

CORBRIDGE MATTERS



October 2026 Issue 91

www.corbridge-pc.gov.uk

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Council NOTES



Dusty fields, parched lawns, dry streams and low rivers - the hallmarks of a heatwave. Looking back we can all now reflect on the waning of this year's hot, dry summer. While many of us enjoyed temperatures reaching the high 20s - and even breaching 30C on occasion - our farmers have suffered poor harvests with yields down on cereals such as wheat, barley and oats. The Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board reported in August that the UK's aggregate harvest was the lowest on record. Many of Northumberland's farmers will make very little profit this year. In fact some will be fortunate to break even and others will make losses. As the foundation of our local rural economy this will impact on us all in some way. It's always worth remembering that we can support British agriculture by buying local produce whenever we have the opportunity. The impact of the dry summer on wildlife has also been profound. Species that are adapted to Britain's temperate and relatively wet climate have suffered badly. Birds and small mammals need more water as temperatures rise just at the time where it has become scarce. Furthermore, their sources of food such as insects and invertebrates have dropped markedly because their life cycles and reproduction depend on wet environments. On the train between York and Darlington I saw a young deer staggering in a dry field - clearly in need of water. None seemed close at hand which is a sad and unprecedented sight in England. On a brighter note, the staff at Corbridge Roman Town tell me that visitor numbers held up very well this summer. The reason for this may be that as well as British tourists the site attracts high numbers of overseas visitors. While Housesteads, Vindolanda and the Roman Army Museum are all major attractions they rely very heavily on British holiday makers and day trippers. With household budgets tightening I'm told that visitor growth has been impacted. We should be thankful that Corbridge seems to be more of a specific destination for international tourists interested in the Corbridge Hoard and the ancient town buildings. A particular strength. The Market Place improvement scheme planning application is still progressing steadily. At the time of writing we have a meeting scheduled with Northumberland County Council's planning, archaeology and highways officers to work through various matters of detail. I will report on our progress in future issues of Corbridge Matters.

I wish everyone well now that autumn is here.

William Clouston
Corbridge Parish Council Chairman

Northumberland County Council is modernising the Library Service and carried out a very extensive consultation with drop-in events in every library from Berwick to Blyth and across to Haltwhistle. Engagement was strong with over 5,800 people responding. All council run libraries will remain open with some reorganisation of opening hours based on usage and local populations. Residents will be able to access other council services in Corbridge Library as staff are trained in customer service and will have access to council systems to help log any queries. As the world moves to more services being accessed digitally it is important to retain some face-to-face contact and we will be using our libraries to do that. At the time of writing final decisions have not been made but it looks likely that Corbridge will change its opening hours from 15 to 12 hours a week while council paid staff are present. I have facilitated discussions between the Corbridge Community Partnership and the NCC Library Service and it looks hopeful that they will move their Heritage Centre from the Community Hub building into the library. This will enable longer opening hours during which residents will be able to take out and return books - a win-win for everybody. Corbridge will also receive some of the £491,000 Library Improvement Funding being invested across the county in digital services - self-service checkout, smart lockers and smart bookshelves. The BorrowBox digital service will continue to be promoted. I have been in a dialogue with English Heritage about the future of Aydon Castle which you are probably aware has been closed for some time now. When my children were growing up we were members of English Heritage and regularly walked up there, had a picnic in the orchard area and they played hide and seek. I'm very keen to see some sort of access maintained for residents and visitors and will work with English Heritage to explore the possibilities. They have expressed an interest in more community use of the castle and grounds and it would be good to see this happen. We have already discussed this at a Parish Council meeting and I will be meeting them again soon and inviting the Corbridge Community Partnership to join us for these discussions. Please contact me if you have any ideas - for example, I think it would be great to have concerts there. As ever, I can be contacted at nick.oliver24@outlook.com or 07779 983742.

Nick Oliver
Corbridge County Councillor

Motor Show



Some of the arrivals for the recent 2026 Northumberland Classic & Performance Motor Show at Tynedale Park in Corbridge.





