

# Birkdale Buzz



**A community magazine sponsored by the  
Birkdale Community Hub & Library at  
The Station Master's House  
Find out what's going on in the Hub as well as in and  
around Birkdale village**

## How does the Library pay for itself?

Anyone can become a member of the library and then use the facilities at the Station Master's House and the Liverpool Road Methodist Church library at no cost. The Birkdale Community Hub & Library charity which runs the facilities receives no funding from Sefton, so how do we pay for heating, lighting, broadband, insurance, maintenance etc? The answer is simple: by the public generously contributing in some way to our running costs, either by joining the 200+ Club lottery, becoming a Friend of the Station Master's House, by the sale of unwanted books and by buying tickets for one of our events.

**Thanks to everyone for their contribution. We couldn't do it without you.**

## The 200+ Club

The 200+ Club, launched in 2017, provides a valuable source of funds for Birkdale Community Hub & Library, while at the same time giving supporters a chance each month of winning a cash prize. The money raised is used as a mix of basic income and to fund ongoing improvements to facilities offered by the charity.

Being part of the 200+ Club costs just £2 a month per number, the more numbers you have, the greater your chance of winning. The monthly draw gives one prize of £50 and two prizes of £20 each month, plus an annual prize draw of £500.

**To join or to find out more, contact Chrissy Gadd**

**Email: [200club@thestationmastershouse.co.uk](mailto:200club@thestationmastershouse.co.uk)**

## Friends of the Station Master's House

Being a Friend means that you will be kept up to date about recent activities and future events and plans.

Why not become a Friend for just £12 annually (payable in January each year) and help meet the costs of running your local library and community hub?

**To join, pick up a form from the library reception or download an application form from our website:**

**[www.thestationmastershouse.co.uk](http://www.thestationmastershouse.co.uk)**

## Want to advertise in the Birkdale Buzz?

The magazine comes out every quarter (March, June, September and December) and is printed in A5 format. Paper copies are printed in B&W and in colour online via our website. The charge for adverts in the next edition is: 1/8 page costs £15, 1/4 page costs £25 and 1/2 page costs £40.

We also offer a discount for placing an advert in four editions: four adverts for the price of three. **The deadline date for the June edition is 25th April.** For further information and advice please email us at:

**[birkdalebuzz@thestationmastershouse.co.uk](mailto:birkdalebuzz@thestationmastershouse.co.uk)**

## Hello Readers

Welcome to our tenth edition of the Birkdale Buzz, produced by volunteers at the Birkdale Community Hub & Library charity. We hope that quarterly editions of the Birkdale Buzz will help keep locals in touch with people and events around Birkdale. We distribute copies to over 3000 homes in the Birkdale area.



An online version of the Buzz can be found by visiting <https://thestationmastershouse.co.uk/birkdale-buzz/> or by using this QR code.

If you would like us to send an online copy to friends and relatives please email us at [birkdalebuzz@thestationmastershouse.co.uk](mailto:birkdalebuzz@thestationmastershouse.co.uk) and we will put you on the emailing list. Copies of the Buzz are free and we are grateful to local advertisers who help pay for the costs of printing. Details of advertising costs can be found on page 2. We are particularly keen on attracting small adverts from local tradespeople.



The Community Hub & Library is situated in the Station Master's House next to the station, where there is a library, meeting rooms for hire, and a computer suite. The charity also runs a branch library at the Liverpool Road Methodist Church.

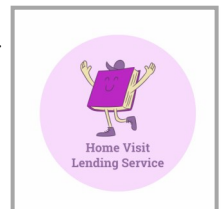
Membership of the Library is free and all our facilities are free for members to use. If you want to know more about future events organised by the charity, why not pop into the library or visit our website: [www.thestationmastershouse.co.uk](http://www.thestationmastershouse.co.uk)

Meanwhile enjoy the Buzz!

**Phil Margham (Chair of BCHL Trustees)**

## We're Looking for Readers at Home

**Birkdale Community Hub & Library** runs a Home Visiting service for local residents who are unable to get to a library and would like to borrow from our extensive range of books. The service is free and working well. Our volunteers visit homes and residential establishments to find out what type of books are of interest and provide a selection from which to choose.



We are keen to expand the service to those living on their own at home who like to read, would be interested in a new range of books, but find it difficult to get out. So, if you are living on your own, or know someone living on their own who would like to receive a visit from our volunteers, please email us at:

[homevisit@thestationmastershouse.co.uk](mailto:homevisit@thestationmastershouse.co.uk) or call the library on **01704 566992**.

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## Do you have time to be a volunteer?

**Chess Club:** we are looking for volunteers to run a chess club for primary school children for an hour after school at the Station Master's House. Day and time to be confirmed.

**Lego Club:** volunteers are needed to run the Lego Club on a rota basis. Saturdays 11.30-12.30 at the Station Master's House

**Warm Spaces:** we offer a warm welcome on a Thursday between 10am and 4pm with hot drinks and snacks, quizzes and talks from invited speakers. We are looking for volunteers to act as hosts to our visitors.

If you or anyone you know is interested in helping, please contact  
[volunteers@thestationmastershouse.co.uk](mailto:volunteers@thestationmastershouse.co.uk)

## Drop-in Community Police Advice Surgeries

Luke Holden, an officer from Merseyside Police, or another officer if he is away, holds regular drop-in community police advice sessions at the Station Master's House. The surgery offers local residents the opportunity to meet the officer to discuss and receive advice on any local or neighbourhood issues and concerns. You can also seek advice on security and crime prevention measures and get guidance if you are worried about any approaches you've had that you think may be a scam.

