

## BRIDGING SOCIAL ISOLATION



Happy New Year! Welcome to the January 2026 edition of Bridging Social Isolation.

We hope you had a great festive season and enjoyed the celebrations.

New Year brings new things for Bridgend as the rooms upstairs are now completed and will start being used over the course of the next few weeks. The Bridgend Ball will be bringing a bit of sparkle to the chill of January and is an exciting new fundraiser for us.

You can read more about these on pages 2 and 3.

Whatever your resolutions are, whether it's taking up a new hobby, being more thrifty with pennies or even doing some volunteering, the Bridgend Centre can help, so why not pop down and speak to one of the team today.

## Great ways to support the Bridgend Centre

We are really excited about the 'Bridgend Ball' that is taking place at the Tytherington Club on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January to celebrate 35 years of supporting the Bollington community. This really is a one-off event and tickets are selling fast, so don't miss out! You can buy individual tickets or tables of ten if there is a few of you that would like to go. Tickets include a welcome drink, fabulous three-course meal and a variety of entertainment including the brilliant Monkey Harris who will keep us dancing until the small hours. You can purchase your tickets here:

<https://bridgendcentre.org.uk/bridgendball2026>

All funds raised will go towards the running costs of our drop-in support service so by coming along you are making a big difference to your local community.

If you can't make the Ball but still want to make a difference to our community, you could either donate a prize to our luxury draw or make a donation to our '£35,000 for 35 years' campaign, which will go directly to supporting vulnerable and isolated people who use our drop-in support service day-in day-out, such as Hilda.

*Hilda lives alone in Bollington and is in the early stages of dementia and comes into the Bridgend Centre every day for a brew and a chat. She also attends a couple of the activity groups, including Tai Chi, which keeps her body active and mind calm. Hilda's family live far away so can't visit her too often and so she really appreciates*

*the opportunity to chat with the community workers at Bridgend, catch up with friends and keep active.*



The campaign continues to go well with over £27,000 now having been raised. We are aiming to achieve £35,000 by the end of March so please donate today to help us reach our goal and help more people like Hilda. To do so you can go to our website [www.bridgendcentre.org.uk/donate](http://www.bridgendcentre.org.uk/donate) or pop into the Centre. Becoming a regular donor is a great way to support us on an ongoing basis.

Keep an eye on our website and social media channels for updates:

[www.bridgendcentre.org.uk](http://www.bridgendcentre.org.uk)

Email: [info@bridgendcentre.org.uk](mailto:info@bridgendcentre.org.uk)

Facebook: [@bridgendcentrebollington](https://www.facebook.com/bridgendcentrebollington)

## Trustee update

We are delighted to welcome Chris Bennett to the Bridgend board of Trustees. Many of you will know Chris from his work with Friends of The Rec and also The Bollington Festival. He brings a wealth of knowledge about our community and a real enthusiasm for the work that Bridgend does. In order to really understand the day-to-day of Bridgend, Chris is also taking his turn manning the kettle as a café volunteer on a Tuesday afternoon. This is a great way for trustees to see our triumphs and our challenges out in the field and help to guide the ship accordingly. So, welcome to the team!



## Competition Time! Project Bridgend

Project Bridgend is now complete! The work on the roof and first floor rooms has is finished, the iconic white walls outside have been repainted and the windows replaced. We hope you agree that the building is looking much smarter.

The Bridgend Centre is very old, having been built in approximately the 16th century. It started life as a farmhouse, with the people living on the first floor and their livestock being housed on the ground floor. The building has had a number of uses over the centuries, in the mid 20th century, the building was a garage, complete with petrol pumps on the forecourt! You will notice that the floor level of the Bridgend Centre is substantially lower than the ground and road in front of it. This is because the building pre-dates the canal, the time when the ground between the canal and Bridgend was significantly raised by the addition of earth from the first, failed, attempt at building the embankment. 'Throstles Nest', the cottage opposite the Bridgend Centre, is similarly set down in the ground.

Huge thanks goes to the National Lottery Community Fund for making this project happen and making our building fit for the next generation. Also a big thank-you goes to Hogbens Chartered Surveyors for managing the project and to East Cheshire Joinery for their skill and expertise in transforming our ancient building.

The new rooms created will soon be available for hire, including in the evenings and at weekends. In addition, we are looking at expanding our timetable of activities.

