

Gilsland Village Magazine

THE CAMPAIGN TO REOPEN GILSLAND STATION NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

By Malcolm Chainey, Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership Chair

The station at Gilsland closed in the 1967 Beeching cuts, though the site of the station remains intact, along with space for car parking and a subway linking the two sides of the railway line. The village now relies entirely on a very sparse bus service for its public transport.

To date, four studies have examined the viability of the railway station. The first two looked only at the resident population but in 2013 its potential use as a destination for tourists was also included. This study found that including tourists made the business case much more attractive, a conclusion that was confirmed by a further study in 2017.

Reopening the station is supported by the current MPs for Hexham and Carlisle (as it has been by their predecessors) as well as councillors on either side of the county boundary. However, Network Rail's estimate of the rebuilding cost (inflated by signalling costs) was initially unfeasibly high - we successfully challenged this, reducing the costs significantly. Now we have political, business and community support for a good value project to reopen the station. It feels like we're nearly there but the project is in danger of being lost in the system.

Which is where you come in. The North East Combined Authority is refreshing its Rail Strategy, which will be the subject of a six week consultation early in 2026. It will be immensely helpful if there is a spirited response from the community in support of reopening. This would hugely support our work to ensure that the project is included in regional transport plans, a vital pre-requisite to it actually happening.

The exact form of the consultation won't be known until it's launched, so it's not possible to give advice on how to respond at this stage. Once we know, we'll be able to provide some guidance - please keep checking our website for news: www.tvcrp.org.uk.

Doing anything on the railway is always a lengthy and expensive business. If we keep plugging away we hope eventually to get the result we want - a railway station at Gilsland once again.

UPDATE FROM GILSLAND SCHOOL

By Nic Atkinson, Headteacher

Kingfisher class (Key Stage 2) had two very wet, but very enjoyable days at the Children's forest working with Lulu McGuinness and Alison Clarricoats to learn more about our local environment, see how the trees they planted earlier in the year are thriving and plant the next section of trees for the forest. It was lovely for the children to meet up again with their friends from Shankhill CE Primary School.

The children were very respectful during our Remembrance Assembly. George brought in some of his Great Grandad's war medals and told us about them. Some of the children read out their Remembrance Haiku poems they had written. Thank you to everyone who contributed so generously to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

We kicked off anti bullying week with everyone wearing odd socks to celebrate individuality and to show that it's okay to be different. The mismatched socks symbolize that everyone is unique and should be accepted for who they are, helping to raise awareness about bullying and promote kindness and respect. This year the focus of Anti-Bullying week was 'The Power of Good' which children looked into in more detail during their MSSC morning which focused on the theme 'Power of Good' and linked to our Christian values of compassion and friendship.

The children also enjoyed learning more about the great work Children in Need do to support projects and charities across the UK that help disadvantaged children and young people. Our school families once again contributed kindly.

We are looking forward to welcoming Revd. Ben Phillips into our Gilsland school family to share a collective worship at the beginning of December and have many exciting activities planned for the lead up to Christmas, including our Christmas trip to Cragg House Farm in Buttermere. We have already begun practicing for our Christmas Production this year which will take place on Tuesday 16th December.

THE SAMSON INN HOPES TO REOPEN SOON

By Jane McDaid, GCSL Chair

We are pleased to advise that significant progress has been made towards re-opening The Samson. Exit arrangements have been agreed with George, whom we continue to wish well with his next venture. We anticipate taking vacant possession of the pub at the end of this month.

Thank you to those shareholders who volunteered for the tenant recruitment panel. The panel met recently with the prospective new tenant and both the panel, and the Management Committee, unanimously approved proceeding with them.

Heads of Terms for the lease have been agreed and solicitors have been instructed. However, there are some necessary legal formalities to conclude before we can share further details of the new tenant.

We are all working positively and collaboratively together, and hope to re-open The Samson in December.

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE THRESHING BARN?