2027 will mark 40 years since Wimpey Homes invited 1980s' steeplejack and television personality Fred Dibnah to demolish the last chimney at the site of Jameson's fireclay works off Aydon Road to make way for a new housing estate where Jameson Drive and Craggside are today.

Steve Betts, one of the volunteers at Corbridge Heritage Centre, has been researching the factory and the four generations of the family who managed the business. Here Steve tells us a little about founder John Jameson and the early days of the company, known locally as "The Works".

**TO LET,
THE WINNING and BREAKING of about 200
Cubic Yards of LIMESTONE at GRINDON
HILL QUARRY; also, the BREAKING of 50 Cubic
Yards of WHINSTONE for Roads. Offers will be re-
ceived until June 5th, by Mr J. JAMESON, Coal and
Lime Office, Fourstones.**

John was born in Slaley in 1835 to George and Mary Jameson. George was a blacksmith and it was John's younger brother, also called George, who followed in his father's footsteps. The family moved to Falmouth, probably to work on the construction of viaducts on the West Cornwall Railway, while John worked as a grocer. He married Grace Parnell Hammett in Bridgwater, Somerset, in 1855 and they had 14 children, although six died in infancy. He continued to work as a grocer on a number of large Victorian engineering projects around Britain until returning to Tynedale in 1866 where he had a major career change - managing a local quarry as well as being a coal and lime agent and lived at Frankham near Fourstones.

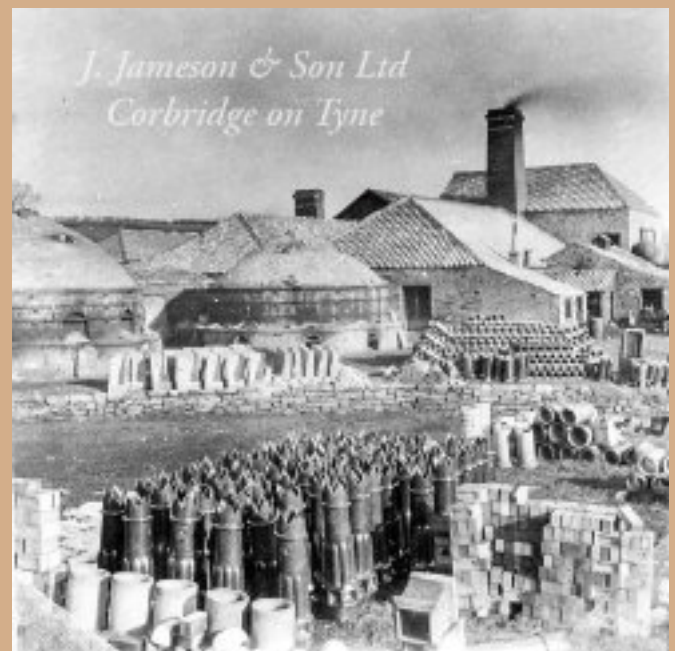
In 1870 he teamed up with Corbridge butcher and cattle salesman Henry Richley and acquired the old quarry on the Aydon Road opposite Piper Close. The six acre site was ideal to access the rock which, when

mixed with water, formed clay which could be fired at high temperatures without melting or breaking down. They negotiated a 50 year lease at £4 per annum per acre with John Walker of Eastfield House "for the addition of kilns, machinery, drains and other works



Beehive kilns & chimneys

necessary for the winning, working and carrying away of said fireclay". The seams of fireclay were in land adjacent to the factory site but approval was needed to access them. The earliest available mining indenture was between Jameson & Richley and Ann Winship, widow of Lionel Winship whose family had owned Aydon South Farm since 1625. It allowed access to their land on the east side of Aydon Road for 25 years "without entering upon the surface of the said lands".



