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We're fighting for better rail services

A SCHEME to get Ribble Valley rail services back on track has received the green flag from the borough council.

The council's economic development committee has agreed to press for the doubling of passenger services between Clitheroe and Manchester and investigate the restoration of services between Clitheroe and Hellifield.

The committee heard increasing the hourly Manchester service to half-hourly and adding a late-night service would greatly enhance the travel experience of the line's 284,000 or so

annual passengers.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Ken Hind said: "We have decided to lobby Secretary of State for Transport Chris Grayling, Network Rail and Northern Trains for the extension of services between Clitheroe and Manchester and the possible reintroduction of passenger trains to Hellifield, which will link Clitheroe to Skipton, Bradford and Leeds to the East and Lancaster and Carlisle to the West.

"This will take cars off our congested roads and bring more visitors to Ribble Valley, as well as enhancing employment

and economic development."

Marjorie Birch, chairman of Ribble Valley Rail, added: "We are excited by any plan to improve rail services in the borough.

"We certainly need more trains and fewer cancellations between Clitheroe and Manchester and look forward to working with the council on this issue."

The economic development committee has requested detailed briefings from Lancashire rail specialists and Northern Rail about the feasibility of increasing passenger services.

● Turn to centre spread for more economic development news.



'Seize the moment' call from councillor

A COUNCILLOR born just three years after universal suffrage is calling on women to "seize the moment" and make their mark on public life.

Veteran Ribble Valley councillor Joyce Holgate, 86 (pictured above), is calling on women to ensure they are registered to vote and consider standing for election as the UK commemorates the 100th anniversary of the start of voting rights for women.

The 1918 Representation of the People Act gave propertied women over the age of 30 and all men the vote, paving the way for the extension of suffrage to all women in 1928.

Councillor Holgate, who has represented Whalley on Ribble Valley Borough Council for 23 years, been borough mayor twice and received an MBE for services to local government in 2011, said: "A hundred years ago, women could not stand for election or even vote.

"So what better way to remember and celebrate those

who campaigned tirelessly in the face of great hostility for votes for women than by registering to vote and even standing for election?

"I have been involved in many aspects of community life during my time as a borough councillor and been rewarded and enriched every step of the way.

"I would encourage all sections of the community, particularly woman and the young, to register to vote and have their say in elections, or better still seize the moment and take up public life."

Voter registration is available to anyone aged 16 or over (a person may register to vote at 16, but may not vote until they are 18), a British or qualifying Commonwealth citizen who has the right to enter and remain in the UK, or a citizen of the Republic of Ireland or other European Union (EU) member state.

● Local elections in Ribble Valley take place in May, 2019, and voter registration is available at gov.uk.



● ON TRACK: From the left are Ribble Valley Borough Council's regeneration policy officer, Craig Matthews; Rupert Swarbrick, chairman of the council's economic development committee; council leader Ken Hind and Ribble Valley Rail chairman Marjorie Birch

Refuse collection maintained despite cuts

RIBBLE Valley's much-admired refuse collection and recycling service is to continue as normal despite a £430,000 cut in funding from Lancashire County Council.

Councillors have agreed to protect the service after the withdrawal of recycling credits by Lancashire County Council, which is the refuse disposal authority.

Recycling credits reward borough councils for collecting recyclables and are funded from savings made by county councils in taking less material to landfill.

But Lancashire County Council has said the payments will cease from April 1.

Stuart Carefoot, chairman of Ribble Valley Borough Council's community services committee, said: "Recycling and refuse collection is one of our most successful services, so rather than reduce it in any way we have adjusted our budgets to compensate for the loss of the credits.

"We will not be charging for the collection of green waste, the only authority in Lancashire not to do so, and will be maintaining weekly collections.

"This excellent service is down to a committed workforce that gets on with the job come-rain-or-shine and is a fantastic example of the dedication, care and effort that council employees put into making the borough a great place to live."

● VISITOR BOOST: Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Ken Hind (right), with the council's tourism and events officer, Tom Pridmore



Visitors flock to our 'Dordogne'

VISITORS are flocking to Ribble Valley, according to new national figures.

According to the latest figures, Ribble Valley now attracts over 3.66million annual visitors, a 6.3 per cent increase, who spend about £177million between them.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Ken Hind said: "Tourism is a key part of our economic strategy and we recognise its potential for growth.

"Our challenge is to develop the visitor economy, while ensuring it does not detract from the beauty of the area, or adversely affect the local community.

"This is why we are implementing a strategy that targets key markets, such as food and drink, walking and weddings."

Ribble Valley is one of the UK's premier food destinations, dubbed 'the Dordogne of the UK', while Clitheroe hosts an annual food festival that attracts tens of thousands of visitors.

At personal request, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales visited a food festival showcase last year, while Holmes Mill in Clitheroe hosted

a conference organised by Marketing Lancashire and the Department of International Trade to celebrate Lancashire's £735million food economy.