By Amanda Drago

Green Croft Arts is based at The Threshing Barn, located between Greenhead and Gilsland, and we provide a wide range of creative and wellbeing activities for communities across West Northumberland. Our programme includes free events designed for our local residents, as well as paid workshops and retreats that help attract day visitors to the area.

Free Activities

- Gilsland Lantern Parade - Saturday 6th December meeting at Gilsland CofE Primary School walking to House Of Meg and enjoying their Christmas Market and Hadrian Singers Choir.
- Voices from the Wall is an exciting new sound walk project that brings the history, stories, and atmosphere of Hadrian's Wall to life through sound & storytelling. Susannah Ronnie is leading 5 weeks of creative writing sessions starting on the Thursday 8th January between 1pm - 3pm.
- All female dance company Ceyda Tanc Dance, will be performing at Gilsland Village Hall in March '26. They are leading a community contemporary dance project for women aged 14-100 years. Are you interested in contemporary dance and would you like to perform in a curtain raiser to the show?

Paid Activities

We offer weekly Pilates, yoga and adult ballet classes, along with deeply relaxing meditation classes & sound baths—either floating at Hayton Pool or paired with a fire ceremony. Our creative workshop programme also runs throughout the year employing local artists to deliver.

If you would like to find out more about what we do head over to our website www.greencroftonthewall.com.

MOSS PETERAL FARM ARE LOOKING FOR 'ALLIES'

By Sue Seymour

We enjoy working with like-minded people on our conservation projects and, with more work in the pipeline, are thinking of getting together a volunteer group of helpers who'd be interested in an on-going relationship with Moss Peteral.

We'd suggest that 'Allies' might come to between 3 and 6 workdays in the year where tasks could be:

- Tree, hedge or scrub planting/maintenance/monitoring
- Restoring a heritage feature eg drovers' water troughs
- Collecting wildflower or tree seed and growing on
- Biodiversity surveying/mapping/recording
- Fence removal
- Self-sown sitka removal

We'd provide instruction, refreshments and lunch on workdays. We're not expecting people to be already skilled at the task in hand beforehand. We'll make sure there's someone here to give instruction but if you happen to have expertise to share so much the better!

In return, besides the obvious feel-good benefits of learning and doing useful stuff outside with others, we could offer:

- Involvement in planning future conservation measures
- Opportunity to meet expert ecologists etc. here
- Meat box
- Open invitation to visit/walk/picnic/wild camp here
- Undertake own creative project

Does this appeal to you? The scrub planting, an ideal group project, is coming up in January. The work will involve erecting several types of tree protection, planting, recording and mapping – something for everyone. If you'd like to get involved and, potentially join the proposed 'allies' group, please come along on Dec 6th – we're not planning a working day, maybe a walk to see the trees planned earlier this year, a chat and lunch. Do email or phone if you'd like to come so we know numbers for catering – and if you can't come to this first meeting we'll keep in touch as plans for 2026 develop.

Contact: sue@mosspectral.com; 07935 259 416; Moss Peteral, Greenhead, Brampton, CA8 7HY.

WEEKLY EVENTS

Mondays

- Community Coffee Morning | Village Hall | 10.30am - 12.30pm

Tuesdays

- Yoga | Haltwhistle Leisure Centre | 10.30am - 11.30am
- G&G Knitting Group | House of Meg | 1pm - 3pm
- Outreach Post Office | Village Hall | 1pm - 4pm

Wednesdays

- Craft Group | Village Hall | 1pm - 4pm

Thursdays

- Outreach Post Office | Village Hall | 9.30am - 12.30pm
- Coffee Break | Methodist Chapel | 10.30am - 12 noon

Fridays

- Outreach Post Office | Village Hall | 9.30am - 12.30pm
- Yoga | Haltwhistle Leisure Centre | 7.15pm - 8.15pm

Saturdays

- Hatha Flow Yoga | Green Croft Arts | 9am - 10am

BULLETIN BOARD

Christmas Carols at Gilsland Village Hall at 6pm on 20th December. Come and spread some Christmas cheer with your favourite carols, a glass of mulled wine and nibbles. There will be a raffle to raise funds towards the £3,500 essential health and safety works to the rear of the hall. Donations of raffle prizes gratefully received at the hall. Santa will arrive with a small gift for the children.

