

### Play, Learn and have Fun at Topcliffe Playgroup

Everyone at Topcliffe Playgroup is very excited as they begin another fun packed year of playing, learning and enjoying the new facilities that have been successfully implemented during the last year. Due to the hard work, dedication and inspiration of the staff at the playgroup, Topcliffe Playgroup are very proud to be celebrating for the second consecutive year the accolade of **Highly Effective Setting** awarded by Hambleton District Council.

Out of the 298 schools and Early Years settings, 48 were chosen by Hambleton District Council and we were one of those top 48.

Run daily by a conscientious team of qualified staff, and managed by a committee, the playgroup is very much at the heart of the community. We recently gained funding through 'Awards for All' to organise a community arts project with the help of the Rural Arts (Thirsk). Working together with the local childminding group and Topcliffe Primary School a community mosaic was made which will be a part of the playgroup forever.

The playgroup runs as a charity and is registered to care for 2 to 5 year olds. Based next to Topcliffe Church of England School the links between the Playgroup and School have grown from strength to strength. A lunch club has now been introduced where playgroup children have the opportunity to enjoy a healthy dinner in the school or take their own packed lunch. This further encourages development and stability for the children and makes the transition from playgroup to school much smoother. We also have fantastic links with other local schools and children have regular contact with their new school and teachers.

**Jessica Robertson – Playgroup Leader – “The lunch Club has proved to be a great success**

*and strengthens our (already) excellent links with the School. We actively encourage shared activities with the school, once again last Christmas we joined them for a theatre trip to see Cinderella at Harrogate ”*

Thanks to fundraising and additional grant money the outside area of the Playgroup has recently been redeveloped.

The children also enjoy the new ICT opportunities with a newly installed SMART Board and up to date software that enhances the children’s learning interactively. The children enjoy the different aspects of the new ICT facility, from self registration to sharing games with their friends.



If you would like to come and see our amazing establishment, please ring any day of the week and speak to a member of our welcoming staff. Call us on 01845 578959.

**[www.Topcliffe.net](http://www.Topcliffe.net)**

Keep up to date with Parish information, meeting minutes, a colour version of The TATtler and all the pictures of Topcliffe and the surrounding area.

## ASENBY INSTITUTE: ALIVE and (trying very hard to be) KICKING!

Despite some rumours about the end of Asenby Institute for the Playing Field, our small committee is still active!

However, it has been a trying time. We are a voluntary committee, and great efforts have been put into organising events for the village in the past year: Cream Tea afternoon, The Barbeque, Party Night at the Angel... We have letter dropped newsletters to every house in the village, asking for ideas and support, put up posters, done our utmost to encourage people to support us. You can probably imagine, therefore, how disheartening it is when turnouts for these events are low, events such as the Pie and Pea night have had to be cancelled, and we receive the grand total of one reply responding to requests for ideas.

We wholeheartedly thank those of you (many of you friends from Topcliffe) who support us come rain or shine but there **have** been times when we have wondered....**why**?

BUT we will not give up! We want to keep the village spirit alive!

The Annual Barbeque, with the slide the children love so much, and the possibility of live entertainment for all, will be held on 6th June. This earlier date has been chosen in the hope that more of you will be able to come, have fun, and catch up with other villagers. More details nearer the time but one change will be 'Bring your Own Drink', in a hope that the committee will be able to spend a little more time enjoying the fun with our families.

We also have a new Chairperson. Thank you to Sharon Furness who has agreed to replace Nikki, who stepped down from chair but remains a valued committee member. A huge thank you to her for all the work she has done in the past few years.

Looking forward to the future!!  
Asenby Institute for the Playing Field Committee



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### from District Councillor Neville Huxtable

The Government has confirmed that the County Council election will now take place on the 4<sup>th</sup> June to coincide with the European election. To make sure of being able to vote it is essential that you and everyone in your household over the age of 18 be registered with Hambleton District Council. If you are unsure whether or not your name appears on the **Electoral Roll**, please check with Hambleton District Council on 0845 1211555. The very latest you can register to vote in the June elections is 5pm. 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009.

**DO YOU NEED A POSTAL VOTE?** Don't get caught out. If you know that are not going to be able to vote in person in June, it is not too early to register with Hambleton District Council for a postal vote. If you are planning a holiday, know that you are going to be away on business or even possibly in hospital, register now. Please contact me. I have the necessary forms or go direct to Hambleton District Council using the phone number above.