Ribble Valley Borough Council has also spearheaded Wedding Heaven, a partnership between wedding venues and suppliers working collaboratively to develop the borough as a premier wedding destination.

A key tool in the borough's tourism offer is the Ribble Valley Visitor Guide and this year's publication is flying off the shelves.

It features sections on food, shopping, heritage, outdoor activities, weddings, the arts, and comprehensive events and accommodation listings.

It also features an innovative section dedicated to dog-walkers, including the best dog-walking routes, dog-friendly places to stay, a 'dog play barn' and a programme of dog pub walks.

Discover Ribble Valley has been distributed to tourism exhibitions and visitor information centres across the UK, and is available from visitribblevalley.gov.uk.

Leader's message

We're building on our strengths

A VIBRANT borough bursting with amazing spaces, people and places – that's the vision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.

The council has put economic development at the top of its agenda, with the establishment of a dedicated economic development committee and search for an economic development and planning director charged with leading a team focused on growing the local economy.

A new promotional web site with the strapline, Amazing spaces, people and places, is also under construction and will be unveiled towards the summer.

We aim to build on the council's track record in rural regeneration, which has already established Ribble Valley as a premier food and drink destination, to drive the local economy, maximise enterprise and create jobs.

Ribble Valley Borough Council has lost 40 per cent of its Government grant since 2010 and it will never return.

In the post-austerity era ahead, we will have to maximise the council's income to spend on services for the benefit of the public.

The Government proposes to end the revenue support grant to local government and allow local councils to keep 75 per cent business rates by 2020 and we are preparing for this change.

We plan to create jobs, improve infrastructure for the increased population and keep our young people housed and working in Ribble Valley.

New business parks are proposed, as well as boosting the borough's leisure and hospitality offering, including a new Clitheroe Market redevelopment.

At the heart of our policies will be the rural economy, agriculture and tourism to more attract visitors to our fells, historic monuments and shops.

Enterprise and innovation are our watchwords, our message: Ribble Valley is a vibrant borough bursting with amazing spaces, people and places.

**Ken Hind, Leader
Ribble Valley Borough Council**



£1.8million windfall to help preserve iconic Pendle Hill

PENDLE Hill – one of Lancashire's most iconic landscapes – has received a £1.8million windfall from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The funding will be used to restore important wildlife and landscape features, tell the stories of Pendle people from the past, explore the geology and heritage of the hill and inspire others to enjoy the area.

Access to the hill will be improved, walls, hedgerows, grasslands and woodlands restored and traditional rural crafts revived.

Apprenticeships will be offered to young people wanting to pursue a career outdoors and learning opportunities for schools and groups created.

Walking routes will be improved and made accessible, while information points at Barley, Downham, Spring Wood and the Nick of Pendle will be enhanced.

The project is being managed by the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership made up of Ribble Valley Borough Council, Pendle Council, Lancashire County Council, Natural England, the RSPB, Ribble Rivers Trust, Pendle Heritage and Pendle Leisure Trust.

Robert Thompson, Ribble Valley Borough Council's representative on the partnership, said: "Pendle Hill is an iconic landmark, with a rich history, heritage, culture and ecology.

"This windfall will allow us to preserve and improve this important landscape at a time when the local visitor economy is booming, and we look forward to working on this important project over the coming years."

Albert Atkinson, who represents Ribble Valley North-East on Lancashire County Council and is chairman of the Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership, said: "This grant will help to safeguard the heritage and environment of this much-loved Lancashire landmark.

"Pendle Hill is a very special place and I welcome the opportunity to preserve and develop it for future generations."

Further information is available at forestofbowland.com.



We have much to be proud about, say peers

RIBBLE Valley Borough Council has much to be proud about – that's the verdict from its 'peer challenge'

Peer challenges are a Local Government Association initiative, where senior officers and councillors from other authorities review a council's work and offer friendly suggestions on how it can be improved.

Ribble Valley Borough Council's peer challenge team spent three days at the authority reviewing how it is led and governed, financially managed, the future economic development of the borough and how to balance growth and housing.

The team interviewed 77 people, including council staff, councillors, partners and stakeholders, facilitated 12 focus groups and reviewed a number of the council's policies and strategies.

And the peer challenge report has said Ribble Valley Borough Council has "much to be proud about."

"The council delivers good core services through a committed workforce, achieving high levels of customer satisfaction and value for money.

"It has a history of prudent financial management and remains in a comfortable position relative to the rest of the sector," the report said.

The team has made a number of suggestions for improvement, which are currently under consideration, and their report is available at ribblevalley.gov.uk.

● The council's 2018 satisfaction survey, which asked questions on a range of issues, including council services, community safety, road and pavement repairs, dog fouling, recycling and refuse collection, sport and leisure facilities, and open spaces, has attracted hundreds of responses, which are currently being analysed. The results will be reported in the next issue of Ribble Valley News.