A mine was opened up near the east end of the site. There was no mineshaft. Miners walked through the entrance in the side of the quarry then removed the rock along horizontal boards (tunnels) leaving pillars to hold up the roof. The rock was carried from the mine in small trucks on a tramway, carried up this ramp and

Jameson and Son

dropped into the grinding mill where it was crushed to a fine powder by two huge revolving wheels, each weighing a ton, which were bought second hand in 1870. The powder was mixed with water to become “slip” which, after resting for a few days, was fed into pipe machines, poured into moulds and pressed to form bricks, hand-moulded into various shapes or hand-thrown on a potter’s wheel. The products were then placed on “flats” (drying pads) where heat from below helped them to dry and harden before being stacked ready to go into the firing kilns.



A Beehive kiln

Jameson’s used brick built beehive kilns and for 112 years the principles of producing earthenware goods didn’t change very much, so successful was the finished product. Each had an internal diameter of 18 feet, a domed roof to help the heat circulate, metal bands to strengthen the kiln against steam pressure and fireboxes built inside the wall with openings to shovel in the coal. Each kiln was linked to a 46 foot chimney by an underground flue.



The workforce c1904 in front of Beehive kiln (L) & Newcastle kiln (R)

It could take a full day for two kiln setters to stack around 600 items before the access door was bricked up and sealed. Kiln firers then took over, lighting the fires and ensuring they were fuelled continuously by hand from wheelbarrows for 72 hours!

The temperature in the kilns had to be increased gradually to ensure moisture was removed from the products otherwise steam pressure could build up and cause an explosion. Eventually the temperature would reach 1800OF (980OC). The salt glazed finish, which made the products resistant to extreme cold weather, was achieved by throwing common salt into the fireboxes at 1260OF (680OC). The salt vapourises, turning into sodium chloride which combines with the silica in the clay to form the glossy coating of sodium silicate.

After three days the fires were extinguished and the cooling process began. A trapdoor in the flue was opened to create a downdraft, forcing the heat out through the chimney. Cooling took about two days before the door could be opened and the kiln emptied. At its height Jameson’s had 10 operational kilns working in rotation.

The 1904 photograph shows the workforce standing in front of a “Newcastle kiln”. The 1896 map shows some rectangular buildings among the circular kilns but they were demolished in the 1940s, presumably because they weren’t as efficient as the beehives.

Main products in the early days were fire bricks and sanitary tubes for local councils but by 1875 they were expanding to produce bricks for house building, stable yard paving bricks, chimney tops, ridge tiles and water troughs using “far-famed Corbridge seams of clay”.

On 3rd November 1884, at the age of just 49, John died from injuries sustained in an accident at Brunton Quarry leaving his son James Alfred, aka Fred, to run a flourishing business.

See more photographs on page 6

Visit the Corbridge Heritage Centre in Princes Street to learn more about the early life of John and see how Fred travelled the world and became a pioneer of the Canadia Homeland Scheme while running the company and chairing Corbridge Parish Council.

Scan the QR code to see Simon Hunter’s short April 1987 film of Fred Dibnah’s demolition of the last Jameson’s Pottery chimney.



Special thanks to Bruce and Tony Jameson, sons of Tom, the last managing director of the company and their second cousin Heather Switech in Canada.

John's son, James Alfred
aka Fred outside Green
Bank with his wife Lizzie in
1886. Nurse Margaret is
holding baby Ethel



The Jameson workforce and various products

Dilston Women's Institute



Dilston WI are celebrating their 100th birthday! Originally formed in 1926, with Lady Violet Allendale as a founder member, they met in the Hut at Dilston High Town where they remained until 2011. Since then, they have met in various venues in Corbridge and now gather at Corbridge Community Hub on Princes Street.

The ladies of Dilston WI enjoy a wide and varied programme of activities, including talks on topics as diverse as sunken treasure, cider making and the Sound of Music, as well as enjoying craft activities including willow weaving and paper crafts. Their forthcoming programme includes talks on Victorian recipes and remedies, the introduction of beavers at Wallington and Agent Zig-Zag, the Durham burglar, as well as activities such as craft printing and a visit to Birkheads Secret Garden.