The surgery takes place at the library every three weeks on Tuesday evenings from 5.00 pm to 7.00 pm. As this is a drop in service, no appointment is needed. Please contact the Station Master's House (tel: **01704 566992**) for the next surgery dates.

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# SEFTON NEWS

## How things work

**John Pugh**, LibDem Councillor for Dukes Ward, writes:

I'm guessing everyone reading this would want to live in a world where all elected bodies, councils, governments — the people who spend our money and provide our services — were endowed with irreproachable wisdom. As this can't be guaranteed we have a tradition of public debate which you can glimpse on your tele on the Parliament channel. The good news is that soon you will have the option of 'livestreaming' the deliberations of Sefton Council on YouTube.

All 60-odd Sefton councillors meet every two months in the old historic town halls of Southport or Bootle and have done for a century or more. Speaking there, you have the attention briefly of all the elected councillors for every part of Sefton — a good time to get your point across. Any member of the public can in person, if notice is given, put questions and representations to the council.

Last council meeting I was much troubled by the state of what used to be called the Leisure Beach — south of the Pier and adjacent to Pleasureland — where mud and vegetation is being allowed to replace sand. I knew that it used to be council policy to try to hold back the remorseless, silting up of that area, but I sensed that this policy had been quietly dropped. This worried me because beaches and piers are one of the few attractions at the seaside that don't hit the wallets of families, so, I put down for discussion a proposal to review council policy on the Leisure Beach, coupled with a suggestion that plans for the restoration of the Pier be looked at too. The current policy of the council is to ask the government to meet restoration and maintenance costs.

Full council meetings are not allowed these days to make many decisions — certainly none that involve spending money. Decisions are made by eight or so top councillors called 'Cabinet Members'. This contrasts with the situation 20 years ago when very few council decisions were final until agreed by a full council meeting. That's why my proposal was simply to ask 'the Cabinet' to look at the policy on the beach.

Possibly because full council meetings make few decisions, often councillors talk about other stuff and my worries about the beach were considered after the council had debated issues like Women's Pensions and Gaza. As it was, when we got to my proposal after a short debate it was amended by a cabinet member who spoke encouragingly about future developments in Southport but took out all reference to the beach. My original proposal was defeated which was disappointing.

Next time we meet as full council perhaps you'll be able to tune in. You can find my views on the beach here: <https://youtu.be/y0gSSAIfuU>

**Know your Birkdale Village**

**Q1: Where's this?**

**Answer on page 34**



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## Our Jersey Perspective © John Guest January 2025

Think *Jersey* and what images do you conjure up: Jersey Royal potatoes, Jersey cows and cream, John Nettles as detective, Jim Bergerac. An assortment of sun-kissed, secluded sandy beaches or, perhaps, a flotilla of millionaires' yachts berthed with pristine precision in the Marina at St Helier? Well, yes to all those and much, much more! What, for example, is the history and origins of the *Martello* towers that are strategically placed all around the coastline?



**St Aubin**

Jersey is not a part of the UK but is a self-governing British Crown Dependency, situated 14 miles north from the Normandy coast, and as a consequence the Island possesses a decidedly French-feel in its climate, culture, and in its overall ambience.

Our short vacation last year was our first experience of Jersey and I can report that our verdict was all positive. We stayed in St Aubin, a short distance round the Bay from the capital, St Helier; with our hotel commandeering a spectacular view across the small harbour. It is worth taking the “road train” between the two towns as the commentary during the short journey is both fascinating and enlightening.

Many resorts boast stunning views, unspoiled beaches, friendly locals, and a bountiful selection of wondrous cuisine and drinks. Susan and I found Jersey ticked all the boxes thrice over. However, if seafood is *your* speciality, then Jersey truly is THE place. It is easy to negotiate the Island with a little bit of preparation and a decent map in order to seek out those quiet coves and vibrant panoramas away from the more frequented touristy places. Beware though, the roads can be narrow and some of the signs a tad misleading, that’s if they exist at all.

An absolute must is a visit to *The Jersey War Tunnels*. This is a remarkable feat of engineering undertaken (mainly by POWs) during the German occupation: July 1940 – May 1945. It was an eye-opener to read first-hand accounts as to how invaders and islanders had to survive side by side during those five years. In short, the visit was “captivating”!

Are there any downsides to visiting Jersey?

We flew *easyJet* from Liverpool, a mere 55 minutes in the air, and the price was reasonable. However, Jersey can become fogbound, virtually within hours, and this does seriously impact on flights. Alternatively, it’s a long drive and an even longer sea crossing if you choose to go by ferry from Poole in Dorset. Though well worth it in the end.

Jersey has a comparatively higher cost of living than the UK, and as a result prices tend to be slightly above those here, but do not let that put you off vacationing there, and please venture further afield than St Helier. There’s a fantastic amount to explore and experience!

Overall: would we return – YES!

**SPAR** 

# BIRKDALE

We are proud to continue to be at the heart of the local community and have our very own butcher's in store offering a great selection of quality meats & ready meals.



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**Cheeky Coffee**

## BUTCHERS OPENING HOURS

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## WALKING CRICKET IS BACK!

The Lancashire Cricket Foundation is again funding walking cricket sessions, at Dunes Leisure Centre in Southport this Spring.

Aimed at the Over 50s, the one-hour sessions run from 11am on Thursday mornings and are open to all comers.

It's great fun, all kit is provided and anyone interested should just go along to Dunes, on Victoria Way, for the 11am start.



Former England cricket captain **GRAHAM GOOCH** is the guest speaker at the West Lancashire Cricket Society's annual dinner on **Friday 14th March**, at Southport & Birkdale Sports Club.