Council tax to rise for only second time in 10 years

RIBBLE Valley Borough Council's share of the council tax for 2018/18 is to increase by just 3.4 per cent – that is £5 on a Band D property.

The council's policy and finance committee gave the increase the go-ahead, only the second in nearly a decade, despite significant reductions in Government funding.

Council leader Ken Hind said: "Like all other local authorities, we have seen a large reduction in financial support, which means budgeting has been extremely challenging.

"Next year, we also face increased costs of £430,000, due to the loss of refuse collection cost-sharing income from Lancashire County Council.

"I am pleased to say that we have absorbed this loss, without changes to our refuse collection service, or introducing charges for the collection of green waste, unlike many neighbouring councils.

"We have been able to recommend a budget to full council that proposes just a small increase in council tax, while maintaining services.

"Ribble Valley has the lowest council tax in

Lancashire and one of the lowest in the country, which is 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, 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 ribblevalley.gov.uk.

Chipping gets connected to superfast broadband

AROUND 800 homes in Chipping will be able to connect to ultrafast broadband thanks to an impressive volunteer-led project and Ribble Valley Borough Council cash boost.

Community group CHAIN: Chipping Area Internet Network and B4RN: Broadband for the Rural North have installed a fibre broadband hub at Chipping Village Hall thanks to £9,700 from the council's Voluntary Organisations Fund.

Access to adequate broadband remains a big challenge for rural businesses and communities. Lack of technological capacity can have a significant economic and social impact, and Ribble Valley is riddled with 'not-spots', where there is no mobile phone signal.

Chipping councillor Simon Hore said: "Broadband brings huge benefits to rural communities. It allows people to enjoy things that others take for granted, like shopping online and using Skype to keep in touch with family and friends.

"The internet is now an essential part of everyday life, yet the task of connecting rural residents and businesses is much greater, due to lower population densities and geography, which makes the



● SUPERFAST: Ribble Valley Borough Council's head of housing and regeneration, Colin Hirst (centre), with members of the Chipping Area Internet Network

commercial case for investment more challenging.

"The project has been made possible thanks to the hard work of volunteers, particularly the teams who laid fibre ducting direct to people's homes, and the support of Ribble Valley Borough Council.

"Although the total system still requires substantial investment by

the community in money and time, the council funding was essential to get the project started.

Chipping residents and community groups have already invested over £90,000 by buying shares or making a loan to B4RN.

Shares benefit from 30 per cent tax relief under HMRC Enterprise Investment Scheme rules and fixed

five-year loans currently attract interest at 4 per cent.

The first homes have just been connected, benefiting from 1GB internet access, with the remainder of Chipping properties expected to be connected within two years.

● Further information on investing in the project is available at b4rn.org.uk.

Help us to get a handle on waste collection

HOUSEHOLDERS can help Ribble Valley's refuse collection and recycling service stay top of the pile by ensuring their 'handles are facing the highway'.

Each of the council's seven refuse collection crews empty up to 1,000 bins daily, with each bin weighing up to 1,000 kilos, and householders can give them a hand by ensuring the bin handles are facing the roadside.

Stuart Carefoot, chairman of Ribble Valley Borough Council's community services committee, said: "When the handles of wheeled bins are facing the highway, the

refuse collectors are able to empty the bins safely and quickly, ensuring the service efficient for households and safe for collectors.

"It's one small way in which we can work together as a community to ensure our refuse collection service remains one of the most successful in Lancashire."

Householders are also being urged to dispose of waste batteries correctly after combusting battery chemicals caused a spate of fires in refuse vehicles across the UK.

Lithium-ion batteries commonly found in laptops and mobile phones, nickel-cadmium batteries commonly found in remote controls and rechargeable batteries all

contain chemicals that can ignite.

They should be taken to household waste disposal centres in Henthorn Road, Clitheroe, or Chapel Hill, Longridge, where they will be stripped and recycled or disposed of as hazardous waste.

Although common alkaline batteries no longer contain mercury and are not considered hazardous waste, which means they can be disposed of with household refuse, they can still be recycled at household waste disposal centres.

The council also offers a weekly kerbside waste paper and cardboard collection and free white sacks are available from Ribble Valley Borough Council on 01200 425111.



'Ashes beam' installed at cemetery

A CEMETERY with an international reputation for alternative interments has installed an 'ashes beam' for the burial of cremated remains.

Clitheroe Cemetery, which is run by Ribble Valley Borough Council, has installed the beam in the main section of the cemetery for the burial of up to 50 ash urns marked by headstones.

The average funeral cost in the UK is now over £4,000 for burial and around £3,000 for cremation, but interring ashes offers a sense of tradition, with considerably less fuss and cost.

