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Editor: Ian Wylie (ian.wylie@btconnect.com)

# CORBRIDGE MATTERS

February 2022 Issue 63  
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Most photos from Ian Wylie



## Parish Council **INFORMATION**

Clerk of the Council: Mrs Mandy Senior  
Tel: 07950 297634

[www.corbridge.ukpc.net](http://www.corbridge.ukpc.net)

Corbridge Parish Council next  
meets at 7pm on Wednesdays  
February 23 and March 23 2022 in  
the Parish Hall, St Helen's Street,  
Corbridge.



# Council Notes

St Andrew's Church is the heart of our village - no more so at Yuletide when the Christmas Tree Festival draws in thousands to see the craft, creativity and care shown by the exhibitors. We are very fortunate to have such a vibrant Parish Church here in Corbridge. It's sad, however, to hear reports that over 400 Anglican churches have closed in the past decade and that church attendance, in aggregate, continues to fall. Of course, we have experienced church closures here in Corbridge. The adaptation and re-use of former ecclesiastical buildings can breathe new life and purpose into repurposed buildings, as our very own Forum Books has shown in the former Methodist Chapel in the centre of the village. All the same, there is still a sense of loss as society gradually loses the habit of weekly communal worship and assembly. British people used to live, worship, drink, eat and travel to work together to a far greater extent than they do today. Perhaps this explains reports of increased isolation and loneliness. The late Rabbi Jonathan Sacks once said that religious attendance was just as much about belonging as it was about belief. As a non-believing occasional church goer I would have to agree with him. The Parish Council's plans to open one of the two cemetery chapels for visitors as a place of prayer and quiet contemplation will, I hope, provide a new space for the life in common.

Corbridge's pubs, restaurants and cafes are also vital places of communal life. Dr Johnson was surely right when he wrote in 1776 that there "is no private house in which people can enjoy themselves so well as a capital tavern". I try to do my bit to help. After picking up in November and early December it was a real pity - but entirely understandable - to see that the Omicron wave quietened things before Christmas. I really felt for those establishments who had bought in and prepared food only to find Christmas bookings cancelled at the last minute. If it's any consolation, they are in good company. Mandy Senior, our Parish Clerk, reports that bookings to the Parish Hall have also fallen away somewhat in late December and January. However, I remain very hopeful that the worst of the pandemic may now be behind us and, as Spring emerges, we should be able to look forward with confidence in the future.

**William Clouston**  
(Parish Council  
Chairman)



I'd like to wish all Corbridge residents a very Happy New Year. As we begin 2022, particularly after the year we have all just experienced, many of us think about health and fitness and I will be doing the same. Although some of my family have had Covid we have been very fortunate and nobody has been very ill. My thoughts are with those who have lost loved ones to this dreadful pandemic or who experienced more serious illness.

I have resolved to start playing football again regularly, to get out for at least a short walk each day and to do as many miles on my bike this year as I can fit in. We are very fortunate to live where we do; being able to head off on foot or a bike in pretty much any direction and be into beautiful countryside within a few minutes. If you haven't already I'd recommend you try the Historic Dilston Trail that runs along the south side of the river, across to the Physic Garden, to the new Devil's Water bridge, up to Ladycutter Lane and then back down to Corbridge. More details of this and other trails can be found on the Visit Corbridge website.

Regular walkers heading East along the south side river bank struggled to get themselves and their dogs across the stile Network Rail installed with a fence to keep people and animals away from the railway line. I raised this with them and I'm happy to report they have just relaced it with a kissing gate so this popular walk is now accessible again.

We're also very fortunate that adults and children have easy access to wonderful sporting opportunity with Corbridge Football and Cricket, Tynedale Rugby and many more sporting clubs. Badminton has started again in the Parish Hall, table tennis is played in the school, women's touch rugby is thriving, there are active walking and cycling groups and more. Again, a thorough browse through the Visit Corbridge web site will reveal all - or you can email and I'll put you in touch with the right people. Corbridge Gardening Society and Corbridge in Bloom offer alternative ways of keeping active.

I have a strong personal belief that if young people are introduced early to regular exercise that is a habit more likely to stay with them for life. I was therefore very pleased to be able to fund the Daily Mile track at the Middle School last year, now installed.

Here's to a fit and healthy 2022 and, as ever, don't hesitate to contact me if I can help - [nick.oliver24@outlook.com](mailto:nick.oliver24@outlook.com) or 07779 983742.