**Tickets are £40 from Ross Duggan (07850 117560).**

## LEMON BISCUITS (sent in by Jill Jones)

### INGREDIENTS

- 75g unsalted butter – softened
- 50g icing sugar –sifted
- 1 medium egg yolk
- 1 tbsp elderflower cordial
- Finely grated zest of half a lemon
- 125g plain flour – plus a little extra to dust



### METHOD

1. Using hand electric whisk – beat the butter and icing sugar until pale and fluffy.
2. Add the egg yolk, elderflower cordial and lemon zest and beat until all are combined.
3. Add the flour and a pinch of salt and beat until the dough just comes together.
4. Tip onto work surface and shape into a disc. Wrap and chill for at least one hour or up to 24 hours to firm up.
5. Preheat the oven to 180°C, 160°F or Gas 4. Line two baking sheets with baking parchment. Lightly flour the work surface and roll out the dough to 2-3mm thick. Using a 7cm plain or fluted cutter, stamp out circles, re-rolling the trimmings and stamping out to get about 16 rounds.
6. Transfer to the baking sheet, spacing slight apart.
7. Bake for 12-14 mins or until pale golden. Leave to cool on the sheets for three minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

### Oven temperature conversion table

This simple oven temperature conversion chart should help you quickly convert temperatures between Gas, Celsius, Fahrenheit and Fan ovens.

Gas	Fahrenheit (°F)	Celsius (°C)	Fan (°C)	Description
1	275	140	120	Cool
2	300	150	130	Cool
3	325	160	140	Moderate
4	350	180	160	Moderate
5	375	190	170	Moderately hot
6	400	200	180	Moderately hot
7	425	220	200	Hot
8	450	230	210	Hot
9	475	240	220	Very Hot

# Southport & Birkdale Sports Club

Trafalgar Road

PR8 2HF



Southport & Birkdale Sports Club is the leading multi-sports club in the area. The grounds, situated on Trafalgar Road are the backdrop for the well-appointed social club.

Sporting members have the option to concentrate on one sport or take part in all five: cricket, hockey, snooker, squash and tennis. There is coaching available, either personally, or in groups, for squash and tennis, coupled with the option of social matches, club tournaments and local competitive leagues.

Cricket and hockey sections provide training and fixtures for both juniors and adults.

If you just wish to have a social membership, this allows you to use the club facilities whether it be to have a drink, at discounted prices, on a summer afternoon, watching the cricket, take a meal supplied by the renowned D'vine Catering, or attend one of the many functions arranged throughout the year.

Come and watch the Rugby 6 Nations, Guinness £4 a pint during England matches. Check our website for quizzes and music nights. Dates for your diary Wednesday 30 April, a one day match between Lancashire Women and Hampshire Women and the following Wednesday 7 May Lancashire Women v Surrey Women, both start at 10.30am.

**Contact:** Claire Crew,  
Honorary Membership Secretary  
email: [clcrew36@gmail.com](mailto:clcrew36@gmail.com)  
S&B Sports Club, Trafalgar Road,  
Birkdale PR8 2HF  
Tel: 01704 569951  
email: [social@sandbsportsclub.co.uk](mailto:social@sandbsportsclub.co.uk)



The Six Nations  
Championship @ S&B

Sat Feb 1st 4.45pm Ireland v England	Sat Feb 8th 4.45pm England v France
Sat Feb 22nd 4.45pm England v Scotland	Sun 9th March 3.00pm England v Italy
Sat March 15th 4.45pm Wales v England	

Guinness Available @ £4 for all England games during the Six Nations Championship



## Breathing Problems?

*We have received the following helpful information from Simon Barson:*

For the past 14 years the **Breathe Easy Sefton North** group has held monthly meetings in the area. We meet at Liverpool Road Methodist Church in Birkdale. The purpose of the group is to bring together people who suffer with a lung disease, such as Asthma, COPD and Bronchiectasis to name just a few. We meet in a friendly and welcoming atmosphere and have a speaker at each meeting. Our aim is to keep local people up to date with new treatments and facilities that can help with our care. Meetings are very casual and provide an opportunity to share experiences over a cuppa.

We meet on the 1st Wednesday of the month at the Methodist Church for around two hours, starting at 1.30pm. We also meet monthly for a meal and a chat in a pub.

If you would like any further information, please contact Simon on:

**07552 182032.**

We are local, experienced doctors offering private GP consultations in a clinical setting, or in a patient's home if required, allowing you the time and space to discuss any health needs or concerns you may be experiencing. When necessary we can refer to either the private or NHS sectors for specialist care depending on your preference. The benefits of using our services are flexibility, short waiting times and longer consultations. We have full access to blood tests, imaging (X-rays, scans etc) and pathology.



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**Know your Birkdale Village**  
**Q2 Where's this?**  
**Answer on page 34**



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## A Day in the Life of a Veterinary Surgeon

I retired seven years ago after 35 years as a vet, spent mostly in the Southport area. A working day always began with a coffee and a chat with my colleagues. It was often the only time we met up during the day and it was a great opportunity to discuss difficult cases, new developments in veterinary science and, failing that, last night's TV.

Consultations began at 9am and on one particular day I found myself looking at George, a handsome ginger cat. George had the air of a contented cat but had clearly been involved in a contretemps with another cat and had developed an abscess close to his right ear which was compromising his undoubted good looks. Fortunately for George this was something we saw frequently and the treatment was straightforward. I gently incised the troublesome boil, releasing the pus, cleaned the area and gave George an injection of antibiotic. We would repeat that in a couple of days and George would be fit once again to resume his life as the Birkdale playboy.

Once morning surgery was finished, I would prepare to operate for the rest of the morning. There was nothing unusual on that day and so I was able to perform a few neuterings before sneaking off for my lunch.