Liz Nash, Ribble Valley Borough Council's cemeteries officer (pictured above), said: "Alternative funerals are gaining popularity and the new ashes beam means cremated remains can be interred and marked by a headstone, offering the same sense of a traditional resting place as burial, but without undue ceremony and cost."

Part of the woodland burial area has been designated a woodland ashes glade where ashes can be interred in biodegradable boxes or poured directly onto the ground.

Interments in the woodland ashes glade are not recorded on a plan, nor do they have headstones, but an entry is made in the Register of Burials on the day of interment.

Clitheroe Cemetery has an international reputation for "green burials" and its woodland burial site was one of the first in the UK.

Interment in the ashes beam starts from £394 and further details are available from Ribble Valley Borough Council on 01200 425111.



● MAJOR PLAYERS: From the left are Sally Russell, design director at Mott MacDonald Bentley, Jamie Fitton, Ken Hind and the council's head of regeneration and housing, Colin Hirst

“Major player” relocates to Ribble Valley

TOP UK civil engineering company Mott MacDonald Bentley has opened new offices in Ribble Valley.

Mott MacDonald Bentley, or MMB, has transformed the former Carr Hall garden centre, Langho, into state-of-the-art open-plan offices for 200 employees working on the delivery of United Utilities' capital programme.

MMB is a multi-award-winning design-and-construct specialist that combines the skills and expertise of contractor JN Bentley with global consulting giant Mott MacDonald.

The company will spearhead projects across the North West encompassing the full spectrum of water and wastewater infrastructure and non-infrastructure, as well as energy-related work, from its new Carr Hall base.

Ribble Valley Borough Council assisted MMB's location to Carr Hall with planning and legislative advice.

Council leader Ken Hind said: “Mott MacDonald Bentley is a major player in the design-and-construct sector and its co-location with United Utilities at Carr Hall is a fantastic boon for Ribble Valley.

“Not only does this venture bring employment and training opportunities, but provides further evidence of Ribble Valley as a desirable area in which to start or grow businesses.

“We were delighted to assist MMB through the planning and legislative process to ensure a smooth and successful venture.”

MMB operations director Jamie Fitton added: “Carr Hall provides us with a great new resource for the joint-delivery of United Utilities' capital projects.

“We are looking forward to providing efficient, first-class outcomes for United Utilities customers across the North West from our new state-of-the-art facility at Carr Hall.”

MMB has a strong record of innovation and its Carr Hall site will include the famous Bentley Academy opening up career prospects in construction and civil engineering for local young people.

GROWING the local economy is vital if Ribble Valley's high-quality services are to be maintained following a 40 per cent cut in Government grants in recent years.

Ribble Valley Borough Council has established a dedicated economic development committee chaired by Longridge councillor Rupert Swarbrick and recruitment is underway for an economic development and planning director charged with attracting investment and boosting business rates.

A new web site showcasing the borough's many assets and featuring the council's new strapline, Amazing spaces, people and places, is also under construction.

Council leader Ken Hind said: “Ribble Valley is a visitor hotspot and premier food destination attracting an income of £104million a year. But up to 5,800 new homes could be built in the

borough by 2028 and we need to provide opportunities for business to start and relocate here to provide jobs and avoid becoming a dormitory community.

“Our economic development strategy is designed to draw investment into the A59 corridor that runs through Ribble Valley and we will be vigorously searching for businesses to relocate to the borough for a better working environment.”

The economic development committee has already agreed to lobby for improved rail and broadband services in the borough.

From chic business sheds to cutting-edge engineering, captains of industry to up-and-coming companies, read on to find out how Ribble Valley Borough Council is working hard to put the borough's amazing spaces, people and places on the map.

£8m brewery nears completion

THE new £8million head office of historic brewery Thwaites is taking shape in Ribble Valley.

Thwaites is relocating its famous 200-year-old brewery from Penny Street, Blackburn, to Sykes Holt, off the A59 at Mellor Brook.

The brewing development will feature new stables for Thwaites' iconic shire horses, a brewery, where it will brew craft exclusive beers for its own pubs, and a heritage centre celebrating its history.

Thwaites employs around 2,000 staff across the UK in its hotels and inns, and has 250 pubs on its books.

The company's 80 Blackburn-based staff will relocate to purpose-built offices at Sykes Holt.

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Ken Hind said: “Thwaites is a prestigious Lancashire company, with a long and illustrious history, and I cannot overstate how fantastic it is that it has chosen to relocate to our borough.

“We worked with Thwaites for two years to find a suitable site as close as possible to Blackburn and assisted the company at every stage of the planning process.

“This relocation will retain and create jobs, and the new visitor centre will provide a first-class attraction for Ribble Valley, which has a national reputation for fine food and drink.”

Rick Bailey, chief executive officer at Thwaites, said: “We are looking forward to moving to our new site later this year.