**Nick Oliver**  
(County Councillor)



## Black Bull Fire

Regulars at The Black Bull were relieved to see it reopen just days after a December fire which led to power supply and phone line issues at the pub in Middle Street. The Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service, Tyne and Wear Rescue and Northumbria Police attended the incident which involved a tumble dryer in a first floor room at the back of the pub - not in a public area. No-one was hurt and Black Bull staff worked hard to ensure the historic pub opened its doors again as soon as possible after the fire.





# Corbridge Stands Out



*rated “outstanding” (Ofsted)  
a phenomenal team spirit  
Our parents are very supportive  
children have continued to thrive and learn  
such a special place to be  
a well-planned curriculum taught with great skill  
pupils respect each other  
A brilliant school with a great team of staff.  
School leaders, including governors, are not  
complacent.  
Teachers work tirelessly*

Corbridge Middle School was rated “outstanding” in a recent report by the government’s Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted).

It rated each of four categories - quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development plus leadership and management - as outstanding. Leading to an overall “outstanding” verdict for the school in Cow Lane. A full inspection in 2015 had previously described the school as “good” - a rating confirmed in a 2018 short inspection.

With some 355 pupils aged between nine and 13, Corbridge Middle School was inspected over two days last October.

Head teacher Jane Kennedy left the school at the end of term in December for a new education role with Northumberland County Council. But before her departure she gave her reaction to the report: “I am really pleased that our school has been recognised in this way. We are a school that is clear about what we are trying to achieve, and we work hard to make sure that every child feels safe, happy and is able to access our fantastic curriculum.

“All the staff work extremely hard in every aspect of school life; the teaching, support and associate staff have all contributed to these Ofsted judgements and there is a phenomenal team spirit here. I couldn’t be more proud of how our staff, children and their families have dealt with everything we have had to face. The hard work and determination to make this a great school has been recognised.

“Our parents are very supportive and work with us to ensure that we are doing our best for every child. Our children have continued to thrive and learn through the most unique of times and they are what makes the school such a special place to be. I am absolutely delighted for our entire school community.”

The latest Ofsted report said: “Corbridge Middle School is a school that puts inclusivity at its very heart. It is a caring community where every member of staff shares a determination that all pupils will benefit from exceptional opportunities.

“Pupils study a well-planned curriculum that is taught with great skill. Pupils with special educational needs and / or disabilities (SEND) receive highly effective support. At the end of Year 8, pupils achieve very well across all subjects and are exceptionally well prepared for the transition to high school.

“Corbridge is a calm school where pupils respect each other and adults. Pupils work hard, behave well in lessons and act with maturity around school. They enjoy school and feel safe. Bullying is very rare, but when it occurs, pupils say that staff deal with it effectively.

“The school’s planned enrichment programme of learning adds considerable depth and breadth to the curriculum. Pupils value the wide range of activities on offer, including representing the school at sport, learning British Sign Language and cookery with a professional chef.

“Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. A comment from one summed up the views of most: ‘A brilliant school with a great team of staff.’

“School leaders, including governors, are not complacent. They are relentless in their desire to continually improve the school. Leaders welcome visitors to school and reflect carefully on feedback they receive. All staff in school share leaders’ vision and determination that every pupil should have a successful school experience. They are immensely proud to work in the school.”

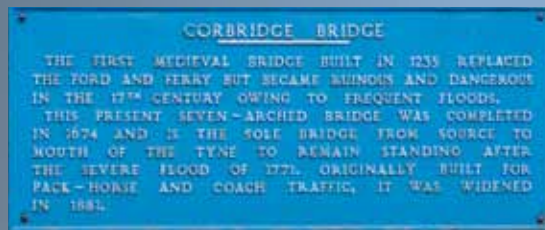
Ofsted Director for the North East, Yorkshire and Humber Emma Ing visited the school to present the report in person. She said: “Staff, pupils and parents have worked hard to overcome the challenges that schools across the country have faced as a result of the pandemic.

“Teachers work tirelessly to make sure children at the school are provided with a well-planned curriculum, tailored to meet their individual needs and enhanced by an impressive range of enrichment activities on offer.”

Scan the QR code to read the full Ofsted report.







The present bridge over the river at Corbridge was the only one along the Tyne to survive 'The Great Flood' with November 2021 marking the 250th anniversary of that event.

Following a period of torrential rain, water raced down the Tyne Valley on the night of November 16th / 17th in 1771. As the plaque on the south side of today's bridge explains, "This present seven-arched bridge was completed in 1674 and is the sole bridge from source to mouth of the Tyne to remain standing after the severe flood of 1771."