By 2pm I was back consulting and just before finishing at 6pm was, by coincidence, seeing Whisky, a large ginger cat with an abscess close to his right ear. His owners informed me that the abscess must have burst while he was out that morning as it was now much smaller than it had been first thing when they had phoned for an appointment.

Now I am no Hercule Poirot, but there was something fishy about this and I felt Whisky was giving me a pleading look. It was before microchipping became routine so positive identification was difficult but a quick check of home addresses revealed that Whisky and George did live in houses which backed onto each other and his double life of double treats and double dinners had just come crashing down.

Whisky was his true identity and he spent the night at home under that name. When his owners went to work in the morning he assumed his alter ego as George, heading for his second home, polishing off a second breakfast and retiring to bed after, what his adopted owners assumed, was a night on the tiles. In truth it worked out fine for Whisky-George as he could still live his two-home life with just portion sizes reduced. It goes to show that there is no such thing as a typical day for a vet!

### Sefton Councillor Surgeries

LibDem Councillors representing Birkdale Ward (i.e. Birkdale to landward of the railway line) and Dukes Ward (Shoreside Birkdale as well as Town Centre) will hold evening surgeries at the Station Master's House on the **3rd Tuesday of every month between 6 and 7 o'clock**.

The Labour Councillor also representing Birkdale Ward will hold midday surgeries at the Station Master's House on the **first Wednesday of every month between 1 and 2 o'clock**. No need to book, just turn up to discuss any issues you may have.



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## A Warm Welcome for Everyone Your Warm Space in Birkdale Village at BCHL



Have you ever visited Warm Spaces at Birkdale Community Hub & Library next to the station – you may have passed the banner outside and wondered – what happens there?

Every Thursday between 10am and 4pm this is everyone's place to come in out of the cold to enjoy free hot drinks, biscuits and a friendly chat. We are fully accessible with a lift to our warm and cosy upstairs space. We provide free newspapers and host regular quizzes and activities, and we occasionally have guest speakers too.

If you are passing and have never visited us – please just call in! Our dedicated team of volunteers are always there to greet you with a truly warm welcome. Some of our volunteers have now been with us for over a year – and some of our regular visitors have been coming to us for that long too!

At the end of March and then throughout Spring and Summer we continue as Welcome Spaces – offering all the same free facilities.

You don't have to be a library member to visit your Warm Space in Birkdale Village – we are open for all the community. So why not come in and see us on Thursdays – we look forward seeing you soon!

### Simple Gifts

*Come to the Station Master's house  
where there's an open door  
to friendship, warmth and laughter,  
up there on the top floor.*

*No matter what the weather is  
they'll brighten up your day.  
If your heart is troubled  
they'll soothe your cares away.*

*In a world grown harsh and bitter  
it's wonderful to find  
such acts of simple friendship  
from folk both good and kind.*

*Brenda R Tillston*



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**For more information, please contact our secretary Sue Durrance on  
07999 496322**

## Gardeners' Corner

My name is Wendy, I am a volunteer at Birkdale library. I love gardening and hope you do too.



It's so uplifting to see the succession of spring bulbs in our village. This spring you can also enjoy a mass display of daffodils which we planted in the grounds and beds of the Birkdale Methodist Church, Liverpool Road, PR9 9JQ where our second library is based.

The front garden display at the Station Master's House is always eye-catching and now includes a boat planter.

### The 3rd Annual Community Sunflower Summer Challenge – how tall will your sunflower grow?

Look out for details of this year's sunflower challenge to see who can grow the tallest sunflower from seed this year in Birkdale. It could be YOU! Whether you are 8 or 80, we would love you to join in. Full details will be published before Easter.



As our gardens and house plants come alive there is always plenty to do:

- \* Give the garden a thorough spring clean and make sure your paths are clear and safe.
- \* Cut back dead stems from last year's perennial plants to allow new shoots light to thrive.
- \* It's not too late to prune roses, (they are tough) wearing gloves to protect yourself.
- \* Put plant supports like trellis and stakes in place before the plants start to grow fast.
- \* Water and feed indoor plants more frequently and check for bugs!



And finally, take time to sit back with a cup of tea and enjoy your garden, or visit our library gardens.

**Happy Gardening!**



## What's On in Southport

**Southport Food & Drink Festival (30 May-1 June)** Victoria Park

**Southport Armed Forces Festival (28-29 June)** Southport Town Centre

**Lap up the Dogs Direct UK Summer Festival (28-29 June)** Victoria Park

**Conquer the Coast Fitness Event (19 July)** Victoria Park

**Southport Flower Show (14-17 August)** Victoria Park

**Southport Air Show (30-31 August)** Southport Seafront

**ATTENTION  
PLEASE!**



## SEFTON NEWS

**Sonya Kelly**, Labour Councillor for Birkdale Ward, writes:

**RECOVERY PACKAGE FOR SOUTHPORT:** The Council welcomed a £5.6million funding package for Southport from the Government as part of its Community Recovery Fund to support the town following the tragic events in July. Monies are being allocated by way of grants for businesses in Hart Street and the St Lukes Road area, funding to help promote Southport as a visitor destination to boost footfall and spending. Comprehensive psychological support is being given to those directly affected as well as the wider community.

**MAYOR'S TOY APPEAL:** Lots of community groups, local businesses and residents alike donate funds, toys, games, toiletries and clothing to the Mayor's Toy Appeal. This year the gifts and toys supported 1297 children. The Mayor of Sefton, Cllr June Burns, has said "Year in, year out this appeal goes above and beyond my expectations and this year was no different. So many people contributed to make this appeal successful and all I can say is thank you."