“We have spent a long time developing the plans and are putting a substantial long-term investment into the scheme, so it is great to see the site finally take shape.

“We are very proud to have been part of Blackburn for 210 years and it is great that we are staying so close to our roots.

“The reaction to our design has been extremely positive – we think it fits in really well with its rural location – and we are looking forward to the next 200 years in our new home.”

The new site is scheduled to open this summer.

Relocation will retain and create jobs and provide first-class attraction



● MEANING BUSINESS: Rupert Swarbrick (left) and James Alpe

‘Green’ business park set to open

THE first significant business park to be built in Clitheroe for 15 years is nearing completion by local entrepreneur James Alpe.

James is constructing 21 units ranging from 1,000 to 14,000 square feet on a seven-acre site at the Salthill Industrial Estate.

The ‘green’ business park will be powered by renewable energy via solar panels and feature a tree-planting scheme.

The units, which will include dedicated parking, will attract new businesses to Ribble Valley and allow established businesses to expand.

Rupert Swarbrick, chairman of Ribble Valley Borough Council's economic development committee, said: “This scheme has turned a derelict site into a valuable industrial and office park that will allow new businesses to move into the borough and

established businesses looking to expand to remain.

“It will provide a significant economic boost to Ribble Valley and we are delighted to have assisted James in this fantastic venture.”

James Alpe, who is director of Clitheroe company James Alpe Limited, one of the North West's leading vehicle specialists, said: “Having lived and worked in Clitheroe all my life, it is important to me that the town continues to thrive and evolve.

“This is a high-quality development for committed local businesses and interest in the units has been high.”

Ribble Valley Borough Council assisted James Alpe by allowing access to the business park over council-owned land and offering pre-planning guidance.



● PHONE HOME: From the left are Ken Hind, DAC director Steven Dade and the council's regeneration policy officer, Craig Matthews

Top telecoms firm sets up shop

AN up-and-coming company currently cornering the market in specialist telecommunications equipment has relocated to Ribble Valley.

DAC Limited has set up shop in the former Pendle Antiques Centre in Union Mill, Sabden, from where it has ramped up production of its sought-after vandal and weather-proof phones for export across the world.

The go-ahead firm relocated to Sabden after outgrowing its premises at the Lomeshaye Industrial Estate in Nelson and has transformed the redundant mill into a state-of-the-art production and export facility.

DAC director Steven Dade said: “The move has allowed us to greatly improve our manufacturing operation. With the additional space, we have been able to invest in more raw materials, which has helped us reduce lead times to customers,

Company ramps up production of phones for export around the world

review our manufacturing processes to become more efficient and improve our build times, meaning we can react more quickly to customer demand. “We have invested a significant sum of money in Union Mill to create a new production area, office space and infrastructure.

“Owning a building has given us greater flexibility as a business and we will be leasing parts of it, so it can become a hub for small businesses.

“There are seven of us in the company and we are already taking on two additional staff to meet new

business growth. “Sabden is a wonderful village and offers an extremely pleasant working environment for our staff, and we look forward to attracting more local people to help us expand further.”

Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Ken Hind said: “Union Mill is an iconic building in Sabden and it is great to see it starting another exciting chapter in its history.

“DAC is an up-and-coming company with a real sense of direction and I am delighted the council was able to assist it in finding the right premises, and offering pre-planning advice.”

DAC Limited supplies the rail sector, including Network Rail and the London Underground, as well as police forces in the UK and globally, tunnel operators, shipping companies, caravan park operators and companies in remote locations.



● JOBS BOOST: Ilyas Munshi (left) and Ken Hind

Jobs boost is on the menu thanks to new food outlets

A JOBS boost is on the menu at the Barrow Brook Business Village thanks to four new food outlets.

Blackburn-based Euro Garages has built four retail units housing Starbucks, Subway, Greggs and KFC.

The development, which includes 76 parking spaces, has provided 50 full and part-time jobs. Ribble Valley Borough Council leader Ken Hind said: “Euro Garages is a dynamic, successful company and its development at Barrow Brook has significantly contributed to the local economy and created employment.

“We have big ambitions for Barrow Brook and are delighted to have assisted this scheme with pre-planning advice.”

Euro Garages has become one of the UK's largest privately-owned forecourt operators since being founded in 2001 and enjoys partnerships with several leading forecourt and retail brands.

Ilyas Munshi, group commercial director at Euro Garages, said: “We aim to deliver a consumer experience that exceeds expectations.

“We are delighted to bring leading global brands to Ribble Valley and look forward to people living in and driving through the borough to access the facilities.

“We would like to thank Ribble Valley Borough Council for its support in realising this investment opportunity.”

LOCAL government is facing the challenge of taking on a greater role in health and social care.