The flood caused the death of 25 people: Eight in each of Bywell and Ovingham and nine in Newcastle, as well as the loss of numerous farm animals. It also resulted in much destruction. Apart from the one at Corbridge all of the bridges in the valley were swept away including the 14 month old bridge at Hexham and the 500 year old medieval bridge with its shops and houses in Newcastle. Numerous houses were destroyed along its path, especially on the Quayside and in Bywell, but Corbridge escaped as the Saxons had the foresight to build their church and settlement north of the river where it was above the level of flooding.

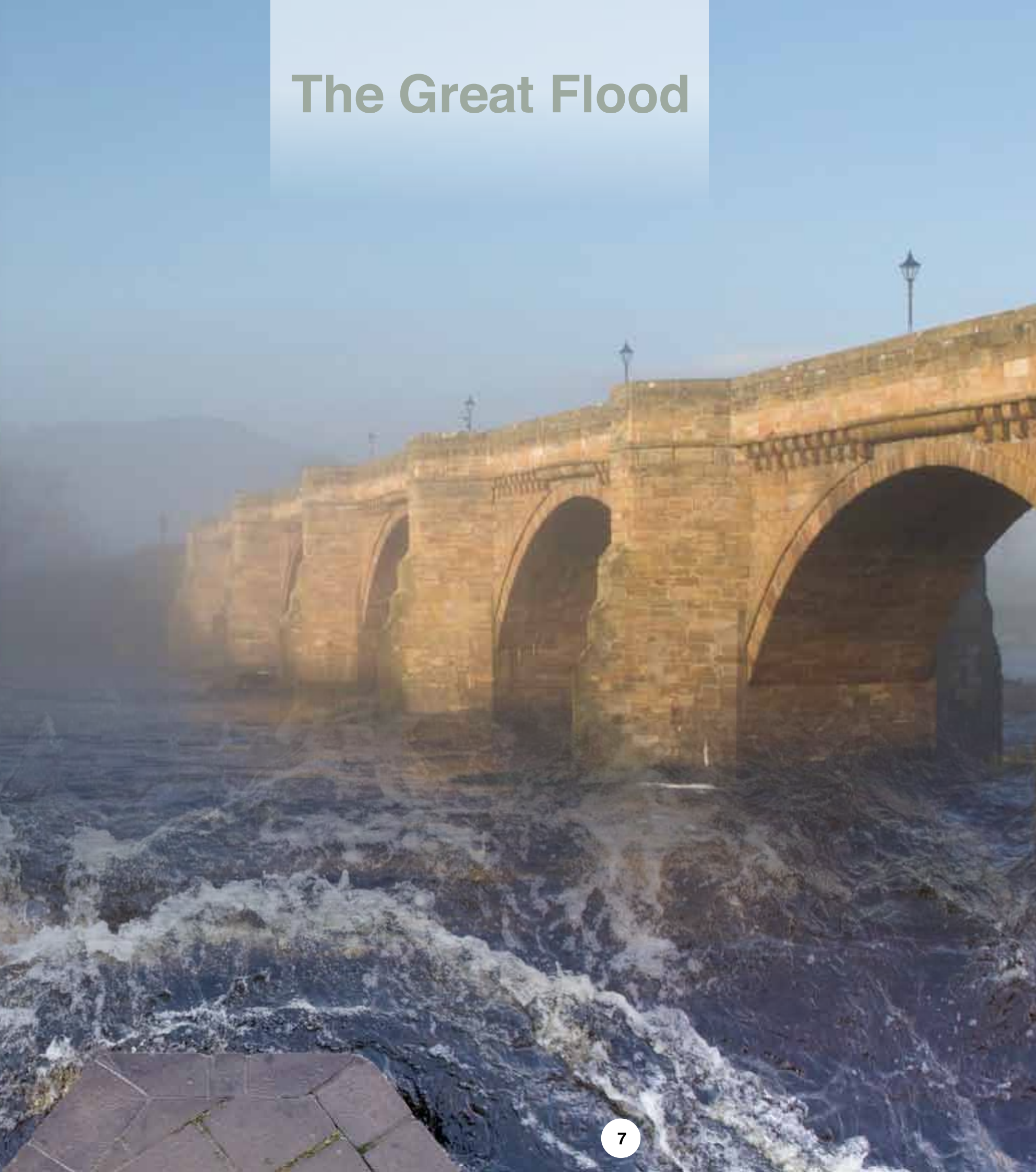
At Corbridge, according to Forster, "the river was swollen to such a wonderful height that many of the inhabitants washed their hands over the battlement. This was done at the south end of the bridge, the battlement at that time being much lower than at present, and where there were steps". It is said during this flood the water level rose by an estimated 21 feet making it the highest in 1000 years. The second highest was 19 feet in 2015, the fourth 17 feet in 2005, both readings when Corbridge had its own measuring station, and the fifth in 1955 when the present Lion Court was a maternity home and mothers together with six new born babies had to be evacuated by boat.