They meet on the first Monday of each month at 7pm at the Community Hub and new members are always welcome – they're a friendly bunch and would love to welcome you to a meeting. For further information please contact dilstonwi@gmail.com.

The Magic Flute



The 2026 Corbridge Chamber Music Festival included a sold out Flute Workshop with Principal Flute of the London Symphony Orchestra Amy Yule at the Corbridge Community Hub. Scan the QR code for more photos and a short video.



Sasha and Khrystyna



Scan for Video



Scan for Photos

Ukranian Mykhailichenko sisters Sasha, 14, and Khrystyna, 20, recently returned once again to St Andrew's Church for a violin and piano recital and yet another memorable Corbridge evening. Having sought refuge here with their mother before moving south to continue their music education. Violinist Sasha studying at the Yehudi Menuhin School in Surrey and pianist Khrystyna at the Royal Academy of Music in London.



Notice Board

St Andrew's Church

Sundays at 10am: Parish Communion.

Sunday October 4 at 4pm: Simply Worship.

Sunday October 11 at 4pm: Messy Church.

Sunday August 18 at 4pm: Simply Worship.

Sunday August 25 at 4pm: RIVER.

Corbridge Methodists

Thursday October 8 at 10am: Service at St Andrew's Church

Thursday October 22 at 10am: Service at St Andrew's Church

Corbridge Christian Fellowship

(Part of Tynedale Christian Ministries)

11 am every Sunday, Corbridge Parish Hall

Lively worship and Bible-based ministry, We have a seat just for you! Coffee served before service from 10.30 am. Warm, friendly welcome to all.

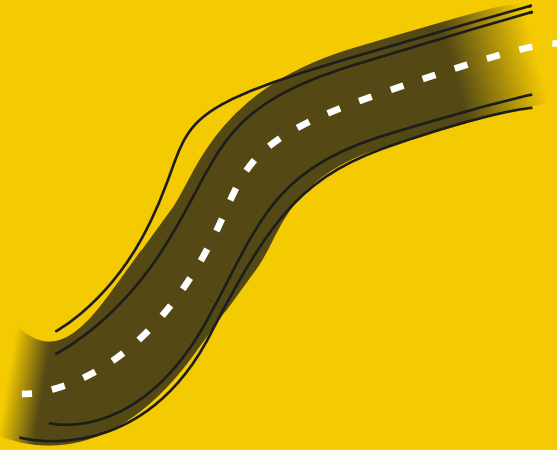
Corbridge Apple Juice: Volunteers are needed for the 2026 Corbridge Apple Juice charity project. With apples donated by the local community once again turned into cans of Corbridge Sparkling Apple Juice and, this year, bottles of Corbridge Cider. All sold to raise funds for local charities The Charlotte Straker Project, Corbridge Youth Initiative and organises the Corbridge Community Partnership. If you can spare any time to help the team - with no previous experience needed - during the local **Apple Picking Week**, which begins on Monday September 28, and / or the **Apple Pressing Weekend** at Corbridge Cricket Club on Saturday and Sunday October 3 and 4, please contact John Maude at: johnmaude100@gmail.com or 07791 590814 or Maurice Hodgson at: maurice.hodgson@btinternet.com or 07940 709636.

The juice will then be transported to Allendale Brewery who will produce the cans of apple juice and bottles of cider. They will be on sale in Market Place during the St Andrew's Church Christmas Tree Festival (Friday December 4 to Tuesday December 8) and again on Saturdays leading up to Christmas - while stocks last. Other sales will be advertised on local social media.