As always, if you have any issues that you would like to discuss, please contact me.

**NEVILLE HUXTABLE**  
**01845 501068**

[Cllr.neville.huxtable@hambleton.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.neville.huxtable@hambleton.gov.uk)

### **Carpet Bowls Club enjoys evening out**

By Melvyn Arkley (a guest)

An evening meal was arranged at the Carpenters Arms on the last Thursday in January. The event was well attended by members and their guests. A John Smith and Sons coach was booked to take everyone from Asenby, Topcliffe and Carlton Minniot to the venue. On arrival the first drink was paid for by the club, as was the wine and final coffee. The meal was of excellent quality and together with the convivial atmosphere, all appeared to enjoy their evening out.



The children of Topcliffe School performed a lovely nativity play at St Columba's for parents and friends.

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## A Life-Saving Gift

Alan Nuttall, on behalf of Thirsk Rotary Club, is seen presenting Drs Parker and Shaw with a defibrillator. Rotarians raised £1,000 towards this lifesaving piece of equipment for Topcliffe Surgery.

It isn't essential to have medical training to be able to use this up-to-date model and in several neighbouring villages, there is a rota of trained volunteers who are on call 24/7 so that should a resident have a heart attack, any time of day or night, help is available even before an ambulance arrives. As heart attacks and babies arrive at inconvenient times, this seems like an extremely practical idea, particularly in rural areas. If Any of Our Readers are interested in such a scheme for Topcliffe and Asenby, why not ring or email us.



## More than 350 Yorkshire walks to download and print FREE!

There's no doubt about it, walking is good for you. It's good for your heart, it's good for your lungs, it's good for the muscle and bone growth of your children and it's good for your feeling of wellbeing! Strong scientific evidence now supports the many benefits to health of regular walking – it is recommended that we take at least 10,000 steps a day.

Studies show that walking can:

- > Reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and stroke
- > Lower blood pressure
- > Reduce high cholesterol
- > Reduce body fat
- > Enhance mental well being

John Harris, a keen walker, got fed up with the lack of information on walks in the County. So, he decided that if he couldn't find what he was looking for - he had better create it!

So [www.walkinginyorkshire.co.uk](http://www.walkinginyorkshire.co.uk) came into being. The website gives you all the information you need for the best walking in the County:

Details of more than 350 walks to download and print free, details of all the Yorkshire walking groups, maps and walk books – plus loads more information.

So check out the website and get walking!

# Topcliffe Parish Council News

by Garry Key

In this time of economic turmoil and employment uncertainty it is pleasing to report that Topcliffe continues to thrive, is a sought after and nice area to live and the council finances are secure. Unlike many government departments, we have scrupulously adhered to budgets and spent your funds wisely and only where necessary. The parish precept has not been raised this year because we do not need to.

The council wishes to extend a warm welcome to the new management of The Angel Inn, who have been interviewed by the village's intrepid roving reporter Vicki Moores, who provides an article on the new team elsewhere in this issue. We wish them all success.

We also welcome 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment Royal Artillery under the command of Lt Colonel Greg Cole, who have now settled into Alanbrooke barracks after many years stationed in Osnabruck, Germany. We wish them well and look forward to meeting them in the local shop and hostelrys.

The next major project on the immediate horizon is the pursuit of funding for a new play park. Some intended refurbishment of the current park has been ongoing for some time. However, within our midst lies a raft of hidden talent, namely the ladies of the parish council playing field committee. Representing the council on the committee is Cllr Amanda Jameson-Allen. The committee is chaired by Lauren Atkinson with chief fundraiser, Jenny Smith, and supported by Jane Molineaux, Ruth Stockdale, Jane Burnett, Charlotte Broadbent and Anne-Marie Barningham. Together they have put together a detailed bid for approximately £25,000 of grant aid for a new and exciting play park. The council is supporting it with a promise of £3,000 of matched funding and financial support from Newby Foods. These young mums have really done a great job and their bid deserves to succeed. When successful, this will provide the village with an excellent play facility and wonderful picnic area. Our thanks go to them all for their sterling efforts so far. If anybody has any ideas for the future development of our community, please come and voice them at council. You will get a fair hearing.