The number of people aged over 85 in the UK has increased by a third in the last decade and is expected to double over the next, while Ribble Valley has an above average number of older residents – three per cent, as opposed to the UK average of 2.2.

The growing number of older people is cited as one of the principal reasons for the rising – and some feel unsustainable – demand in health and social care services.

At the same time, concerns about mental health and the health

of young people are gaining prominence across the UK.

Ribble Valley Borough Council has been providing public health services, such as affordable housing, health and fitness schemes, disabled adaptations and grants, parks and leisure facilities, for many years.

But read on to find out how it is now taking the lead on an innovative new partnership aimed at integrating health and social care in the borough, improving the health and wellbeing of residents and working towards official dementia-friendly status.

Pilot partnership aims to integrate health services



● HEALTH FIRST: Ribble Valley councillor Bridget Hilton (right), with Kirsty Hamer and Paul Hodges of the East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group

RIBBLE Valley Borough Council has joined forces with the health, housing and charity sectors to pilot a partnership aimed at integrating health services.

The Ribblesdale Community Partnership aims to join up health and care services in the Ribblesdale locality, comprising Clitheroe, Whalley, Sabden and Slaidburn.

It is chaired by Bridget Hilton, chairman of the council's health and housing committee, and meets every two months to improve the health of residents and access to health services, particularly by the young and isolated.

Councillor Hilton said: "The Ribblesdale Community Partnership, which is being

piloted for two years, will integrate the management of local health and care services in the borough's Ribblesdale locality.

"The partnership is the first step in the integration of health and social care, and we believe it can achieve a great deal to improve the health and wellbeing of Ribble Valley residents.

"We have been surveying residents to find out about their health needs and experiences of the health service, and their views are being analysed and considered."

The partnership has drawn up an action plan outlining several priorities around joined-up working, children and young people, mental health and self-care.



Next step in the borough's dementia bid

RIBBLE Valley Borough Council has taken the next step in its bid to become dementia-friendly.

The council's health and housing committee has set up a working group to look at how the borough can achieve official dementia-friendly status.

The council has spearheaded a number of dementia-friendly initiatives in recent years and wants to become one of only a handful of official dementia-friendly boroughs and councils in the UK.

Bridget Hilton, chairman of the council's health and housing committee, said: "We have made significant progress in promoting community awareness of and support for people with dementia.

"The Alzheimer's Society has outlined a number of key steps that need to be addressed in order to become officially recognised as a dementia-friendly community, some of which are either already in place, or can be addressed through existing partnerships.

"A working group will be looking at what steps the council needs to take to progress towards formal recognition, which may include staff training, access and building layouts, and dementia-friendly signage."

Ribble Valley Borough Council has been working with businesses, community groups and public and private sector organisations to establish the area as a hub of dementia-friendliness for several years.

The council has hosted dementia awareness sessions, developed a network of 'dementia friends' able to assist people with the condition and held dementia awareness sessions for staff.

It also unveiled East Lancashire's first 'memory bench' featuring soothing colours, calming words and surrounded by sensory plants noted for their aromatic and tactile properties outside the Ribble Valley Borough Council offices in Clitheroe.

Further memory benches have subsequently been placed in Waddington, Clitheroe Market and Castlegate, Clitheroe.

Council cash helps Shopmobility find new premises

A SHOP that provides living aids and mobility scooter hire has moved to new premises thanks to an £8,000 grant from Ribble Valley Borough Council.

Shopmobility has relocated to the former Peter Buckley Pharmacy in Railway View Road near the Ribble Valley Borough Council Offices car park.

As well as hiring mobility scooters and large items, such as hoists and turntables, it now stocks a range of living aids, such as spill-proof cups, folding canes and walking sticks, wall-mounted key safes and pill cutters and crushers.

Shopmobility is run by Simon O'Rourke, who said the popular service he started 11 years ago from a single stall on Clitheroe Market had outgrown its

Lowergate premises.

He said: "The service is going from strength to strength and we desperately needed more space. Thanks to the generosity of Ribble Valley Borough Council, Ingham Building Contractors, Dawson's and Peter Buckley Pharmacy, we have been able to relocate to the new premises and increase our stock of mobility aids for sale or hire.

"Residents are invited to pop in and see what we have to offer, or just for a brew and a chat, particularly if they fancy volunteering a bit of time each week, so that we can extend our opening hours!"

Bridget Hilton, chairman of Ribble Valley Borough Council's health and housing committee, said: "Shopmobility provides a much-needed and



appreciated service to residents and Simon and his team of volunteers do a fantastic job.

"The council is committed to identifying individual and community

needs, and responding where possible, and we are delighted to have supported Shopmobility."

Shopmobility doubles as an information point, offering leaflets,

information, advice and advocacy on disability issues. It is open Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10am to 4pm, and further details are available on 01200 425028.

RIBBLE Valley is one of the safest places in Lancashire and behind the scenes a great deal of hard work is going on to ensure this remains the case.