Corbridge Sewing Bee Open Meeting: An open meeting will be held at the Corbridge Community Hub on Princes Street at 6pm on Monday October 19th to discuss the establishment of a second sewing bee. Although the existing sewing bee has no vacancies, members would be happy to support the development of a new group for anyone interested in sewing, knitting, crochet, embroidery, felting, quilting or any textile art. We look forward to seeing you there.
Rosie Cunningham (Chair, Corbridge Sewing Bee). rosie.cunningham2@outlook.com



FixMyStreet is primarily for reporting to Northumberland County Council things which are broken, dirty, damaged or dumped and need fixing, cleaning or clearing. Like graffiti, dog fouling, potholes or street lights that don't work. Scan the QR code to go to the website. Or search for it online.



The Pubs of Corbridge



A new talk by David Waugh

7pm on Tuesday October 6th

Corbridge Community Hub, Princes Street

Admission: £7 (Cash or Card)

This will also be a village community social evening with the talk followed by tea and coffee and the opportunity to mix and chat



Corbridge Poetry Day
Saturday 10 October

FORUM
Books.

The Workshops

@ Corbridge Community Hub 2-4:30pm

Led by experienced local tutors/writers and open to anyone 18+. All are welcome whether you have no experience of creative writing, are already a regular writer or, if you fit somewhere in between.

The Readings

@ FORUM Books 7pm

Poets featured include Sarah Cullen, Linda France, Pamela Gormally, Pauline Hughes, Eileen Jones, Lesley Mountain, Ellen Pethian, Josephine Scott

Tickets available in-store + at
ticketsource.co.uk/forumbooks

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Year of
Reading
2026

Corbridge Film Nights 2026/27

Films shown in Corbridge Parish Hall. Doors Open 7pm.
Film starts 7.30pm.
Pay cash on door (£5)



My Favourite Cake - Sunday 11th October 2026

Seventy-year old Mahin, solitary until now, chooses to revive her love life. A chance encounter becomes an unforgettable evening.

Iran, 2024. Dir. Maryam Moghadem, Behtash Sanaeeha

Persian language 96 mins



The Death of Stalin - Sunday 8th November 2026

The death of Russian dictator Joseph Stalin throws the Soviet Union into comic chaos as his ambitious but addled ministers maneuver to succeed him.

UK, 2018. Dir. Armando Iannucci

English language 107 mins



Remembrance Past and Present

The annual Remembrance Sunday Parade, organised by the Corbridge branch of the Royal British Legion, takes place on November 8th. Leaving the Corstopitum Social Club around 10:10am. Followed by a Civic Service of Remembrance at St Andrew's Church at 10:40am including the laying of wreaths. After which the parade marches back to the social club.

As highlighted in the montage of these two photos - past and present - the Remembrance Sunday parade is an important Corbridge tradition. Also involving residents and visitors who gather every year to pay their respects. The Royal British Legion explains: "Remembrance ensures the service and sacrifice of our Armed Forces community is always remembered."

Veterans, military and emergency service personnel are welcome to take part in the parade and do not have to be members of the Royal British Legion. If you are a member of the groups mentioned and would like to know more about taking part, please email RBL Corbridge branch secretary Stuart Robinson at: robinsonstuart1970@gmail.com

Also note that this year's Poppy Appeal launches on Thursday October 22nd.

Thank You!

... to the following for both sponsoring and giving a raffle prize(s) to the 2026 Corbridge Village Show...

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Corbridge Tandoori
Croft and Graves
GB Motor Engineers
Forum Books
Halcyon House Café
House of Coria

Lisa Graham Hearingcare
Massey's Tea Rooms
My Oh My
Sarah Thomson
Saunders and Pughe
The Black Bull
The Blue Bell
The Corbridge Cookshop
The Corbridge Garden Room
The Golden Lion

The Independent Salon
The Wheatsheaf
Shorts of Corbridge
Vintage at the Tower
Watsonia Florists

... and to the following for either sponsoring or donating a raffle prize(s)...