**LIVERPOOL ROAD PEDESTRIAN CROSSING PROPOSAL:** Following the opening of Aldi opposite Tesco Express on Liverpool Road, pedestrian movement has increased resulting in a request for a controlled crossing. It would see the removal of on street parking outside Tesco Express but hopefully this will help with visibility for vehicles exiting Tesco car park.

**LES TRANSFORMATIONS DE SOUTHPORT:** The improvements to the Market Quarter in Southport town centre have now started, following extensive consultation. The first phase will see significant improvements to the appearance of the streets around the market by widening of some of the pavements, new paving and kerbing, new carriageway materials, new street furniture and tree planting with additional planted areas together with improved pedestrian crossings. King Street between Eastbank Street and Market Street will be narrower and one-way but incorporating disabled parking bays. A section of Market Street will become a traffic-free environment and the remainder becoming a two-way section.

**INVESTSEFTON:** Sefton council provides a single point of contact for all businesses, irrespective of size, via a service called InvestSefton. They can assist with full impartial information and support such as business planning, marketing, exporting, accessing finance, finding premises, business rates, licensing and planning. Events and workshops are run throughout the year. For more information contact [investsefton@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:investsefton@sefton.gov.uk) or call 0151 934 3452

**LEO'S BAR:** Leo's Bar located on Nevill Street has been in a dilapidated state for many years and the Council had to take legal action against the former owners as the building was in a dangerous state. The new owners have successfully secured a grant from the council and work has now started. The building, with its Art Deco features, will be brought back into use creating a bar, two retail units and accommodation on the upper floors.

**WE HAVE A NEW PARK RANGER:** Green Sefton has now employed a new member of staff, Katie Etheridge, who covers the north of the borough. Katie is a very welcome addition as she works with all community and volunteer groups for Sefton’s green spaces providing support, help and guidance. She will be helping me to set up a Friends of Carter’s Piece group to help look after the small green space between Hartley Road and Blundell Drive. Watch out for details!

**FRIENDS OF BEDFORD PARK:** The Friends of Bedford Park will soon be receiving a defibrillator donated by the local charity Southport Saviours. The defibrillator will be installed by Sefton Arc on the brick pavilion building next to the football pens and will be accessible to the community 24/7. Southport Saviours will also be providing awareness sessions on how to use the defibrillator.

**FIGHTING FOOD WASTE:** Are you aware of the Food Cupboard situated on Longford Road, Birkdale? It is a local community project focused on fighting food waste from supermarkets and tackling food poverty. The volunteers get close-to-use-date fresh and frozen food produce. If you use the cupboard, please leave a small donation if you are able, and please don’t block neighbouring driveways.

**SEFTON LIBRARY SERVICES:** The local Alzheimers Society has teamed with Sefton Libraries to provide a free dementia symptoms checklist for anyone worried about their memory, or that of a family member. The checklist contains 20 questions about possible symptoms or behaviours relating to dementia. For further support and information, please contact the local Society on 01704 539967 or email [seftonoffice@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:seftonoffice@alzheimers.org.uk)

**SEFTON O.P.E.R.A:** Sefton O.P.E.R.A stands for Sefton Older Persons Enabling Resource and Action and is a charitable voluntary organisation aiming to provide health and wellbeing activities for older people across Sefton. The group delivers a whole range of activities including music sessions, walking groups, day trips, chair-based exercise, IT workshops, craft sessions etc. Sefton OPERA delivers monthly drop-in sessions both in Southport and in Bootle. The monthly dance held at the Atkinson building is very popular and normally held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month. Please contact the group for more information on 0151 330 0479, or 0745 2867 648 or email [admin@seftonopera.org.uk](mailto:admin@seftonopera.org.uk)

## **ROAD WORKS**

**21 FEB - 17 MARCH:** GUILDFORD ROAD multiway signal at mini roundabout with Kew Road

**MARCH 5 – 14:** TOWN LANE/ SOUTHBANK ROAD 2-way signals

**MARCH 18 – 20:** GUILDFORD ROAD stop/go boards near to Central Avenue

**MARCH 18 – 20:** KEW ROAD stop/go boards

**MARCH 18 – 20:** STAMFORD ROAD stop/go boards near to junction with Bedford Road

**MARCH 31 - 4 MAY:** ARUNDEL ROAD multiway signals

**APRIL 14 – 16:** PALACE ROAD closure between Ascot Close and Weld Road

More information can be found at [www.sefton.gov.uk/streetworks](http://www.sefton.gov.uk/streetworks)

## And Another Thing...

Why is it that everything is wrapped up in plastic **packaging** which is often too tough and difficult to get into? Have you ever had to resort to knives, scissor tips etc to force your way in? The usual answer to the question is that it makes the article easier to sell from supermarket shelves. So, could it be that shops have massively increased their use of plastics and cardboard in order to encourage self-service and therefore reduce their staffing costs? Interesting to know. But perhaps you think that the convenience of helping yourself in shops instead of asking an assistant is actually an improvement on old-fashioned service?

And while I'm on the topic of things we buy and use, what about those **lids** and **caps** that are so difficult to open on bottles and tins? I can't be the only one who finds that I have to resort to various tools to get certain things open. Do you have any stories to tell about this? If so, do drop us a line. Email:

[birkdalebuzz@thestationmastershouse.co.uk](mailto:birkdalebuzz@thestationmastershouse.co.uk) or leave a letter with our volunteers at Birkdale Community Hub & Library, addressed to the Editor, Birkdale Buzz.

## Birkdale Community Hub & Library Fundraising Events Dates for your diary in 2025



**April 24th:** Gardeners' Question Time (Liverpool Road Methodist Church)

**May:** Games Evening

**June:** Cheese & Wine Quiz Night

Dates to be confirmed. Details about these events will be available at the Station Master's House and on our website in due course.