On the theme of the playing field, we need volunteer grass cutters. To aid this, we are refurbishing the gang mower, which will cut down both mowing time and fuel costs. It should take no more than two hours to cut the grass. Volunteers are covered by council insurance and training will be given. Any volunteers please contact the clerk (577863) or a councillor.

Finally, the government has designated that elections for some local councils and Europe will take place on June 4<sup>th</sup>. Please, whatever your political persuasion, exercise your democratic right and VOTE!

## I Lost my Husband to a Helicopter

Christmas Day was the fatal date. I made the monumental mistake of buying my husband a remote controlled helicopter for Christmas. Since then it has taken over his, and more upsettingly, *my* life. It's all he ever thinks and talks about. I was ridiculously sure that it would simply keep him amused over the holiday period. Boy was I wrong! He's rebuilt it, modified it and even given it a name. He refuses to refer to it as his toy. No way! This is serious love affair going on. Every day helicopter related packages arrive by post. He nags me to come watch him fly – which generally consists of a vague hover followed by an almighty crash. But do small mishaps such as this put him off? Oh no, it merely enhances the whole experience for him.



Any advice would be welcome.

Signed,  
Helicopter Widow in Topcliffe (a.k.a. Ange Hook)

## PLAYGROUND NEWS

By Lauren Atkinson

On the afternoon of Tuesday January 27, an open event was held in the village hall, inviting people to inspect the proposed designs for the new play park. Thank you to all those who gave their valuable input to the chosen design. We are very happy and excited with the plan that was eventually chosen with a large majority of votes. The preferred design company is called Playscheme, and they have already put together the fantastic park in Rainton. We are now eagerly awaiting a reply to our application, telling us if we have been granted funding for the project.

**Just a reminder that  
dogs are NOT allowed  
on the playing fields  
in Asenby and Topcliffe!**



## Like Taking Ale From Newcastle

At last, warm smiles and a friendly welcome are guaranteed when you visit The Angel Inn. Following a somewhat troubled few months, it seems that the pub is at last returning to its former glory. The new management from Newcastle is very experienced, having sold three pubs to take over this large and well-known establishment.

There are three couples in the team – Kevin and Marita Bird, Ian Bell and partner, Michelle Blythe, and Phil Gibbons and partner, Gaby Matthews. Each individual brings a particular skill, from cooking and barwork, to decorating and gardening. And all of them are buzzing with new ideas.

The bar menu promises reasonably priced home-cooked food throughout the day from 9am and morning coffee will be served daily. A traditional Sunday lunch costs £6.95 for the main course and there is a pleasing choice of homely puddings such as fruit crumbles and spotted

dick and custard. Plans are in hand to develop a more sophisticated menu for the restaurant.

Various entertainments and activities will soon be held from darts, dominoes and pool matches, to karaoke and cabaret evenings. A selection of Real



Ales will also be on offer in the near future. The venue will continue to be available for weddings and conferences with a whole new and brighter look.

Ian Bell, an enthusiastic and hospitable host, said, "We're very keen to get involved with the community and to forge links with the church and any fundraising activities in the village" To this end, a Race Night is planned for March 20 when half the proceeds will be donated to the new children's playground and half to the Church Restoration Fund. More immediately, the quiz team were more than impressed with the generous helpings of sausage and chips served at a recent home match.

A few licks of paint and a sprucing up of the pub's exterior and bedrooms, which is planned for the spring, will ensure that The Angel's reputation will, once again, spread far beyond Topcliffe.



### Under New Management

**Marita, Kevin, Ian & Michelle** would like to welcome you to our family-run business with its warm friendly atmosphere and service

## The Angel Inn

The Angel Inn  
Long Street  
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Try our new Bar and Restaurant Menu. Main meals from £5.25. We have wines from around the world and **Traditional Ales**. Traditional **Sunday Lunch** served from 12 noon till 3pm. Food is served all day. **Breakfast/Coffee & Tea** are served from 9am.

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## The Land Girls of Yorkshire

Were you fortunate enough to see "An Honorary Yorkshireman", a play about James Herriot which was performed at the village hall last August? If so, you'll be pleased to know that this year, on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> July, the same theatre company - Badapple Theatre will be coming to the Topcliffe village hall to perform the original play 'The Land Girls of Yorkshire'.