Alex Clark Art
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Casa Rosso
Coffuffle
Corbridge Business Centre
Corbridge Sandwich Bar
Corbridge Yoga Studio
Corstopitum Social Club
Craftworks Gallery
Down to Earth

Dyvals Home and Lifestyle
Fawcett and Russell
Finale
Finest
Floorscope
French Beauty Lounge
Gelson Osteopathic Clinic
George Hall
Grants
Hair at the Arches (Davina Nixon)

Hair at the Arches (Hayley Henderson)
Halcyon Wealth Management
Jack Robinson and Son
Jessie Juniper
Kirsty Taylor Goldsmith
La Suite
Lambert, Taylor and Gregory
Lawrence Stephenson Antiques
Matthew Thompson
North Acomb Farm Shop

Pat Jamison
RE
Sky High Sports
JA Stobo and Son
Tea and Tipple
The Amber
The Angel Inn
The Corbridge Larder
The Dyvals Inn
The Errington Coffee House

The MJ Forster Gallery
The Natural Hair Salon
The Paper Shop
The Pele
The Watling Coffee House
Westway Vets
(46)

Your generosity is greatly appreciated by all members of the Corbridge Village Show Committee... we couldn't run The Show without your wonderful support!

John Shackleton





TROPHY WINNERS

Children's Section District

Age up to 9

The Corbridge Village Show Cup

Aidan Clegg

Age 9 and over

The Corbridge Village Show Medal

Niamh Rubbick

District Classes

Best Vegetable Exhibit

The George Inns Memorial Trophy

Elkie Joyce

Best Flowers Exhibit

The Ken Johnson Memorial Trophy

Elkie Joyce

Best Industrial Exhibit

The Tyne Tees Trophy

Helen Hardy

Best Exhibit Art and Photography

The Barry Noble Memorial Cup

Megan Ainslee

Open Classes

Winner - Leeks

The James Hardy Memorial Cup

Elkie Joyce

Best Leek in Show

The Sun Trophy

Elkie Joyce

3 Onions Dressed

The Tom Joyce Trophy

Miles Joyce

Best Collection of Vegetables

The Bill Hardy Memorial

Miles Joyce

Three Round Beetroot

The Smallholder Champions Medal

Dana Conway

3 Onions Shown as Grown

The John Hardy Challenge Trophy

Miles Joyce

Open Flowers

Best Exhibit in Flowers

The Patricia Jameson Cup

John Thirlwell



Corbridge Village Show 2026



The main prizes were again presented at the Parish Hall by Carol Malia. Scan the QR code to see a full photo gallery



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Forum Books

Hello Happy Readers

As the leaves change and fall, Autumn is the perfect time to curl up with a book. This time we have more than a few varied reasons to keep turning pages. Firstly, Saturday October 10th is Bookshop Day. This celebrates an incredibly busy week of big publications which this year includes new books from Barbara Kingsolver, Bonnie Garmus, Ian Rankin and Ann Cleeves. It's worth noting that **Ann Cleeves** will be at The Exchange in North Shields on Wednesday October 14th while **Bonnie Garmus** is at the Tyneside Cinema on Friday November 6th.

In Corbridge we'll be celebrating Bookshop Day in poetry with both workshops and readings plus the first Corbridge Poetry Day. (See poster on the Notice Board page) Tickets are available now with workshops at the Corbridge Community Hub led by experienced local tutors and writers who will support and encourage. Tickets also include refreshments and cake. Then in the evening at FORUM Books there'll be readings from a host of local poets sharing both published work and new work as part of this celebration of the talents of the region. Staying local...we know lots of you have fallen for **Kimberley Adams'** gently romantic and funny Love Lindisfarne series. So, we are excited to share the news that there is a new one much closer to home. **Christmas at Corbridge Castle** has all of her trademark humour and imaginative license at play. At the time of press we don't have the finished cover but know it's the same artist as the others and are promised "lots of mention of the village, some shops, and basically much love shown for Corbridge!" by the author.

