

BRIDGING SOCIAL ISOLATION



Photo by Ed Baron

January 2025 is definitely making its presence felt so far, with freezing temperatures, snow and ice to contend with! They do produce some lovely views though in our beautiful town and we have included some in this newsletter for you to enjoy.

We had to cancel some of our activities due to the ice and snow this week but hopefully things will get back to normal as the temperatures rise. It is always so nice to hear people's voices and laughter in the Centre when it is busy!

Here at the Bridgend Centre we wish you love, laughter, good health and memorable times in 2025 and we hope to see you very soon.

The Bridgend Centre celebrates National Lottery funding award

Everyone at the Bridgend Centre was celebrating in December after receiving the news that our charity will be awarded £167,000 in National Lottery funding to renovate the first floor of the Bridgend Centre and deliver even more services to the local community.

We will use the money to replace the stone roof to the front of the building and develop the first floor to create two modern and bright meeting rooms that will be used to accommodate more activity groups, exercise classes and one-to-one meetings for the community.

We are delighted that The National Lottery Community Fund has recognised the work we do at the Bridgend Centre and that we have the opportunity to expand the depth and breadth of services we deliver by increasing the amount of useable space we have for the public. By renovating the first floor of the building, we will be able to create a lovely space to spend time in and ensure it is available for the community for many years to come.

In 2018, our charity was able to raise sufficient funds to purchase the building and since then we have made significant investment to improve it, including renovations to the shop, area to the rear and our lovely contemplation garden.

The new funding from The National Lottery Community Fund, which distributes money raised by National Lottery players for good causes and is the largest community funder in the UK, will see the number of activities taking place at the Bridgend Centre and the people taking part in them expanded significantly.

We are absolutely thrilled by this award and excited about what it will enable our charity to achieve over the next few years.

The National Lottery Community Fund recently launched its strategy, [‘It starts with community’](#), which will underpin its efforts to distribute at least £4 billion of National Lottery funding by 2030.

As part of this, the funder has four key missions, which are to support communities to come together, be environmentally sustainable, help children and young people thrive and enable people to live healthier lives.

National Lottery players raise over £30 million a week for good causes across the UK. Thanks to them, last year (2023/24) The National Lottery Community Fund awarded over half a billion pounds (£686.3 million) of life-changing funding to communities across the UK, supporting over 13,700 projects to turn their great ideas into reality. To find out more visit www.TNLCommunityFund.org.uk



The year ahead - Hello 2025 at the Bridgend Centre

Yet again after what seems like a whirlwind of a year in 2024, many of us have asked 'where did that go?' Time certainly passes quickly and now is a very opportune time to reflect on the past year and think ahead to the New Year. Here at the Bridgend Centre we wish you love, laughter, good health and memorable times in 2025.

The past year has seen many successes at the Bridgend which we continue to celebrate and of course it brings some sadness when we think of those we have lost and whose lives we added value and happiness to. Of course, some people choose to make New Year Resolutions – and that's a great activity. But for others that may seem a little daunting or unrealistic.

So with that mindset, think about pressing your own personal 'reset' button so that you make the most out of 2025 and do things that please you and make you happy. Your reset doesn't have to be life changing, it can be a variety of small activities or ways of thinking which add value, and maybe smiles, to your life. So how can we help you here at the Bridgend Centre? We are a place where everyone is seen, valued and cared for, where friendships blossom and memories are made.

We have many varied activities which are undoubtedly sociable and inclusive. Our full activity programme is available on our website or you can pick up a leaflet from us. The advantage with our activities is that you are not committing (or paying for) a full course, so you can dip your toe in the water and see how you feel. We always aim to keep our costs low for our activities as we want them to be accessible to all.

For example, why not join our **Tai Chi classes** on a Monday afternoon – a combination of low impact exercise and meditation. Our current attendees are just loving this new activity. Or start your week off with a **Walk for Health**. Get out into the beautiful countryside and enjoy a one hour easy guided walk. No hills, no stiles – ideal for those who want gentle outdoor exercise and company.

On Tuesday afternoons we have our **Art classes**. These are open to anyone wanting to paint and draw with help from peers in the group. You certainly don't have to be a budding Van Gogh – and even better we are able to provide art materials for you to use. It's a lovely friendly group who chat and laugh lots and welcome new guests into the group.

Thursday afternoons provide the opportunity for people to get together for our **Talk and Games (TAG) group**. Enjoy chats, games and a cuppa. Each week is different, sometimes with a quiz, sometimes guest speakers, and occasional booked outings. On Thursdays we also have a male-focused social group called 'Brew with the Guys', which does exactly what it says on the tin with weekly opportunities to meet people, chat, go out on day trips and meals and listen to interesting speakers.



If you like to occasionally get out and about but don't want to go under your own steam, our **Shuttle to the Shops** service runs fortnightly and has included trips to Bury Market, Handforth Dean, Poynton and Macclesfield. We do ensure that our destinations have access to restrooms and food!