The Tyne is measured as the fastest flowing and fastest rising river in England and this adds pressure to any obstacle in its path. The bridge at Corbridge is believed to have withstood the 1771 flood partly due to the shape of the piers it was built upon but mainly because at that time south of the river there was no flood embankment (not until 1833) and only one house (Tinkler's Bank). This allowed much of the excess water to flow around the south end of the bridge and, without interruption and as nature intended, across the flood plain then known as The Eals. Even so kitchen equipment from the house ended up in the branches of trees in its orchard. By comparison, 45 houses south of the river in Station Road and The Stanners were flooded in 2015.

Since 1771 there has been a flood of some description affecting Corbridge on average every nine years with further work to improve flood defences south of the bridge undertaken since 2015.

*David Waugh*

# The Great Flood





# NOTICE BOARD

All listings on this page and in the Parish Hall diary are subject to change.

## Diary Dates

**Friday June 3:** Northumberland County Show at Bywell.

**Saturday and Sunday June 11 and 12:** Corbridge Steam Rally at Tynedale Park.

**Friday June 17 to Sunday June 19:** Tynedale Beer & Cider Festival at Tynedale Park.

**Wednesday June 22 to Friday June 24:** Arts & Crafts Fair at St Andrew's Church.

**Thursday June 23:** A Midsummer's Evening in Corbridge.

**Friday July 29 to Sunday July 31:** Corbridge Chamber Music Festival.

**Sunday August 14:** Northumberland Classic Vehicle Gathering at Tynedale Park.

**Sunday August 28:** Corbridge Family Fun Day at Corbridge Cricket Club.

**Saturday September 3:** Corbridge Village Show at the Parish Hall.

**Friday December 2 to Tuesday December 6:** St Andrew's Church Christmas Tree Festival.

**Monday December 5:** Christmas in Corbridge.

## St Andrew's Church

**Parish Communion** at 10am every Sunday.

**Evening Prayer** at 6pm every Sunday.

**Holy Communion** at 10am every Wednesday plus:

**Sunday February 13 at 3pm:** Messy Church.

**Sunday February 27 at 4pm:** RIVER - see info on this page.

## Corbridge Methodist Church

**Service at 10:45am** every Sunday but not February 27:

**Sunday February 27 at 4pm:** Joining with RIVER at St Andrew's Church.

## Corbridge Pentecostal Church

Meets at the Parish Hall at 11am on most Sundays. See the Parish Hall listings.



**CORBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL**

is looking for a person to carry out general maintenance around the village.

This will be a minimum of 4 hours per week with additional hours, as needed.

£12.50 per hour


For further information please contact Mandy Senior, Clerk to the Council

Email: [corbridge@ukpc.net](mailto:corbridge@ukpc.net) Tel: 01661 852277 or 07950 297634