Here's a sneak preview of the play.

***It's wartime, and there are some new arrivals in the village. They're turning heads and breaking hearts as the fine girls of the Women's Land Army take to the hills.***

***This brand new show is the latest comedy two-hander from Badapple's resident writer, Kate Bramley. She celebrates the highs and lows of the wonderful women who helped keep Britain fed during World War II, set against a backdrop of glorious music of the age, as well as new tunes by songwriter Jez Lowe.***

***Although a fictional tale this play owes much to the reminiscences of a number of Land Army Girls who contributed their own personal stories to this exciting new comedy.***

Do mark your calendars for Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> July and be sure to join us in Topcliffe village hall to watch: ***The Land Girls of Yorkshire***. More details will be given in the Summer Tattler.



### Service of Welcome & Commissioning

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> March 10.45am  
St Columbas' Church**

For the new Head Teacher of Topcliffe C of E School

Please join our special family service where we will welcome Mrs Shepherd.

We hope that as many school children and their families as possible will join us for this celebration. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be served afterwards.

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## What is a FEOFFEE?

"Feoffee" is a historical term relating to the law of trusts and equity. The modern-day equivalent is "trustee". The term "feoffee" is still in use locally as a governing body of twelve who administer the Consolidated Charities of Topcliffe. Feoffees were first appointed in Topcliffe in 1674 by the "Commissioners of Charitable Uses" for the management of the affairs of Topcliffe Grammar School and for the administration of Topcliffe Parochial Charities. In those days the ancient ecclesiastical parish of Topcliffe was much larger than just Topcliffe village; it included Asenby, Baldersby, Dalton, Dishforth, Eldmire, Marton-le-Moor, Rainton, Skip-ton-on-Swale as well as Topcliffe itself.

Nowadays, each of the above villages has nominated feoffees, approved by their own parish councils. The group meet, under the chairmanship of the vicar of Topcliffe, to decide the distribution of charitable monies.

There are now two main funds which come under the direction of the feoffees:-

- 1) **The Topcliffe Poor Fund** which gives grants to each village in relation to their population. This fund derives its income from the rent paid for two pieces of land owned by the charity. Last year Topcliffe received £200 and Asenby received £65. Feoffees distribute the monies at their discretion.
- 2) **The Topcliffe Educational Fund** which gives grants to young students to purchase college books. This fund derives its income from the interest on capital investments. Students are encouraged to apply. Last year eleven students shared £450.

Further details are available from your village feoffees, who would be happy to discuss their work with you.

Topcliffe: Ange Hook and Anne-Marie Barningham  
Asenby: Carole Ford.

## Neighbourhood Watch

Damage was caused to the wing mirrors of 5 vehicles in Topcliffe. It is asked that people remain vigilant and report anyone acting suspiciously to the police non-emergency number 0845 60 60 247.

2-in-1 burglaries continue to be a problem in the area. This is when offenders break into properties, take valuables, the occupants' car keys and then take their cars. It is asked that residents remove all keys from areas of their home that are visible from the outside. As a prevention measure it is always advised that occupants take their keys upstairs with them.

In January 2009 the new North Yorkshire Police website [www.northyorkshire.police.uk](http://www.northyorkshire.police.uk) was launched. This can be used to access information about your local Safer Neighbourhood Team, events being run in the area, local crime information and mapping. Once on the website simply click on the Safer Neighbourhood Policing tab on the left hand side of your screen and then on Hambleton South.

If you do see something suspicious or witness any crimes, don't hesitate to call 0845 60 60 247. If it is an offence or the offender is still at the scene committing the offence, please call 999. For any questions regarding Neighbourhood Watch, property marking or any other issues or events you may like to discuss, contact a member of the Safer Neighbourhood Team on 0845 60 60 247 extension number 8814 or email:

ThirskSnt@northyorkshire.pnn.police.uk



## School News

The main news at Topcliffe School, of course, is that Mrs Wendy Shepherd has taken over from Mrs Chatwin as headteacher and by the time you read this, a service of welcome will have been held at St Columba's on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mrs Shepherd has certainly had a busy half-term with Mrs Whitaker on longterm sick leave; happily, she is now recovering. Ms Gibson has left and a new reception teacher has started – and then there's been the snow and ice. Mrs Shepherd has optimistically decided that if she can cope with all this, she can cope with anything.