To mark this occasion we would like to rename all our meeting and activity rooms in the Centre, of which there are four, two large and two small. We have decided to run a competition to find the best names for the rooms and would welcome entries for ideas! If you have any bright ideas, please cut out the form below and return to the box in reception. For example John, Paul, George and Ringo ;-) The winner will be awarded with a £20 voucher for the fabulous Bridgend Centre shop. Closing date is 31st January 2026. Management decision on the winner will be final.



### Name the rooms competition!

#### Room 1 (Large room on the ground floor)

Name idea.....



#### Room 2 (Small room on the ground floor)

Name idea:.....



#### Room 3 (Large room on first floor)

Name idea:.....



#### Room 4 (Small room on first floor)

Name idea:.....



Name: .....

Telephone number:.....Email address:.....

## Sunshine after the snow

The recent snow and ice were a distant memory and we enjoyed some blue skies and a spot of sun on the Bridgend Wednesday walk on 7th January.

Walking is excellent exercise and the Bridgend guided walks evolved from the success of the Heritage Trails. Exploring the stunning countryside 360 degrees around the Bridgend Centre, our walks cover hills, dales, woods and fields and allow people to exercise and meet new and old friends alike.

Bridgend walks provide a great way to enjoy the great outdoors and socialise. You do not need to book a place, so please just turn up on the day. We currently have two different walks every week, one on a Monday morning and one on a Wednesday morning. We also have monthly walks on a Saturday morning and an evening walk in the spring and summer months.

Our Monday 'Walks for Health' are short, easy guided walks in Bollington and surrounding areas and are designed to encourage new walkers. They provide a great opportunity to enjoy some exercise and meet people. The walks on this programme are weekly on a Monday morning at 10:15am. There are different start points around Bollington and surrounding areas each week on a rotational basis. All the walks are easy, approximately 2 miles in length, with no stiles and only gentle or short slopes/steps to climb or go down.



Our Wednesday walks are longer, usually between 4-6 miles and are around 2-3 hours in duration. There are some climbs and stiles to get over. Each Wednesday walk has a boot rating to guide you on whether it is suitable for you. Please check the event on the website for the details or in the leaflet for that individual walk and choose a walk that is appropriate for your fitness level and abilities. All Wednesday walks start at the Bridgend Centre at 10:15am.

Once a month we also have a longer walk of at least 7 miles on a Saturday, which will take place once per month.



## Get the right treatment when **YOU** need it



SELF-CARE  
Care for yourself at home  
Minor cuts and grazes  
Minor bruises  
Minor sprains  
Coughs and colds



PHARMACY  
Local expert advice  
Minor illnesses  
Headaches  
Stomach upsets  
Bites and stings



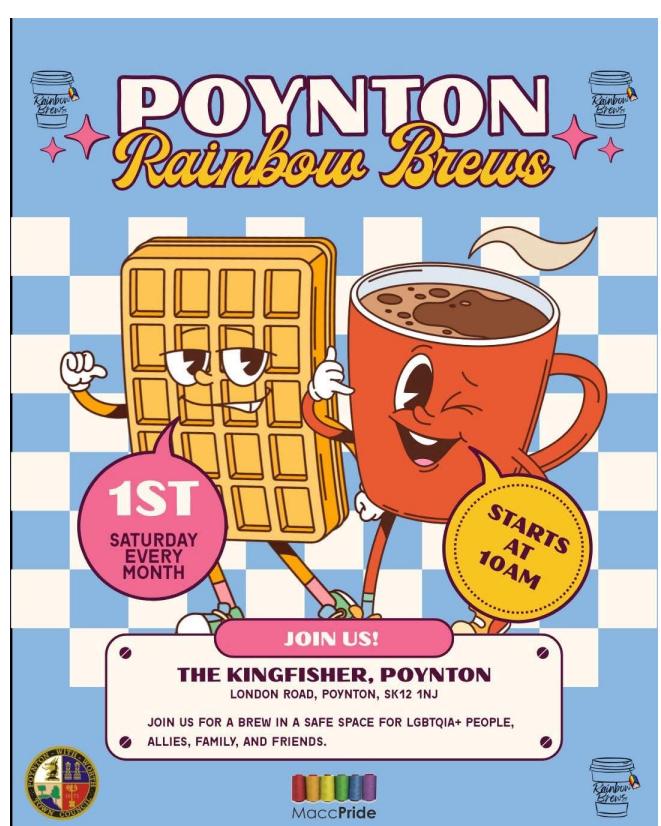
NHS 111  
Non-emergency help  
Feeling unwell?  
Anxious?  
Need help?  
Unsure?