## Corbridge Parish Hall

February 2022

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	2	3	4	5	6	
16:00 - 17:30 Zumba Kids	09:00 - 10:00 Zumba Class	10:30 - 15:30 KSA Painters	09:00 - 10:00 Zumba Class	09:30 - 11:30 Corbridge Badminton	10:00 - 14:00 Children's Party	10:00 - 14:30 Corbridge Pentecostal Church
19:00 - 20:00 Diston WI committee meeting	10:00 - 15:00 Tuesday Art Group	16:00 - 20:45 Corbridge School of Dance	10:30 - 16:30 Art Group	13:30 - 14:30 Pilates, Dance and Therapy for Posture	19:30 - 21:30 Tynedale Scottish Country Dancing	
	13:00 - 16:00 Corbridge Bridge Club - Chicago		10:30 - 12:30 Singing	17:00 - 19:00 Karate		
	16:00 - 19:00 clear away and set up time		17:00 - 18:00 Supastrikers			
	19:00 - 21:00 Corbridge Carpet Bowls Club		19:30 - 21:30 Piper Badminton			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
13:00 - 16:00 Corbridge WI	09:00 - 10:00 Zumba Class	10:00 - 13:00 Lace Class	09:00 - 10:00 Zumba Class	09:30 - 11:30 Corbridge Badminton		10:00 - 14:30 Corbridge Pentecostal Church
16:00 - 17:30 Zumba Kids	10:00 - 15:00 Tuesday Art Group	10:30 - 15:30 KSA Painters	10:30 - 16:30 Art Group	13:30 - 14:30 Pilates, Dance and Therapy for Posture		14:30 - 17:30 Children's Party
18:00 - 21:00 Diston WI	13:00 - 16:00 Corbridge Bridge Club - Chicago	16:00 - 20:45 Corbridge School of Dance	10:30 - 12:30 Singing	17:00 - 19:00 Karate		18:30 - 22:00 Corbridge Film Nights
19:00 - 22:00 Corbridge Bridge Club	16:00 - 19:00 clear away and set up time		17:00 - 18:00 Supastrikers			
	19:00 - 21:00 Corbridge Carpet Bowls Club		19:30 - 21:30 Piper Badminton			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
16:00 - 17:30 Zumba Kids	09:00 - 10:00 Zumba Class	10:30 - 15:30 KSA Painters	09:00 - 10:00 Zumba Class	09:30 - 11:30 Corbridge Badminton	19:30 - 21:30 Tynedale Scottish Country Dancing	10:00 - 14:30 Corbridge Pentecostal Church
19:00 - 22:00 Corbridge Bridge Club	10:00 - 15:00 Tuesday Art Group	16:00 - 20:45 Corbridge School of Dance	10:30 - 16:30 Art Group	13:30 - 14:30 Pilates, Dance and Therapy for Posture		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	13:00 - 16:00 Corbridge Bridge Club - Chicago		10:30 - 12:30 Singing	17:00 - 19:00 Karate		
	13:15 - 15:00 Corbridge in Bloom Committee Meeting		17:00 - 18:00 Supastrikers			
	16:00 - 19:00 clear away and set up time		19:30 - 21:30 Piper Badminton			
	19:00 - 21:00 Corbridge Carpet Bowls Club					
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
19:00 - 22:00 Corbridge Bridge Club	09:00 - 10:00 Zumba Class	10:00 - 13:00 Lace Class	09:00 - 10:00 Zumba Class	09:30 - 11:30 Corbridge Badminton	19:30 - 21:30 Tynedale Scottish Country Dancing	10:00 - 14:30 Corbridge Pentecostal Church
	10:00 - 15:00 Tuesday Art Group	10:30 - 15:30 KSA Painters	10:00 - 12:00 Art Appreciation 2, Tynedale USA Group	13:30 - 14:30 Pilates, Dance and Therapy for Posture		
	13:00 - 16:00 Corbridge Bridge Club - Chicago	19:00 - 21:00 Parish Council Meeting	10:30 - 12:30 Singing	17:00 - 19:00 Karate		
	16:00 - 19:00 clear away and set up time		13:30 - 16:30 Art Group			
	19:00 - 21:00 Corbridge Carpet Bowls Club		17:00 - 18:00 Supastrikers			
			19:30 - 21:30 Piper Badminton			



**River**  
St Andrew's Church  
Corbridge

AN AFTERNOON GATHERING IN CHURCH

**Refreshing  
Informal  
Varied  
Engaging  
For everyone**  
(young and old alike!)

River is a short afternoon time of worship, followed by refreshments. We don't usually sit in the pews, but around tables at the side of church (in the 'north transept'). And we may not sit all the time, but sometimes move around the church building.

The music and songs are not traditional. There is always something to engage with - but not a sermon.

River is different every time, partly because we are still learning how to do it well! But also because being varied is one of our key aims - see the list above.

Scroll down to view details of recent/forthcoming River services. Do come along and dip your toe in River.



# Hadrian's Wall 1900



The year long Hadrian's Wall 1900 Festival launched on January 24, the birth date of Emperor Hadrian in AD76.

It marks 1,900 years since he came to Britain in AD122 and ordered the wall to be built at the northern edge of the Roman Empire.

Hundreds of events and activities are taking place between now and Dec 23 along the full length of the wall. Among the first events to be announced, with more to come, were two in Corbridge.

Our English Heritage Roman Town will be staging an exhibition called Extraordinary Exploration - The Edwardian Discovery of Coria. Between 1906 and 1914 excavations at Corbridge uncovered the well preserved remains of the most northerly town in Roman Britain.

"Most of the labourers who did the work were local and almost entirely anonymous. To mark the 1900 anniversary celebrations of Hadrian's Wall, research has been trying to identify these men from the wonderful collection of photographs from the excavation."

