough's wild and beautiful landscape will make for a spectacular sight, and we look forward to putting Ribble Valley firmly on the international map."

Recycled bikes to go to Kenyan street children

PUPILS from Ribblesdale High School, Clitheroe, and Pendle Vale College, Colne, have refurbished discarded mountain bikes for street children in Kenya as part of the legacy of Stage 2 of the 2015 Aviva Tour of Britain.

The youngsters joined Ribble Valley Mayor Bridget Hilton at the Nick o' Pendle to official launch the stage by lighting green and white flares, the King of the Mountain colours.

They were led up Pendle Hill, one of three Stage 2 King of the Mountain climbs, by Paul Oldham of Team Hope and Ian Wilkinson of Team Raleigh GAC, where they exchanged school pennants as a symbol of the partnership between the two boroughs in hosting the top event.

Both groups of pupils were riding refurbished and sprayed King of the Mountain green, which are to be sent to Glad's House in Mombasa, which provides education, health and social support to street children.

Ribble Valley Mayor Bridget Hilton said: "The tens of thousands of spectators expected to descend on Ribble Valley and Pendle for the Tour of Britain will bring significant benefits, but the refurbishment of mountain bikes by youngsters from Ribblesdale High School and Pendle Vale College for street children in Kenya is an particularly delightful legacy of the event and I would like to thank them for their splendid efforts."



Log on to dedicated Tour website

A DEDICATED Stage 2 website has been launched featuring a host of information for cycling enthusiasts and residents looking to keep abreast of the Tour of Britain.

The web site, tourofbritainstage2.co.uk includes downloadable maps of the route, featuring spectator zones and parking, information about the race and how businesses and schools can get involved, and road closures.

The web site will be continually updated over the summer months as further information becomes available.

There is also a dedicated email address, thetour@ribblevalley.gov.uk, for residents with specific concerns about the event, such as parking or road closures, or to request further information.

As Ribble Valley News went to press, spectator zones had been finalised for the Judge Walmsley at Billington, Whalley Arms at Whalley and Wellsprings Inn at the Nick o' Pendle, but others are under negotiation and will be publicised as soon as details become available.



DID YOU KNOW?

- Road cycle racing began as an organised sport in 1868 and the first cycling world championship was in 1893.
- The first winner of the Tour of Britain was Frenchman Robert Batot in 1945, when the race was known as the Victory Marathon.
- Since the race was rebranded the Tour of Britain in 2004, the only British winner has been Sir Bradley Wiggins riding for Team Sky in 2013.

- The Tour of Britain has four jerseys that are handed out to the best cyclists in distinct disciplines, the most coveted being the yellow jersey, which is given to the leading overall rider.
- The 2015 Aviva Tour of Britain starts in Beaumaris, Anglesey, on Sunday, September 6.
- At 154km, Stage 2 is the shortest stage, but the toughest, with many uphill sections and King of the Mountain climbs at Pendle Hill, Barley and Earby.
- Participants in the Tour of Britain will cycle a mammoth 760 miles in eight days.



Saddle up for summer as activities get under way

Cyclists urged to tackle the Gisburn Trail

TOUR enthusiasts are invited to get on their bikes at a premier cycling trail in Gisburn Forest.

The Gisburn Forest Bike Trail, funded by Ribble Valley Borough Council and the Ribble Valley Strategic Partnership, includes an easy eight-kilometre "blue" route for families and beginners, and a 22-kilometre "red" course for more experienced and expert cyclists.

The trails, which are set against the stunning backdrop of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, include tricky downhill and boardwalk sections and offer fine views over the nearby Stocks Reservoir.

The trails were made possible by funding from Sport England, the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Ribble Valley Borough Council, the Ribble Valley Strategic Partnership, United Utilities and the Forestry Commission.

Mark Beveridge, Ribble Valley Borough Council's head of cultural and leisure services, said: "The Gisburn Forest Bike Trail offers a great sporting experience to all cyclists, from thrill-seekers and fitness enthusiasts, to families enjoying an active day out.

"The trail is one of the UK's premier outdoor cycling facilities and offers the perfect opportunity for cyclists to make the most of Tour weekend."

Further details about the Gisburn Forest Bike Trail are available from the Clitheroe Visitor Information Centre on 01200 425566.



● **SUMMER OF FUN:** From the left are Phoebe Bolton, Ruby Bolton and Louise Farquhar



AS tour fever wheels into Ribble Valley, local youngsters are invited to get on their bikes for a host of summer activities.

Ribble Valley Borough Council has launched its 2015 summer activities booklet listing six weeks of sports, arts and crafts for youngsters.

The courses, being offered in conjunction with Lancashire County Council, the Grand and the Ribble Valley Children's Trust, will take place at venues throughout the borough, including village halls, primary schools, libraries, the Ribble Valley Tennis Centre, Longridge Sports and Arts Centre, Platform Gallery and Visitor Information Centre, the Grand, Roefield Leisure Centre, Ribblesdale Pool and Clitheroe Castle Museum.

The 24-page booklet features dozens of activities on offer over the summer months, including archery, arts and crafts, body zorbing, climbing, dance and drama, football, netball, orienteering, singing, storytelling, street dance, skateboarding and swimming.

Ribble Valley Borough Council's sports development officer, Peter Fletcher, said: "This year's summer activities booklet is the most comprehensive yet, featuring a bumper crop of activities for young people.

"From body zorbing to zumba, there's no need for boredom in Ribble Valley during the summer months, and with Tour fever expected to wheel into the borough towards the end of August there's never been a better time to get out and get active.

"We are grateful to the fantastic venues and dedicated volunteers, who have joined forces to make these activities possible."

The booklet is available from the Ribble Valley Borough Council Offices in Church Walk, Clitheroe, or ribblevalley.gov.uk.

Half-price orienteering maps during Tour

● **JUST THE TICKET:** Connor Atherton and Zara Blackledge



AN orienteering course at Clitheroe Castle could prove just the ticket for families over the summer months.

And maps for the popular course are up for grabs for half price over Tour weekend.

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 has 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 who want to improve their navigation skills, or for anyone who loves the outdoors.

"It is suitable for all ages and fitness levels, families, the elderly and 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."

Maps costing £2 are available from the Clitheroe Visitor Information Centre, or £1 during Tour of Britain weekend, Saturday, September 5, and Sunday, September 6.

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