From the internationally bestselling and prize-winning author of *Piranesi* and *Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell*, **Susanna Clarke's The Bishop of Durham Attempts to Surrender the City** is an enchanted and haunting illustrated short story full of medieval magic. 1110 AD. The fairy host sweeps across the North of England and the city of Durham is under siege. Warily the Bishop of Durham, Ranulf Flambard, prepares to surrender - something which proves far more difficult than he could have imagined. His quest will lead him through a landscape of uncooperative rivers and enchanted forests to a New Castle on the banks of the River Tyne where, with any luck, he will be received by a court of deceptive, would-be fairy queens, shape-shifting stags and a beautiful teenage Raven King.

Elif Shafak, the Booker and Women's Prize shortlisted author, returns with **In One Brief Moment All Eternity**, a study of French writer Gustave Flaubert told through the lives of the women around him, including his most iconic creation Madame Bovary. French author **Marc Levy** has written **The Bookshop of Forbidden Books** for "anyone who cares about books, about our freedoms, about the world we share...a tribute to reading and the transformative power of books". Our hero is passionate bookseller Mitch who is arrested one morning for committing an unthinkable crime: selling books that have been banned. After five years in prison all he wants to do is to regain his freedom and settle back into his bookshop. But fate has other plans. On the same day Mitch crosses paths with the man who put him behind bars, he also encounters Anna, a woman who could well be the love of his life. Mitch finds himself caught between an irresistible desire for revenge and an irresistible desire for love. A whimsical comedy brimming with charm, tenderness and humanity and a tribute to the transformative power of literature, this is a novel that encourages us to live, to read and to resist.

We've enjoyed several events with **Dave Haslam** over the years but never in Corbridge...until now. As an early birthday treat for me, Dave will be in our pulpit on Tuesday October 20th to talk about his new book **Creative Journeys**. Here the DJ, writer and broadcaster has collected 18 of his intimate and unguarded conversations with creative people from across the worlds of art, film, theatre and literature, including Viv Albertine, Jarvis Cocker, Lemn Sissay, Neneh Cherry, Maxine Peake and Raymond Carver. Very cool and endlessly interesting.

And we will be at Corbridge Community Hub on Thursday November 5th - remember, remember! - for the launch of a brand new thriller series by **Jim Ross**. In **Hawk's Justice**, High Court judge William Ryland is found dead inside the Royal Courts of Justice in what seems like a tragic accident. But young, high-flying lawyer Tom Hawk suspects there's more to his death than meets the eye. When he takes over Ryland's final case - a battle between two Russian billionaires - he's thrust into a murky world of deception, where nothing is quite as it seems. Jim will be in conversation with - or cross examined by - **LJ Ross** in this unmissable event.

Don't forget our book club runs on the last Monday of the month and we've always got room for one more if anyone would like to join us too.

Helen





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† The Corbridge Community Hub & Heritage Centre, Princes Street, Corbridge NE45 5DB

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6.30PM – FITNESS PILATES

TUESDAY
HEXHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL SPORTS CENTRE
6.30PM – LIFT LEAN

WEDNESDAY
NEWTON & BYWELL VILLAGE HALL
10.00AM – STRENGTH & CONDITIONING
MILLENNIUM HALL, RIDING HILL
6.00PM – LIFT LEAN / FLEX & PILATES

THURSDAY
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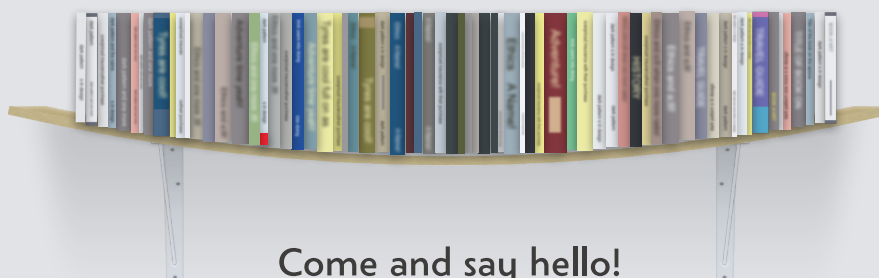
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