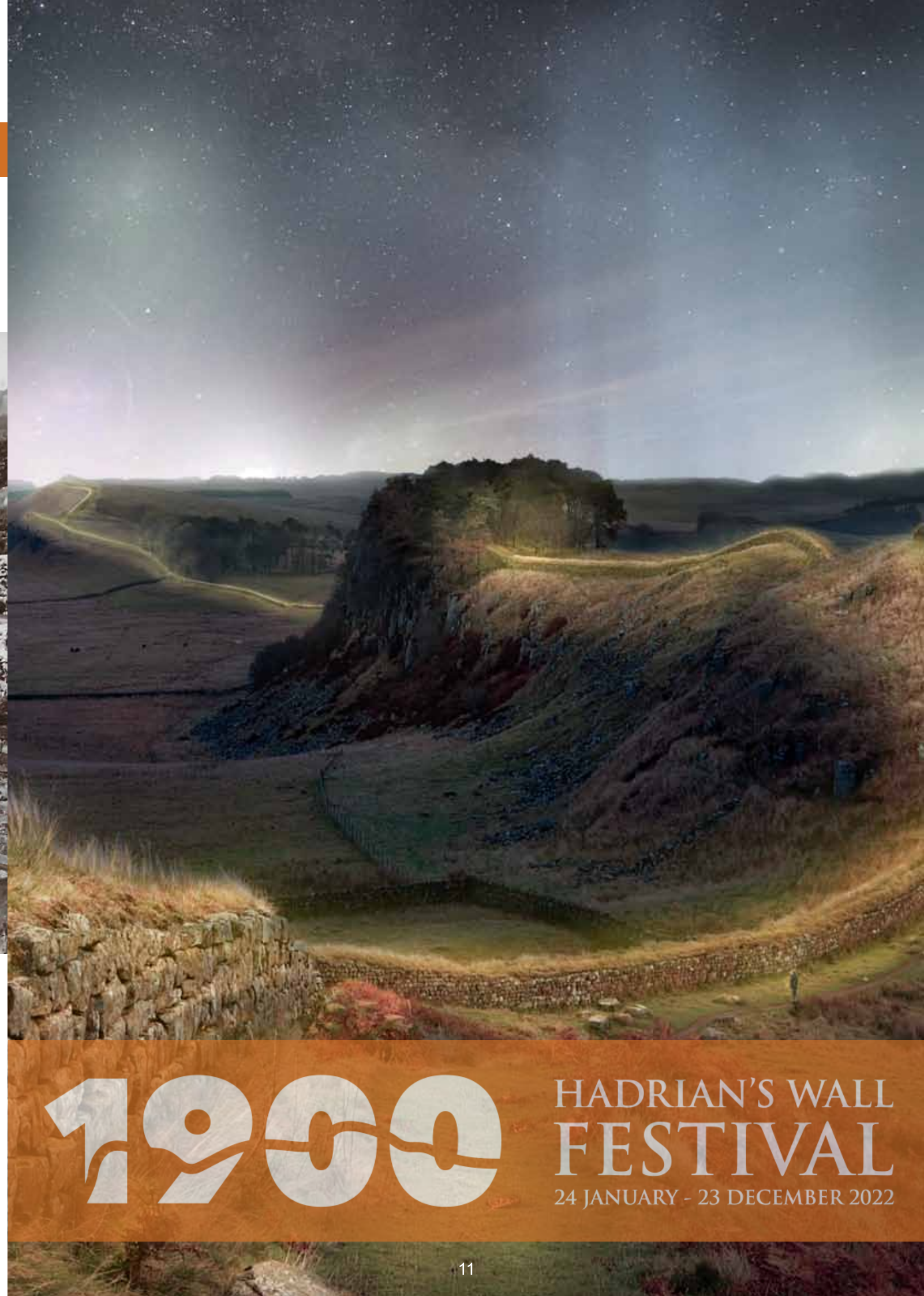
The exhibition will run from April 1 to October 31 and explore both the discovery of the site and the story of the local labourers who worked hard to uncover the Roman Town's secrets.

All being well, Visit Corbridge plans to host A Midsummer's Evening in Corbridge on Thursday June 23. This summer festival will include a celebration of Corbridge Roman Town and its legacy as part of the 1900th anniversary of Hadrian's Wall. With an Arts and Crafts Fair also taking place at St Andrew's Church that week.

Other local community events and activities are currently being planned and will be announced in due course.