All of the above are just a sample of our offerings and there is much more going on every day at the Centre. It goes without saying that you can of course just pop in at anytime for a cuppa, a chat or just to



Wintry scenes in Bollington

2025 blew in with a vengeance in the first full week of January with snow and icy conditions across much of the country. While this created inconvenience and difficult travelling conditions, it also provided some beautiful wintry scenes in the area and the opportunity to slow down and reflect. Here are just a few. Thank you to all our contributors who allowed us to use their photos! Can you guess where they were taken?



Gill Redin



Gill Redin



Tony Hopwood



Tony Hopwood



Gill Redin



Katy Goford



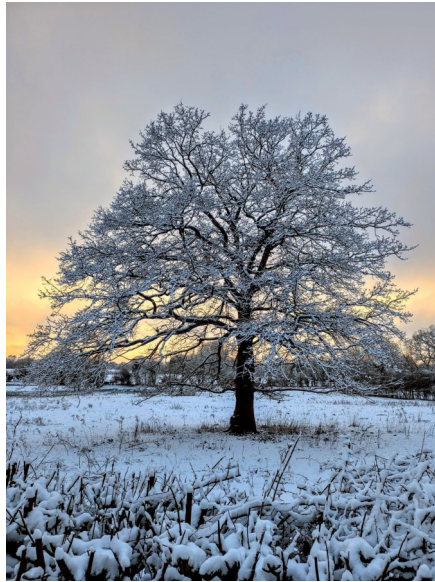
Linda Jepson



More wintry scenes in Bollington



Ed Baron



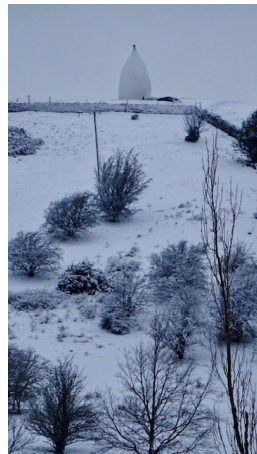
Ed Baron



Bollington Walkers are Welcome



Fiona May



Gill Redin



Mandy Muir



Fiona May

Pun corner

I got so drunk last night that I had a fight with a mop. To be fair, I wiped the floor with it.

To kill a French Vampire, you need to drive a baguette through his heart. Sounds easy but it is painstaking.

I gave Dave an apple. He said he preferred pears. So I gave him another apple.

I was in the supermarket on the Island of Guernsey last week when I asked a staff member, 'Can you tell me where the potatoes are please?' They replied 'on the next aisle'. So I nipped on the ferry to Jersey.....

I got thrown out of a local park after arranging the squirrels by size. They didn't like me critter sizing.....





BRIDGEND BUDDIES

We need your help!

Just one hour of your time per week could help to improve the quality of life of a socially isolated person in Bollington.



Please speak to Bev for details on how you could become a buddy and help make a difference.

01625 576311 or info@bridgendcentre.org.uk

The Bridgend Centre,
104 Palmerston Street,
Bollington, SK10 5PW



Hello 2025 at the Bridgend Centre continued....

sit and chill out with us. We are here for you, to help you find that personal reset button for 2025.

We are often told that coming to the Bridgend Centre changes lives for the better and we certainly hope that you will allow us to welcome you to this amazing facility that Bollington is so very lucky to have.

The New Year offers new chances, new feelings, new dreams, new hopes and fresh starts, and here at the Bridgend Centre, we can be part of that. We can't wait to see you and Happy New Year!

P.S. Did you know that January 21st is International Hug Day? Make someone's day by giving a hug or sending a hug in a card or text.



Winter TV

What better way to while away some time on these dark January nights than with a TV 'box set' or two! There is some really good telly about at the moment, and here are some series we can recommend. Some are on 'pay for viewing' channels but there are some on terrestrial television too.

- 1. Traitors (BBC1)** The ultimate gameshow with views. Set in a castle in the Scottish Highlands, 20 odd people are placed in a game where an unknown number of them are secretly traitors, who have the aim of 'murdering' the remaining faithful. The aim of the game is get to the end alive and there is a prize pot of £120,000. We are just watching to enjoy host Claudia's sartorial choices, such as chunky jumpers and velvet jackets. We can only assume she shops at the Bridgend Centre!
- 2. Playing Nice (ITV1)** Based on the novel of the same name by JP Delaney, this four part thriller will probably annoy and intrigue you in equal measures. Set on the scenic Cornish coast, it has the premise that two baby boys were switched at birth and what happened when the parents discovered the error two years later.
- 3. Missing You (Netflix)** Six-part thriller based on a book by Harlan Coben. A number of books by this author have been adapted to TV by Netflix and ten TV series have been produced out of a 14 book deal. Each one is pretty similar in format but entertaining nonetheless. I'm not sure you would remember it a few days later though!
- 4. Black Doves (Netflix)** Spy thriller with a touch of black comedy, this has a stellar cast and will keep you binge watching well into the night!
- 5. Gavin and Stacey (BBC)** The final ever episode screened on Christmas Day and we thoroughly enjoyed it, it was heartwarming and funny at the same time. What better time to watch the whole series, either to remind yourself of what happened if you have seen it before or to see for yourself what the fuss is about.