Ribble Valley Borough Council chairs the Ribble Valley Community Safety Partnership, which is responsible for developing a crime and disorder reduction strategy for the borough every three years outlining priorities and actions.

The partnership, comprising the borough and county councils, youth, police and fire and rescue services, oversaw a 13 per cent reduction in anti-social behaviour in the borough last year.

From alcohol reduction to juvenile nuisance, read on to find out how the partnership and its members are working hard to ensure Ribble Valley remains one of the safest places in the UK.

Pub blitz exposes age-check failings

A CHRISTMAS crackdown on underage drinking resulted in 11 out of 24 Ribble Valley pubs failing a Check 25 test.

And the pubs in question have been told to get their house in order and attend Check 25 refresher training.

In the Check 25 scheme, pubs have to ask anyone who looks under 25 to prove that they are over 18.

But on 'Mad Friday' 11 Ribble Valley pubs failed to check the ages of test purchasers who were aged 15 and 16.

The festive blitz was organised by the Ribble Valley Community Alcohol Partnership, which also distributed posters to shops pointing out the consequences of buying booze for the under-18s to drink unsupervised.

Over 1,000 brochures outlining the dangers of underage drinking and child sexual exploitation were distributed to secondary school pupils and there was an extensive social media and radio campaign.

Ribble Valley councillor and partnership chairman Robert Thompson said: "Drinking alcohol brings serious risks to children,

putting them in danger of physical and social harm.

"While great progress has been made in reducing the sale of alcohol to under-18s via the Check 25 scheme, it is disappointing that nearly half of the pubs tested on Mad Friday failed.

"Those that did have had to attend a Check 25 refresher course at their own expense and licensed premises throughout the borough are warned that we will be running spot-checks throughout the year."

The Ribble Valley Community Alcohol Partnership, comprising Ribble Valley Borough Council,

Lancashire Trading Standards, the police, schools, shops and the health sector, was launched last year to tackle alcohol-related harm to young people by reducing the sale of alcohol to them, advising them on the dangers of drinking and promoting alcohol-free activities.

Community Alcohol Partnerships have enjoyed considerable success across the UK tackling underage drinking with a mix of education, enforcement, community engagement and the provision of diversionary activities for young people.

If you have information on the supply of alcohol to young people or street drinking, contact the police on 101.

● Photograph courtesy of Convenience Store



CCTV CLAMPDOWN IN CAR PARKS



● ON CAMERA: Sabden councillor Ricky Newmark and Ribble Valley Borough Council's partnership officer, Dilys Day

Vandals told: you're in our sights

VANDALS in Sabden and Chipping are in the sights of crime prevention bosses thanks to two new CCTV systems.

The Ribble Valley Community Safety Partnership has installed the £5,000 systems in Sabden and Chipping car parks after a spate of anti-social behaviour and damage to vehicles.

The systems will be used to gather evidence so that the culprits can be prosecuted.

Sabden councillor Ricky Newmark said: "The majority of young people behave responsibly, but a minority are making a nuisance of themselves, in some cases vandalising vehicles.

"Not only do these incidents cause distress and inconvenience to vehicle owners, but they discourage villagers from using the car park, which creates congestion on already clogged side streets.

"The perpetrators can be abusive when asked to move on and some parents have reportedly demanded proof when informed of their child's behaviour, so thanks to these CCTV systems the police will be able to identify the culprits and take action."

Chipping councillor Simon Hore added: "The new CCTV system will significantly improve the chances of identifying the culprits and where appropriate bring a prosecution.

"This will restore confidence in villagers to use the car park, rather than leave vehicles on roads and side streets.

"Chipping is a beautiful village and we are determined to take action against juvenile nuisance."

The schemes cost £5,472 and received funding from the Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner.

Youth disco to help fight anti-social behaviour

LONGRIDGE is to get a new youth disco in a bid to put anti-social behaviour in a spin.

The Ribble Valley Community Safety Partnership has joined forces with Longridge Community Arts and Lancashire County Council to start the monthly disco at a venue to be decided.

Longridge has been beset with anti-social behaviour and last year the town centre was the subject of a 48-hour dispersal order, including the mobilisation of a mounted police unit, following pleas from

desperate residents.

Now youngsters are to be offered the opportunity to learn new skills, by planning and developing the disco, DJ'ing and running a tuck shop.

Longridge Community Arts surveyed over 40 'challenging' young people in the town, who said a youth disco would divert them from anti-social behaviour.

Kieren Spencer, of Longridge Community Arts, said: "Local youngsters have told us they want a youth disco, so we are going to work

with councils, community groups and societies to make it happen.

"We hope as many residents and youngsters as possible will get involved, so that it becomes a real asset to the community.