All proceeds from these events help to support your local charity  
Birkdale Community Hub & Library



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## Computer Corner by Adam

### Getting Rid of Old Data

As online fraud is becoming ever more prevalent and potential scams harder to spot, there are some simple things you can do to help reduce the likelihood of falling victim. A large part of the problem is the sheer amount of our data that is just out in the wild for people to buy legally or find and use illegally. Luckily there are data removal services that can help reduce the chance of your data being picked up by online criminals.



#### Optery.com

This site offers data removal on both free and paid tiers. So, you can try the free tier and see how many data brokers are buying and selling your information and then opt for the paid tier if you want Optery to write to the brokers to request that your data is removed.

#### Incogni.com

Incogni is a well-respected data removal request service which will give you a full breakdown of data brokers found, the risk level in terms of the brokers themselves and how they manage your data and the current request status for data removal.

#### Privacy Bee

Privacy Bee is another similar service and you can enter your email address on the homepage along with basic details to get a free report to see where your data might be being bought and sold.

Using any of these services can help to significantly reduce spam calls and prevent identity fraud and theft.

You can also very quickly see if your email has been involved in a data breach by entering in the search box on <https://haveibeenpwned.com/>

If you find that is has, make sure to change your passwords and use a password manager (*as mentioned in the December 2024 Buzz*) as well as setting up multi-factor authentication where appropriate. If you've used the same password on multiple sites and that password has been exposed in a breach along with your email address then hackers **will** attempt to access other sites using those same login credentials. If you have Microsoft Authenticator installed on your phone for example, you can check to see the location and IP address where somebody has unsuccessfully tried to access your Microsoft account, i.e. by trying an incorrect password.

One final tip: try to reject cookies or only accept essential cookies when browsing websites.

Know your Birkdale Village  
Q3 Where's this?  
Answer on page 34





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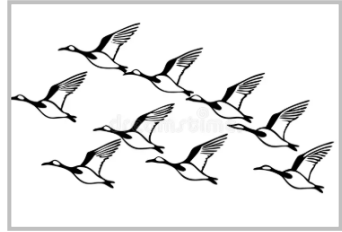
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## TO FLY OR NOT TO FLY by Twitcher

When you see skeins of Pink Footed Geese travelling overhead do you ever wonder where they come from and where they go to when they eventually leave us.

Well they have come from Greenland, Iceland or one of the smaller Northern islands and in order to reach us they have flown between 3000 and 4000 miles. Why have they made this journey and why do they then go back, a round trip of some 7000 miles.

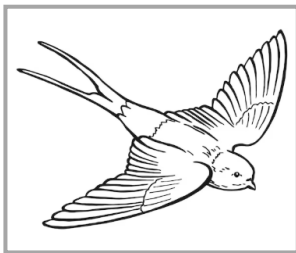


*Geese in flight*

The short answer is food. In Greenland and Iceland they have long days of summer sunshine, which provides the food they need, not only for themselves, but for their young born during this period. However, as winter approaches the days rapidly shorten and food becomes difficult to find. This challenge doesn't just happen to geese of course. All over the world birds are facing changing circumstances as the seasons change and migration is their answer. Although the geese travel a long way, they do not hold the record for the length of migration, not by a long way. That is held by the Arctic Tern, which breeds in the Arctic Circle and as winter approaches there begins a migration to the shores of Antarctica, almost 9000 miles away. The process is then reversed when the Antarctic summer is over.

These migrations leave us with the question: "How do they do it?"

It has been established without doubt that birds possess an internal programme which tells them when and in what direction to set off. It also includes major changes in direction along their route. After that, they seem to be capable of using the sun and stars to maintain their direction. They also have a facility that we do not possess, at least not without the aid of a compass. They clearly possess a sense of magnetism which adds to their other faculties to assist their navigational successes. Senses of smell and sound may also add to their abilities, especially when close to their final destinations. Swallows, for example, are renowned for returning to breed to the exact place where they last bred (or perhaps were born themselves). This



*Swallow*

pinpoint accuracy is quite remarkable, similar in fact to the racing pigeon finding its home, although the latter have been shown to follow roads to help their navigation.

A great deal of research has taken place to explain the phenomena of bird migration and no doubt there will be more to come. In the meantime, the birds carry on showing us up as wonderful navigators.

## Easter Services at St Peter's and St James' Churches

Chocolate eggs are wonderful! Except when you try and split one open, and bits of chocolate go everywhere. I often find a bit of an easter egg months later – melted into the sofa, maybe a little too late to eat it! This year, as Easter comes later, it reminds Christians to trust in God's perfect timing. Just as the followers of Jesus waited for the resurrection, we too can find hope in the waiting.

This Easter – why not come and find out more about this “Hope in the waiting?” All welcome at any of our services: **Rev Sam Johnson**

Date	St James' Church	St Peter's Church
12 <sup>th</sup> April	Crackin' Easter – 11.30 am – Free Craft and activities for all ages with light lunch.	
13 <sup>th</sup> April (Palm Sunday)	Palm Sunday procession – meet at St Peter's Church - 10am, heading to St James' Church for service at 11am, followed by Soup and Rolls	
17 <sup>th</sup> April (Maundy Thursday)		7pm – Agape Communion Reflective service
18 <sup>th</sup> April (Good Friday)	Prayer stations from 1-4pm 2pm Hour at the cross	10am – Morning at the Cross (Quiet Garden)
19 <sup>th</sup> April (Easter Saturday)	Birkdale Dunes Carpark – 8.10pm -Watch and Wait - Sunset Service (Weather Dependent, Bring a torch/light)	
20 <sup>th</sup> April (Easter Sunday)	0900 – Short Communion	
	10:15am – Joint Easter Celebration (St Peter's Church)	
		11.30am – Short communion

## A Local Doctor Writes - The Importance of Protein as We Age

As we age, maintaining muscle mass and strength becomes increasingly important for overall health and mobility. One of the best ways to support this is by ensuring adequate dietary protein. Protein helps build and repair muscles, supports bone health, and boosts immune function—all of which are essential for an active, independent lifestyle.