Scan the QR code for more information about the 2022 HW1900 Festival or go to:

<https://1900.hadrianswallcountry.co.uk>



# 1900

HADRIAN'S WALL  
FESTIVAL  
24 JANUARY - 23 DECEMBER 2022



- TIC** Tourist Information Centre and Library
- WC** Public Toilets
- DS** Doctors Surgery 200 yards
- PS** Petrol Station
- PO** Post Office

### Old Bakery Yard and Town Hall Building

- 1 French Beauty Lounge
- 2 Jack Robinson Printer
- 3 Yoga With Natalie
- 4 Boots the Chemist

### Main Street and Bishop's Yard

- 5 Lawrence Stephenson Antiques
- 6 RE – Remarkable Homeware
- 7 Corbridge Antiques Centre
- 8 Floorscope Carpet & Flooring Specialists
- 9 SPAR
- 10 AngelFish
- 11 The Angel Inn

### Middle Street

- 12 Lambert Taylor and Gregory Solicitors
- 13 Finale Shoes and Accessories
- 14 Nicky Jones Furniture & Interiors
- 15 The Black Bull
- 16 Baby at the Bank
- 17 Shorts of Corbridge Menswear
- 18 Corbridge Cookshop
- 19 Anton Associates Estate Agent
- 20 Acanthus Gift Shop
- 21 Massey's Tea Room
- 22 Coffuffle Fresh coffee/chocolate truffles
- 23 Kirsty Taylor Goldsmiths

### Market Place

- 24 Forum Books
- 25 The Pele Pub
- 26 Purple Hound
- 27 Corbridge Sandwich Bar
- 28 Grant's Bakery and Patisserie
- 29 Lunar Light Healing & Holistic Centre
- 30 Stobo Fruit and Vegetables
- 31 Cafe No 6
- 32 Watsonia Florists
- 33 Jasmine & Lilah – Furniture & Home Fittings
- 34 Corbridge Tandoori
- 35 Finest Properties Estate Agents
- 36 Alex Clark Gallery and Gift Shop
- 37 Tea & Tipple Café
- 38 The Wedding Dress Co
- 39 Gelson Osteopathic Clinic
- 40 Corbridge Garden Room Home & Gifts



### Watling Street

- 41 Capelli Hair Design
- 42 1884 Lifestyle Boutique
- 43 Spokes Kitchen
- 44 Emporium Ice Cream Parlour
- 45 The Wheatsheaf Inn
- 46 Watling Coffee House

### Hill Street and The Tower

- 47 The Blue Bell Inn
- 48 Lisa Graham Hearingcare
- 49 Beech Cottage Dental Surgery
- 50 Saunders and Pughe Goldsmiths
- 51 Chapter 38 Ladies clothes
- 52 Circe Flower Co Florist
- 53 Jessie Juniper Women's Fashions
- 54 Corbridge Larder Deli and Café
- 55 Croft and Graves Optometrists
- 56 Corbridge Co-op
- 57 The Golden Lion
- 58 Turkish Barber
- 59 J D Hall Family Butcher
- 60 Reflections Hair and Beauty Salon
- 61 Vintage at the Tower Homeware, Clothing, Furnishings & Jewellery

### St Helen's Street

- 62 The Amber Chinese Take-away
- 63 Stuzzico Wine Bar
- 64 Il Piccolo Italian Restaurant
- 65 La Suite Hair and Beauty

### Front Street and Bridge End

- 66 Cassia Italian Restaurant
- 67 Craft Works Gallery Arts and Crafts

### Station Road and Tinkler's Yard

- 68 Dyvels Home and Lifestyle
- 69 The Dyvels Inn Pub Food and Rooms
- 70 The Valley Indian Restaurant
- 71 Corbridge Business Centre
- 72 Alexander Carrick Furniture

### Corbridge Outskirts

- 73 Roman Town and Museum - 0.5 miles
- 74 Dilston Physic Garden - 1 mile

### Self catering and B & B

- A Bridge End Cottage
- B Bridge House Cottages
- C Fellcroft B & B
- D Mr Fogg's - Self-catering cottage
- E 22a Hill Street Self-catering
- F Peartree House B & B
- G 9 Watling Street Self-catering



# We Will Remember Them



The Royal British Legion parade on Remembrance Sunday in November made its way through Corbridge to and from a service at St Andrew's Church.



December saw the dedication and unveiling of a memorial bench in what was the 100th anniversary year of the Royal British Legion, including the Corbridge branch. In a short ceremony the bench in Market Place, facing the Lych Gate war memorial, was blessed by Rev Sam Lohead, Assistant Curate at St Andrew's, and received on behalf of the village by Parish Council chairman William Clouston and Corbridge Northumberland County Councillor Nick Oliver.





## Tyne Valley Foot Care

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Karen McCarthy S.A.C. Dip.  
Registered Foot Health Practitioner

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Telephone: 07841 511674

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The procedure was extremely quick and painless and after suffering from partial hearing loss because of wax it's now like having ultra high definition hearing.