A Ceremony of Carols on Sunday 14th December at 3pm at Lanercost Priory. Sparkling seasonal works from the Renaissance onwards, including Benjamin Britton's A Ceremony of Carols for voices and harp. Brampton Chamber Choir, directed by Simon Mortimer with harp soloist Lucy Nolan. £10 on the door, students and under 16s free.

Ivan Riddell would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for 2026.

BULLETIN BOARD

Hadrian Singers The local community Choir is set to sing their special new Christmas set of carols and early music for the patients at the hospital, for the Lantern Parade in Gilsland and, in full Victorian costume, in the Castle in Newcastle this month. The Reindeer Calling chant has to be heard to be believed! We'll start up again in early January as usual, expanding our repertoire and dealing with the post Christmas blues in the best possible way. We meet on Friday evenings in the Community Room at Haltwhistle Hospital at 7pm sharp. We leave, smiling and happy, at 8.30. If you'd like to try the prescription, the first session is free - just come along. All ages welcome.

Haltwhistle History Group December Talk: Nylon Stockings. Woollen Socks, Knitting Wool, and Electricity Bills - Memories of a Haltwhistle Drapery Business. "W Thompson and Son, Ladies and Gents Outfitters" was established in the early 1900s and traded until the 1970s. Many Haltwhistle people will probably remember it as simply the "Wool Shop" run by brothers John (Jackie) and Frank Thompson. Barrie Thompson, Jackie's son, will give a little information on the family and shop history and then recount some of his own memories of the business and some of the business practices that nowadays would be regarded as little more than quaint. Some of these business practices relate to the family's Sock/Stocking Factory that occupied small premises to the rear of the long defunct railway station at Greenhead. The talk will highlight several specific memories. But, as Barrie will point out, memories can be somewhat odd and may vary from the actual facts! Wednesday, 10th December, at 10.30 in the Community Room at the Hospital in Haltwhistle. All welcome, with or without your own recollections of the town when it was full of shops, or of your own Christmas Stockings of long ago! January Talk: Wednesday, 14th January 2026: Nick Johnson will give a talk about the Vintage Tree Trails he has been following in order to ensure these amazing and precious trees are protected - and what he has found in this area.

Poetry Drop-in First Wednesday of the month in Greenhead Village Hall, from 1.30 to 3pm. Listen, read, share, enjoy. The themes are - December: Winter; in January: People. All welcome and free. If you need a lift, ring Annette on 07968 229767 or Wendy 0169774744 Supported by NCDC.

BULLETIN BOARD

Hadrian's Wall Farmers Market on Sunday 14th December from 10am to 2pm at Greenhead Village Hall. A village hall packed with great ideas for Christmas. All local and direct from the producer. Lovely homemade refreshments while you shop. Stay local, buy the best. (No market in January)

Carols by Candlelight at St Mary Magdalene on 23rd December at 6.30pm. Amid the seasonal rush, pause for some moments of calm and joy this Christmas. Come and join us to sing carols by candlelight - everyone will be given a candle but please bring a candle if you can!

CHURCH SERVICES

Gilsland Methodist

Services start at 10.30 unless stated

Dec 7th - Songs of Praise

Dec 21st - 2.00pm - Carols and Christmas readings at the Chapel with Rev Tokumbo, followed by tea / coffee and mince pies