GP ADVICE  
Out of hours: Call 111  
Chronic pain  
New prescriptions  
Long term conditions  
Persistent symptoms



A&E OR 999  
For emergencies only  
Choking  
Chest pain  
Blacking out  
Serious blood loss



## Walk—Lyme Park from Nelson Pit Car Park

The Bridgend Centre is renowned in the area for its guided walks and walking trails exploring the beautiful countryside in the Bollington area. We have started producing some guided walks a little further afield for Macclesfield's monthly 'Local People' magazine. The walk below is an lovely circular walk just a few miles north of the town that is easily accessible by car.

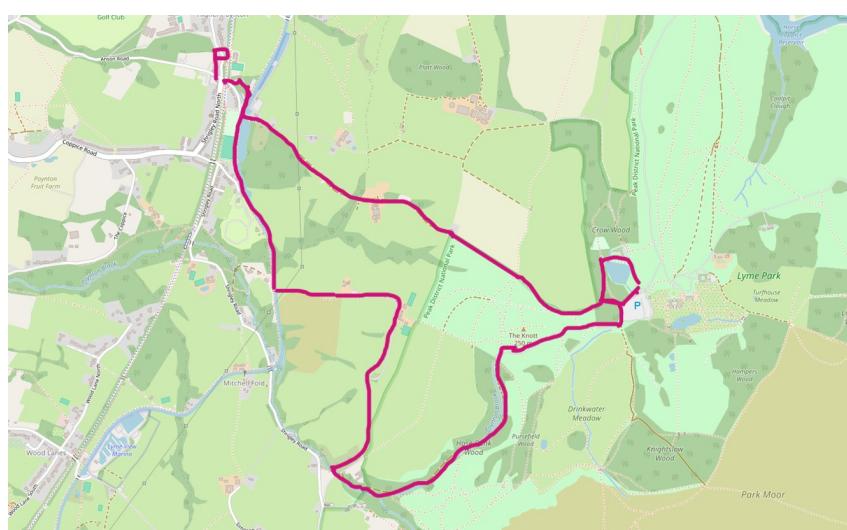
This walk starts at Nelson Pit Car Park on Macclesfield Canal and explores the nearby countryside before nipping into Lyme Park. Lyme Park is a wonderful property owned by the National Trust and has a glorious house to explore (subject to entry fees and opening times), plus gardens, moorland and a deer park. There is plenty of parking at the walk start, either on the road near the Boar's Head pub or in the car park (fee payable). The Boars Head provides refreshments and food to revive you after the walk. The walk is approximately 5 miles long and has some short gentle ascents. Please note that the park has opening & closing times.



1. Nelson Pit car park is made up of two areas, the canal can be accessed at the top of the second, higher car park. Walk thorough a gap in the hedge to gain access to the towpath of Macclesfield Canal.
2. Turn right onto the canal towpath and then immediately alight at bridge 15 to gain access to Lyme Road. Cross the bridge over the canal and continue walking on Lyme Road in an easterly direction. Follow the sign for Haresteads Farm and walk for approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile until you reach the gates of Lyme Park.
3. Go through the large gates into Lyme Park and continue straight ahead on the rough track. Ignore the paths on the right and descend into the heart of Lyme Park. You can spend as much time here as you like, there are lots of diversions for the easily distracted walker, including a café, toilets, a gift shop and a stately home (entrance fee and opening times apply). You can obtain more information from the Lyme Park website: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/cheshire-greater-manchester/lyme](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/cheshire-greater-manchester/lyme)
4. A nice route around the central area of Lyme Park is to walk past the car park, with the house on your right, then bear left down to the café & toilet block. There should be a small lake on your left-hand side. Follow the path around this lake, then return back to the car park.
5. To return to your car, follow the path away from the mansion house uphill in a westerly direction back the way you came. Ignore the paths on the right and go straight on. There should be a small hill on your right (the Knott). You will come to a small parking area. Go through the gate onto a path through a sheltered, pretty, wooded valley. Follow this for  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile until you reach the 'West Parkgate'.
6. Turn right here onto a track and then take the next footpath forking left along another rough track. Follow

this in a roughly northerly direction for about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile. Follow the path keeping the farm on your right and then bend sharp left. At the "private" sign turn left onto a narrow fenced footpath. Take the right hand of the two pedestrian gates sticking to the fenced path.

7. Cross a field until you reach Macclesfield Canal. Cross the footbridge, turn right, and walk along the canal towpath in a northerly direction until you reach Lyme View Marina and café. Your car is in Nelson Pit Car Park to the left after bridge 15.