## Help with Childcare Costs – do you qualify?

If you work and pay for childcare, you may be able to get tax credits to help with the costs. You have to work for at least 16 hours a week to qualify. You may still qualify if you worked 16 hours or more before going on maternity, paternity, adoption or sick leave.

You can get up to 80% of what you pay in childcare, to a maximum of £175 per week for one child and £300 per week for two or more children. The amount you get depends on your income. The lower your income, the more tax credits you get.

For more information ring the Tax Credit Helpline on 0845 300 3909 (open from 8am – 8pm, seven days a week).

Or you can write to: HMRC  
Tax Credit Office  
Preston  
PR1 0SB.

You can also get information from:  
[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

## More upcoming events run by the village churches

There will be a series of weekly Lent Lunches (soup and a roll) starting Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> 12 noon to 1.00pm until the 1<sup>st</sup> April for five weeks in the Village Hall.

St. Columba's, in conjunction with the Methodist Church, will be starting a Lent Course. This will run *each* Monday evening in Topcliffe Methodist Chapel from March 2<sup>nd</sup> through to March 30<sup>th</sup> from 7.30pm

On Thursday March 5<sup>th</sup> the whole school will dress up as their favourite book character for World Book Day. March 9<sup>th</sup> sees Class 4 Year 6 setting forth to Kingswood Outdoor Pursuits Centre. On March 13<sup>th</sup> the children will be invited to wear red and don a red nose for Comic Relief. April 1<sup>st</sup> is Open Day when Year 6 children show parents and friends round the school and invite them to view projects the whole school has been doing on "water".

It sounds as if there's plenty going on to keep Topcliffe and Asenby children and staff busy and the new headteacher is proving that her cheerful energy is definitely infectious.

## Lunch-time Soup & Rolls

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March until 1<sup>st</sup> April**  
(each Wednesday)  
**12 - 1 pm**



### Topcliffe Village Hall

Please join us for steaming hot soup, rolls and warm drink.

Meet your friends for a simple lunch without the bother of cooking!

All are welcome and some high chairs will be available for the little ones (please feel free to bring your own)



## Easter Egg Hunt

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April**  
**10.45am**  
**Holy Communion**  
**St Columbas' Church**

Please come and join us for this very special service and afterwards there will be lots of eggs for children to find while adults can enjoy a relaxing cup of tea or coffee in the church

(unless of course your children force you to hunt for eggs too!)

## The Little Red Bus

For those who yearn for the bright city lights, the Little Red Bus provides services to Thirsk market on Mondays and Northallerton market on Wednesdays for only £2.50. The service doesn't stop there, however. The company ethos is to support people who have difficulty accessing public transport and they always try to meet individual requests. Hambleton residents are offered a year's free membership which would normally cost £6.



To find out more about this excellent service, ring 01423 526655.

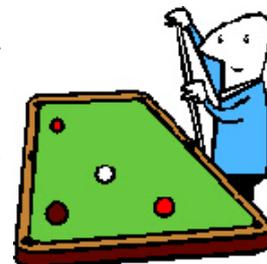
## Palm Sunday

**5<sup>th</sup> April 10.45am**  
**St Columbas' Church**  
**Family Service**



## Snooker Club

We are still looking for members, new and old. Membership costs £15 and members must be at least 18 years of age.



**Don't miss**  
**Race Nite**  
**at The Angel Inn**  
**on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March.**



**All money from the fund**  
**to be shared**

**50-50 between the church**  
**and Topcliffe playing field.**

## Local Telephone Numbers & Websites

**Topcliffe Surgery - 577297**  
[www.topcliffesurgery.co.uk](http://www.topcliffesurgery.co.uk)

**Friarage Hospital - 01609 779911**  
[www.southtees.nhs.uk](http://www.southtees.nhs.uk)

**Gas Emergencies - 0800 111 999**  
[www.nationalgrid.com/uk](http://www.nationalgrid.com/uk)

**Police - 0845 60 60 24 7**  
[www.northyorkshire.police.uk](http://www.northyorkshire.police.uk)

**Hambleton DC - 01609 779977**  
[www.hambleton.gov.uk](http://www.hambleton.gov.uk)

**Harrogate BC - 01423 568954**  
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