For older adults, the recommended daily intake of protein is about 1.0 to 1.2 grams per kilogram of body weight. For instance, if you weigh 150 pounds (around 10st 7 lb or 68 kg), aim for 68 to 82 grams of protein each day. Foods like lean meats, fish, eggs, dairy, and legumes are great sources, but it can sometimes be difficult to meet your protein needs through food alone, especially if your appetite has changed or you have dietary restrictions.

This is where protein supplements can help. Protein powders, shakes, and bars offer a convenient way to increase your intake, especially when you're on the go or struggling to get enough through meals. Available in various types—such as whey, casein, or plant-based options—these supplements can be mixed into smoothies or added to recipes.

Before adding protein supplements to your routine, it's always best to consult with your healthcare provider to ensure you're meeting your individual needs. Proper protein intake can play a key role in staying healthy and strong as you age.

## Parliamentary Update from Southport's MP, Patrick Hurley

At Westminster, no two days look alike, and you don't know what will happen by the afternoon. But it's still good to set out the average day, and what better day than today. That's Tuesday 7th January, by the way.



I don't have a second home in London. When I'm in Westminster - mostly, that's Monday to Thursday - I stay in a room in an apartment block, a ten minute walk away. I got into the office about half seven this morning and started writing a speech for a debate this afternoon, arguing for a reduction in taxation for charities. After coffee and a banana for breakfast, I head off to meet someone helping find investors for Southport, and specifically the pier. We part company after an hour with a promise to meet again with one potential investor in a few weeks, back up north.

I pick up my post. Letters from a dozen people asking for help, a handful of industry magazines and twenty or so campaigning postcards asking for support for various causes. Everyone local gets a reply, but I can't guarantee I'll work on their cause - there just aren't enough hours in the day.

I'm then on a Teams call with the local Chamber of Commerce at 10.30, making plans for some "meet the investor" days in the Spring. At 11.30, I'm feeding into the government's industrial strategy, with a meeting of northwest MPs.

Last year, I agreed to chair the community-owned businesses committee, and so I spend the afternoon reading a report about community department stores, making notes to see if this idea might work in the old Beales store.

At 4pm, we're discussing town centres. I don't get to speak, but it's obvious other towns have seen better days, just like round here. Then it's the debate on charity taxation. I give my remarks and listen to other MPs. There's no vote, but the minister promises to consider our views further. At 7pm, the Nationwide are here. I'm hoping to speak to their community foundation boss, to see if they can fund youth services locally. I take a business card and will email them tomorrow to discuss further. By 8.30pm, I'm back to my apartment block. It's Tesco pizza for tea, while I'm chatting to my wife on a video call. I read a report on housing, then it's the radio news at 10pm before bed.

Who knows what tomorrow will bring?

If you'd like to get in touch with my office, the best way is to email us at [patrick.hurley.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:patrick.hurley.mp@parliament.uk) or phone us on 07761 805456. I also run regular advice sessions across Southport, so please email me or go to my website: <https://patrickhurley.uk/> if you'd like an appointment.

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## Beauty Room by Leanne

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Leanne has worked in the beauty industry for over 15 years and formerly at Sitting Pretty in Birkdale village

### All things Beauty

Call or message Leanne on **07899 243783** for any enquiries or to book an appointment



The next issue of the Birkdale Buzz will be out in June 2025.

Advert requests, contributions, questions or feedback should be submitted to the  
Editor by 25 April 2025

**[birkdalebuzz@thestationmastershouse.co.uk](mailto:birkdalebuzz@thestationmastershouse.co.uk)**

# King's Award for Voluntary Service 2024



In December the Birkdale Community Hub & Library charity celebrated the news that it had been given the prestigious KAVS qualification at a party held at the S&B Sports Club. The party was attended by past and present supporters and by volunteers and their guests, together with two Deputy Lieutenants of Merseyside and the Mayor of Sefton. We had refreshments kindly provided by F.J. Gibb, Funeral Directors and Merseyrail.

The Chair of Trustees, Phil Margham, congratulated the volunteers on achieving excellence based on the three KAVS criteria:

- being truly outstanding and making a big difference to their local community
- volunteers, rather than paid staff, being in the driving seat
- having the highest standards in everything the charity does.

Phil said: "These are rigorous criteria, and we can feel rightly proud that we have achieved the three measures, joining the other 280 voluntary groups around the UK in gaining a KAVS this year. Our citation on the award will read: **creating opportunities for making friendships, providing leisure activities and fostering learning.** That says it all."

A ceremony to present the award took place in mid-February, conducted by the King's Representative for Merseyside, Lord-Lieutenant Mark Blundell, accompanied by five Deputy Lieutenants. Other honoured guests included the Mayor of Sefton, June Burns, and Sally Ralston from Merseyrail, the company which nominated the BCHL charity for the KAVS award and sponsored the refreshments at the event.



*Mark Blundell presenting the award to Phil Margham*

**Mrs Jones  
is delighted!**



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[www.southport-international.co.uk](http://www.southport-international.co.uk)

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## New Pictures for Old?