Action for Happiness - January 2025 calendar

Happier January 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1 Find three things to look forward to this year	2 Make time today to do something kind for yourself	3 Do a kind act for someone else to help brighten their day	4 Write a list of things you feel grateful for and why	5 Look for the good in others and notice their strengths	6 Take five minutes to sit still and just breathe	7 Learn something new and share it with others
8 Say positive things to the people you meet today	9 Get moving. Do something active (ideally outdoors)	10 Thank someone you're grateful to and tell them why	11 Switch off all your tech at least an hour before bedtime	12 Connect with someone near you - share a smile or chat	13 Take a different route today and see what you notice	14 Eat healthy food which really nourishes you today
15 Get outside and notice five things that are beautiful	16 Contribute positively to your local community	17 Be gentle with yourself when you make mistakes	18 Get back in contact with an old friend	19 Focus on what's good, even if today feels tough	20 Go to bed in good time and allow yourself to recharge	21 Try out something new to get out of your comfort zone
22 Plan something fun and invite others to join you	23 Put away digital devices and focus on being in the moment	24 Take a small step towards an important goal	25 Decide to lift people up rather than put them down	26 Choose one of your strengths and find a way to use it today	27 Challenge your negative thoughts and look for the upside	28 Ask other people about things they've enjoyed recently
29 Say hello to a neighbour and get to know them better	30 See how many people you can smile at today	31 Write down your hopes or plans for the future				

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS **Happier · Kinder · Together**

A nourishing recipe for January! Hearty ham and vegetable stew

The action for Tuesday 14th January on the Action for Happiness 'Happier January' calendar is to eat heathy food which really nourishes you. We think this recipe fits the bill to warm you up on a cold January evening!

Ingredients

1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 yellow onion, peeled and finely chopped
 5 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
 2 stalks of celery, finely chopped
 2 medium size carrots, cut into 1/4 inch chunks
 0.75 kg potatoes, cut into 1/2 inch cubes

1 teaspoon dried thyme
 1 bay leaf
 350ml chicken stock
 500g cooked ham, cut into 1/4 inch cubes
 500g kale, torn into bite size pieces



Method

- Heat the oil in a large pan over a medium heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally for about 5 minutes. Stir in the garlic, celery, carrots, potatoes, thyme and bay leaf. Continue to cook, stirring often, until fragrant and beginning to brown up a bit. Add the stock and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer the soup until the root vegetables are tender, about 30 minutes.
- Remove the bay leaf from the pot and then insert an immersion blender into the pot and puree about half of the soup. You still want plenty of chunks left for good texture! You can also transfer half of the soup to a blender and puree that way too.
- Once half of the soup is blended add the chopped ham, kale and salt and pepper to taste. Give the pot a hefty stir and let it sit on warm heat for about 10 minutes to let the flavours blend together. If the stew is too thick ad a touch more liquid. Taste for seasonings and adjust as needed.

Brain Teaser - General Knowledge Quiz

1. What does Mrs Tabitha Twitchit do for a living?
2. What is Broadway's theatre district known as?
3. In which sector of Cyprus is Kyrenia, Greek or Turkish?
4. Tweedledum and Tweedledee appear in which famous book?
5. What is the first name of the French designer Chanel?
6. Which number symphony is Schubert's 'Great C Major'?
7. What went up in 1961 and came down in 1989?
8. A wooden horse was used in the siege of which city?
9. What protects a computer from illegal access?
10. Which pop singer's real name was Marvin Lee Aday?
11. What is an ulster?
12. Who invented the safety lamp for miners?
13. Which British prime minister did Gordon Brown come after?
14. Sleipnir was the eight-legged horse of which Norse god?
15. Which ex-England cricketer was offered the throne of Albania?
16. Which has the longest gestation period, a buffalo or polar bear?



Answers

1. Shop keeper, 2. Great White Way, 3. Turkish, 4. Alice in Wonderland, 5. Coco, 6, 9th, 7. Berlin Wall, 8. Troy, 9. Fire Wall, 10. Meat loaf, 11. Men's overcoat, 12. Humphrey Davey, 13. Tony Blair, 14. Odin, 15. Fry, 16. Buffalo.

I Am Print prints the paper copies of this newsletter 'at cost', which are then delivered to the homes of isolated and vulnerable people in Bollington. Thank you so much to I Am Print, it means the world.





How fraud aware are you?

Drop-in at Bridgend Centre
Thursday 27th of February
12:30 - 14:30

Scammers are targeting older people in Cheshire East. Last year in Cheshire, 5,281 people reported being scammed, costing them over £20 million in total.

Protect yourself by talking to the Age UK Cheshire Scams Awareness & Aftercare Team. They'll be at the Bridgend Centre to talk to customers and give out information.

Speak to a member of staff for more information



Cheshire ageUK — working in partnership with — Cheshire East Council Trading Standards

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Registered charity 1123287 We are a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)