## Buxton Crescent Experience

We would like to thank the Buxton Crescent Heritage Trust for their kind donation of tickets to the Crescent Experience which were handed out to lucky winners at the Bridgend Bingo and our Christmas gathering as part of our Christmas Raffle.

In a town whose history is shaped by water, The Buxton Crescent Experience is a boutique attraction that reveals the story of a special spa town, the renowned water and recent restoration of the Crescent building.



The Crescent opened in 1789 as one of the UK's first purpose-built hotels. Designed by John Carr of York and built for the 5th Duke of Devonshire, the buildings served as hotels, spas and entertainment spaces until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century when it sadly closed. Thanks to an extensive restoration, partly funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Crescent reopened as a luxury spa hotel in 2020 and part of the development included the Crescent Experience, Buxton's premier indoor attraction.

The Crescent Experience is run by Buxton Crescent Heritage Trust, a charity that celebrates and preserves the

unique history of the Buxton Crescent, its spa town, and the world-famous thermal water. This is through inspiring educational engagement, events and visitor information. The work of their Trustees, Colleagues and Volunteers supports Buxton's communities, businesses, and vibrant visitor economy.



The Trust also runs the Pump Room, Buxton's tourist information centre, café bar and giftshop where visitors can find a range of locally produced food and drinks along with a range of gifts. If you are visiting Buxton, be sure to pop into the Pump Room and visit the Buxton Crescent Experience.

## Another satisfied eBay customer!

Check out this beautiful coat made by one of our eBay customers with an absolute bargain, pure wool fabric from our eBay store . They described the fabric as, " Beautiful quality and colour. I made a winter coat and still have enough left to make a skirt." We always love to see the things that customers have created with purchases from Bridgend.

Our eBay store is a great source of funds for the centre and it is where we sell items that are worth more than £15. The reason for this is two-fold, first it means that the items in the shop are the more affordable range that are accessible to everyone no matter their income. Secondly, it maximises the funds raised by people's kindly donated items.



Our listings can be found by searching for bridgend\_centre on eBay or by following the link on the Bridgend Centre website in the Shop section. We do not mind at all if local people want to come and view the item here before purchasing or collect their purchases here in person. The items listed are so varied we have had everything from musical instruments, to telescopes to technical I.T. equipment. The eBay store means we can reach a wider audience and find buyers for more unusual items that would take a long time to sell in the centre.

## Recipe—Slow cooker chicken korma

### Ingredients

2 garlic cloves  
 thumb-sized piece ginger peeled  
 2 large onions finely chopped  
 2 tbsp vegetable oil  
 6 skinless chicken breasts cut into large chunks  
 2 tbsp tomato purée  
 1 tsp ground cumin  
 1 tsp paprika  
 1 tsp turmeric  
 1 tsp ground coriander  
 ¼-½ tsp chilli powder  
 2 tsp sugar  
 300ml chicken stock  
 150ml double cream  
 6 tbsp ground almonds  
 toasted flaked almonds  
 1 tsp salt

Fresh coriander (if using)

Heat the slow cooker to low. Put the garlic, ginger and onions in a small blender with a splash of water and whizz to a paste. Heat the oil in a frying pan over a medium-high heat and sear the chicken all over. Remove from the pan and set aside, then add the onion paste. Fry over a medium heat for 10 mins until lightly golden.

Stir in the tomato purée, spices, 1 tsp salt and the sugar, fry for 1 min until aromatic, then put the chicken back into the pan (with any juices) and add the stock. Stir and bring to a simmer, then spoon into the slow cooker. Cook on low for 5-6 hrs until the chicken is tender and cooked through.

Stir through the cream and the ground almonds and bubble for 10 mins to reduce, if needed. Scatter with flaked almonds and coriander, if using, then serve with rice and naans, if you like.



**Happier January 2026**

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				

## Brain Teaser – super sudoku

		6					4		
			5		2	6			
1		8			5				
					8				
			1		7			3	
6	2			1			4		
		6	4					5	
	4			6		2		7	
3	9					1			6
			3	7			7		8
			4			5			9
	5	1	2	9			9	3	4
			5	6		2			7
1		4			8				6
	7	9				8		5	5
						7	9	8	
					4	6		1	
3								6	
					9				
			7	2			3	8	
			2	6			4		

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 is hugely appreciated.



### Bridgend Centre

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T: 01625 576311 [www.bridgendcentre.org.uk](http://www.bridgendcentre.org.uk)

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We are a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)