Have you got memories locked away in old 35mm slides, VHS tapes or camcorder tapes stored in a cupboard? Well, help is at hand. One of our volunteers, Adam, has offered to unlock those memories by converting the pictures and tapes into digital files that can be stored, watched and sent around the world.



To avoid overloading Adam, the service is limited to 25 slides or one VHS tape each order, but you can repeat your order as often as you like. The charge for each order is £5.00 but you can give more if you wish, all proceeds going to the charity. Bring your slides or tape into the Station Master's House next to Birkdale Station, enclosing them in an envelope marked "Photos for Digitising". You will be asked to sign a form giving your contact details, including your email address.

When you have got your items back, why not organise a family/friends get-together and have a photo party? You'll be amazed how many memories come flooding back!



*Please note:* we may not be able to digitise all VHS tapes as if they are degraded they may damage the VHS player we have. The camcorder tapes we're able to digitise are Sony Hi8 and VHS C.

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# DINGBATS

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17	18	19	20

Answers on page 34

## Answers to Puzzles



- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1 - Silver Lining                            | 11 - Goody Two Shoes         |
| 2 - Mixed Up                                 | 12 - Hang on a second        |
| 3 - Out of the Blue                          | 13 - Jumping the Gun         |
| 4 - Six of one and half a dozen of the other | 14 - Go under the Knife      |
| 5 - Down to Earth                            | 15 - Just Between You and Me |
| 6 - A Foot in the Door                       | 16 - A Mile a Minute         |
| 7 - Eat your Heart out                       | 17 - Go out on a Limb        |
| 8 - End of the Road                          | 18 - Down in the Dumps       |
| 9 - The Lesser of Two Evils                  | 19 - Add fuel to the Fire    |
| 10 - Go Back to Square one                   | 20 - All Shook Up            |

### Answers to Picture Questions.

**Q1** P7: The Station Master's House    **Q2** P13: Birkdale Club    **Q3** P23: Sleepy Paws

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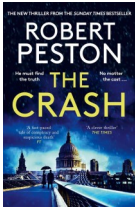
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## New books in Birkdale Community Hub & Library

For a complete list of new titles go to <https://thestationmastershouse.slls.online/>

### ADULT FICTION

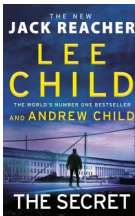
#### ***The Crash.* Robert Peston**



**London, 2007.** It's summer in the City: the economy is booming, profits are up and the stock market sits near record highs. But journalist Gil Peck is a lone voice worrying it can't last. Deep in the plumbing of the financial system, he has noticed strange things happening which could threaten the whole economy. But nobody wants to hear it: not the politicians taking credit for an end to boom and bust, not the bankers pocketing vast bonuses, not even Gil's bosses at the BBC, who think it's irrelevant.

#### ***The Secret.* Lee Child and Robert Child (Jack Reacher 28)**

**Chicago. 1992.** A hospital patient wakes to find two strangers by his bed.



They show him a list of names and ask a simple but impossible question. Minutes later he falls to his death from his twelfth-floor window - a fall which generates some unexpected attention. That attention comes from the Secretary of Defense, who calls for an inter-agency task force to investigate. Jack Reacher, recently demoted from Major, is assigned as the Army's representative. If he gets a result, great. If not, he's a convenient fall guy.

#### ***Keep Her Secret.* Mark Edwards**



In this sinister tale from 4 million copy bestselling author Mark Edwards, a deadly secret turns a couple's new romance into a nightmare. And they're not the only ones who know the truth... After twenty years apart, Matthew and Helena have rekindled their college romance and are away in Iceland on their first holiday together. Swept up in the romance on a mountain hike, one moment they are taking the perfect photo, the next Helena is plunging over the cliff edge...

Terrified, Matthew almost misses Helena's sudden and shocking confession—but what he hears chills him to the bone. And when Helena reveals the full truth Matthew is horrified, not only by what she's done, but why she did it. Does he really know her at all?

### Graphic Novels

We have received a large donation of Marvel graphic novels of which 77 have already been added to the library shelves. For a list of the graphic novels available, search the library catalogue for 'graphic novels' and restrict your search to 'Genre'.



## ***Important Numbers and Information***

Birkdale Community Hub & Library: 01704 566992

BCHL website: [www.thestationmastershouse.co.uk](http://www.thestationmastershouse.co.uk)

Station Master's House: 2 Liverpool Road, Birkdale. PR8 4AR

Liverpool Road Methodist Church: Liverpool Road (near Mercedes Garage), PR8 4PD

Fire, Ambulance, Police emergency	999
Police (non-emergency)	101
NHS Health Advice	111
Out of Hours GP service	01704 395755
Southport Police Station	0151 709 6010
Southport Community Fire Station	0151 296 6650
United Utilities (emergency)	0345 672 3723
Gas emergency (if gas smell)	0800 111 999
Sefton Council Services	0345 140 0845
National Rail Enquiries	03457 484950
Benefits Enquiry Line	0151 934 3660
Job Centre Plus	0800 1690190
Passport Advice Line	0300 222 0000
Samaritans	116 123
RSPCA Southport	01704 567624

## **Defibrillators in Birkdale**

There are eight defibrillators in Birkdale:

- in the Merseyrail Ticket Office
- on the side wall of Samuels & Co
- on the side wall of Morrisons Daily over the line
- St Peter's Church
- Busy Bees Nursery, Lulworth Road
- Between Hillside Pharmacy and the Grasshopper, Sandon Road
- Salvation Army, Shakespeare Street
- S&B Sports Club Trafalgar Road

## **Social Media Links**



**@Birkdale Community Hub and Library**



**@birkdale\_hub\_library**



**Birkdale CH&L**