Longridge councillor Rupert Swarbrick said: "We have been working with the Ribble Valley Community Safety Partnership and voluntary groups for some time to try and resolve anti-social behaviour and I would like to thank Longridge Community Arts for taking this project forward."



● IN A SPIN: Longridge councillor Rupert Swarbrick, with Kieren Spencer and Rachael Ray of Longridge Community Arts

Castle to host weekly 'park runs' to help community get active

WEEKLY 'park runs' in the grounds of Clitheroe Castle are out of the blocks after getting the thumbs-up from Ribble Valley Borough Council.

The council's community services committee heard that Ribble Valley Runners and the Clitheroe Castle Running Group want to hold the events at 9am every Saturday in conjunction with national charity parkrun.

Parkrun offers free, safe, timed 5km runs every week in over 500 locations across the UK.

The Clitheroe Castle junior park run has been operating successfully on Sundays since last October and currently attracts around 50 children aged four to 14 every week for timed 2km runs.

Ribble Valley Borough

Council's sports development officer, Peter Fletcher, said:

"There has been a real surge in running nationally and locally in recent years and the Clitheroe Castle junior park runs have been a great success.

"The proposed adult park run will be organised by local volunteers and inclusive and open to all.

"The nearest park runs are currently in Accrington, Burnley or Preston, but now Ribble Valley residents will be able to take part in regular organised runs in Clitheroe.

"I would like to thank Ribble Valley Runners and the Clitheroe Castle Running Group for their hard work in getting these park runs off the ground."

It is hoped the adult park run will start in late spring and further details will be available at parkrun.org.uk.



Tai chi in the park to help improve fitness

EVERY morning parks and public areas in China come alive to thousands of people, some dressed for a day in the office, undertaking a series of stretches and moves called tai chi.

Now Ribble Valley residents can take part in public tai chi sessions on Friday, May 18, as part of a countywide health day.

Ribble Valley Borough Council is hosting a series of events throughout the day aimed at encouraging people of all ages and fitness levels to take part in physical activity and log a mile by walking, running, swimming, rowing, or cycling.

The tai chi sessions, at Clitheroe Castle Bandstand and John Smiths Playing Field, Longridge, will take

place after a one-mile walk starting at 11am in Longridge and 6pm in Clitheroe.

The council's health and fitness officer, Tracy Balko, said: "We run many activities and programmes in the borough to help people lose weight and get fitter, some of which we will be showcasing during the health day.

"The day will be a great way to kickstart your keep fit programme and what better way than to cap it off with a tai chi session in two of Ribble Valley's most beautiful parks."

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.

Health day activities in



● MOVING: Ribble Valley Borough Council's health and fitness officer, Tracy Balko, and Longridge councillor Rupert Swarbrick

Ribble Valley: Roefield Leisure Centre, Clitheroe – 9am to noon, tag team mile; 9am to 6pm, rowing challenge; 11am to 12.30pm, circuit mile. Edisford Primary School, Clitheroe – 2pm, Olympic mile. John Smiths Playing

Field, Longridge – 11am, walk and tai chi. Clitheroe Castle Bandstand – 6pm, walk and tai chi.

Further details are available from Ribble Valley Borough Council's up and active team on 01200 425111.

Culinary treats at top food festival

MAKE a date in your diary for this year's Clitheroe Food Festival, which takes place on Saturday, August 11.

The festival, now in its eighth year, attracts thousands of food enthusiasts from across the North West.

This year's festival features quality Lancashire produce, inspirational chefs, exciting culinary activities for all the family and great music.

A huge array of wonderful foods, from organic meat and dairy produce made from traditional Lancashire breeds to handmade pies and pastries, wonderful ice cream, delicious cakes and a feast of fruit and vegetables packed with authentic flavours will be found at the festival, which is considered one of the best in the UK.

Visitors can experience local artisan produce – such as craft ales, ciders and spirits – as well as cuisine from further afield at authentic street food stands, while historic Clitheroe Castle will host family-friendly displays and stalls explaining how the purchase of local food and drink benefits the countryside and rural economy.

Further details about the festival are available at clitheroefoodfestival.com.



Borough to receive slice of £100m for sport

RIBBLE Valley is to receive a slice of £100million to trial new ways of delivering sport and physical activity to people with depression, anxiety and stress.

Pennine Lancashire – comprising the six East Lancashire borough councils and Lancashire County Council – has been chosen as one of 12 areas in the UK to

pilot schemes aimed at encouraging better collaboration between local authorities and community groups in the delivery of sport and physical activity.

Sport England has received Lottery funding to look at how communities can work together to tackle inactivity – from improved transport and street lighting to the quality of parks and open spaces and

how sport and activity is promoted by GPs.

Pennine Lancashire's priority group will be 40,000 people with depression, anxiety or stress.

Sport England will be working alongside the Pennine Lancashire authorities to devise a bespoke approach based on the unique needs of their communities.

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