They went above and beyond the call to make my visit safe and relaxed. Thank you very much to you both. Highly recommended."

Google Review

Lisa Graham  
HEARINGCARE  
www.lisagrahamhearingcare.co.uk

42 Hill Street, Corbridge, NE45 5AA  
Tel: 01434 213 632

Whickham Pharmacy:  
Rectory Lane, Whickham, NE16 4PD  
Tel: 0191 486 2488

\*Prices as at 1st January 2022. Visit our website for current pricing.



jessie juniper

Two Danes

Mama B

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Window Cleaner

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and hardworking  
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methods.

Services include:  
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• Internal window cleaning  
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Northumberland  
NE45 5JF

Mobile: 07725670089  
sruthie75@yahoo.co.uk



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Mobile: 0776 140 8041



## Corbridge Community Yoga Studio

### Class Timetable

M	Forest Yoga 12:00-13:00	NIHS Only 17:30-18:30	Forest Yoga 19:00-20:15
T	Forest Yoga 09:30-10:30	Core Strength 18:00-19:00	Restorative Yoga 19:15-20:15
W	Meditation 09:00-10:00	Forest Yoga 10:30-11:30	
TH		NIHS Only 17:30-18:30	Forest Yoga 19:00-20:15
F	Restorative Yoga 09:30-10:30		
S	Monthly Workshops - See www.yoga-with-natalie.co.uk		
SU	Forest Yoga 11:00-12:30		



07874 891371

hello@yogawithnatalie.co.uk



# New Church Door



The new replacement glass entrance door is now in place at St Andrew's Church. Complete with the engraving dedication from Rowan Atkinson and his family as before.



Shop  
local

# Forum Books

Hello there...as the days gradually start to lengthen and the bright buds of spring appear we feel like unfurling too, leafing through a new read. Spring is a perfect season for a fresh batch of books with something for everyone from crime fiction to cookery, historical to a history-making celebration of children's books.

Crime fiction fans are really spoilt with a brand new DCI Kate Daniels from local favourite **Mari Hannah** - **Her Last Request** is as thrilling as the others with a victim's desperate note containing a last request: 'Find Aaron'. But is Kate searching for a potential second victim, or a killer? The countdown is on...

**Trevor Wood's** third and final gritty Newcastle-set crime thriller is **Dead End Street** about a Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) suffering veteran turned sleuth in the face of local villainy. It follows *The Man on the Street*, which won the Crime Writers' Association New Blood Dagger, and *One Way Street*...fresh, authentic and gritty. And **Ann Cleeves' The Heron's Cry** is out in paperback too with Detective Matthew Venn - read it before it appears on TV.

On Saturday February 12th comes Bay Tales Live, a one-day event in Whitley Bay showcasing crime writers. We'll be there and as ever would love to see you too.

Some personal favourites make it into paperback too, including the lyrical wonder **Mrs Death Misses Death** by **Salena Godden**. **Of Women and Salt** by **Gabriela Garcia** is a multi-generational story taking us from Cuba to Miami through five generations of women linked by blood and circumstance, by the secrets they share and by a single book passed down through a family with an affirmation scrawled in its margins: 'We are force. We are more than we think we are.' A stunning read.

Booker winner **The Promise** by **Damon Galgut** reaches us in paperback in March too. And I'm astounded to already have a new potential book of the year - **The Sentence** by Pulitzer winning **Louise Erdrich** - as you might imagine from a prize winning author it is brilliantly written. But she wrote this one in real time spanning the year between All Souls Day 2019 to 2020. Quite the year and it has created one of those books you need without knowing it, that you never want to finish and won't be able to stop thinking about.

A haunting and moving debut, **The Midwife** by **Tricia Cresswell** is perfect for fans of *The Familiars* and *The Binding*. In 1838, after a violent storm, a woman is found alone and near death on the Northumberland moors. She has no memory of who she is or how she got there. But she can remember how to help a woman in labour, how to expertly dress a wound and can speak fluent French. Hooked?

Thursday March 3rd is this year's World Book Day. It is really special as it celebrates its 25th year. Every year - even with lockdowns - we have given away thousands of books to children. It is such an exciting thing to be a part of as we are completely aligned with World Book Day's mission to change lives through a love of books and shared reading. We want to bring the magic of books to children and young people everywhere. And, as ever, the range of books is great. From Michael Morpurgo and Joanna Nadin to Nadia Shireen and Sharna Jackson

Happy reading everyone!

Helen





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