Jan 4th - Songs of Praise

Jan 18th - Covenant Service with Rev Tokumbo

St. Mary Magdalene

Services start at 9.30 unless stated

Dec 8th - Holy Communion

Dec 23rd - 6.30pm - Carols by Candlelight at Nether Denton

Dec 24th - 8.00pm - First Communion of Christmas at Lanercost

Dec 28th - 10.30am - Mission

Community Holy Communion at St Kentegern Irthington

Jan 11th - Morning worship

Jan 25th - Holy Communion

BIN DAYS

Northumberland County Council

General waste: Dec 4th & 18th; Jan 2nd, 15th & 29th

Recycling: Dec 11th & 27th; Jan 8th & 22nd

www.northumberland.gov.uk/waste

Haltwhistle household recycling

Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday 8am - 6pm

Cumberland Council

Refuse and garden: Dec 8th & 22nd; Jan 5th & 19th

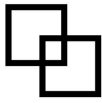
Recycling: Dec 1st 15th & 29th; Jan 12th & 26th

www.carlisle.gov.uk/residents/bins-and-recycling

Brampton household recycling

10am to 6pm, every day except Tuesday

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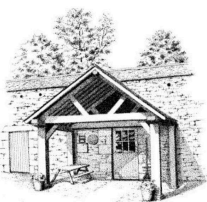
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I would like to say a huge thank you to those who did support me during my short tenure at The Samson.

Special thank you to the local B&B operators who kept the pub going during the summer months as well as all your advice.

To my amazing team who were with me when I needed it most - you are all stars.

Finally I need to publicly thank Cathy Mousette and Gary Dowell, the support and assistance they have provided was over and above anything expected.

There are always two sides to a story - always happy to share the full version!

Best of Luck to your new tenants.

All the best,
George

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THE THRESHING BARN

What's On December 2025



GILSLAND LANTERN PARADE

Saturday 6th December
Meet at 15:00 at Gilsland CoFE Primary School

WINTER SOLSTICE SOUND BATH & FIRE CEREMONY

Sunday 21st December
15:00 - 16:30 & 19:00 - 20:30
£17.50



VOICES FROM THE WALL

A creative writing project working towards creating a sound walk along Hadrian's Wall.

Beginning Thursday 8th January 13:00 - 15:00
FREE



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Mike Mitchelson

Cumbria County Councillor

Mike Mitchelson, 0169772871

Northumberland County Councillor

Alan Sharp, Office: 01434693693, Home: 01434320167, Mobile: 07759665200

Thirlwall Parish Council

Chair: Sue Seymour 07935259416, sue@mosspeteral.com

Vice Chair: Judith Armstrong

Clerk: clerk@thirlwallparishcouncil.org

Councillors: Emma Guerrero, David

Keen, Owen Wilkins

Waterhead Parish Council

Chair: David Rackstraw

Vice Chair: Jovan Nichiolson

Clerk: Sue Hatt:

waterheadpc@gmail.com

Councillors: John Woodmass-Calvert

Upper Denton Parish Council

Chair: Dan Newrick

Vice Chair: Tim Gordon

Clerk: Sue Hatt:

upperdentonpc@gmail.com

Councillors: Mike Harris

Knitting Group: Brenda Smith, 47361

Community Coffee Morning: Doreen Gutteridge, 47036

Craft Group: Sue Maughan, 47607

Dominos: Doreen Gutteridge, 47036

Folk Club Brampton: Katy, 01228 674209

Gilsland Parish Church: Alison Higgs, 47409; Rev Ben Phillips, 07936 099123 or ben@lanercost.net

Gilsland School: 47302

Greenhead School: 47347

Gilsland Show secretary: Vicky Baty, 01228 675368

Methodist Church: Melvyn Whatmough, 47524

Tourism Partnership: Catherine Jarvis, 07759 020 885

Village Hall Committee & Bookings:

gilslandhallcommittee@gmail.com

Village Hall: 01697 543229

WI: Doreen Gutteridge, 47036

Youth Club: Clare Hawkins, 47371

Submissions

The magazine is always looking for submissions! The deadline for submissions is the 20th of the month. Submissions may be edited.

Digital copies

Digital copies of the magazine will be available from the 1st of the month at gilslandvillagemagazine.co.uk. You can sign up to get an email alert when the issue is published on the Contact page of the website.

Credits

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