

Crich Standard

CRICH | FRITCHLEY | WHATSTANDWELL | BULLBRIDGE

Issue 118 Summer 2026



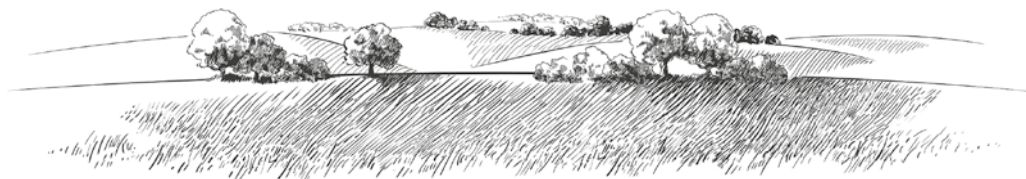
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A Community Magazine for the Parish

Crich Standard is a non-profit community magazine, run by volunteers and delivered quarterly to the Crich, Fritchley, Whatstandwell and Bullbridge area.





Crich Standard

About us

Thanks to all of the volunteers who make up the core team, as well as the wider photographers, contributors, distributors and advertisers. Without their ongoing ideas, skill and hard work Crich Standard wouldn't exist. We continue to build on the original vision of the founding CACN committee.

Contact us

Mail: Crich Standard, Crich Glebe Community Centre, Glebe Field Close, Crich DE4 5EU (thank you to the Glebe).

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Publication dates

The magazine is published four times a year. Deadlines for submission are 6 January, April, July and October.

The editorial committee cannot be responsible for the accuracy of information contained in the magazine. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily shared by the committee.

Crich Standard team

Tony Mills, Stephen Woolley, Karen Davies, Claire Ganthony, Geoff Brown, Julie Woolley, Sally Bestwick, Siobhan Conroy, Louise Maskill, Emma Nicol.

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Support your community and advertise to your local customers.

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3 issues £58 Full year (4 issues) £75

1/3 page (H60mm x W122mm)

Single issue £32 2 issues £53

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1/2 page £53 Full page £95

Advertising deadline: Deadlines for submission are 6 January, April, July and October.

Please send enquiries to:

advertising@crichstandard.org

Crich Fête Team

As spring turns to summer we start to dream of long hot days spent outside! Remember last year's fête? Dry, sunny, warm (hot even), with lots to do, see, eat and drink while meeting up with friends, family and neighbours. Well, here's to a repeat this year.

Crich Village Fête will take place on **Saturday 11 July** on the Recreation Ground.

The Monument Race is back, so come and watch the start at 1.30pm and the returning runners an impossibly short time later! We have some great new attractions this year as well as many of the regular features we know you love, including live bands and the balloon launch at the end of the day (weather permitting). Win the raffle prize and you could be flying high!

On **Saturday 5 September**, instead of the biennial barn dance we are trying something new – an afternoon (and early evening) of **Music on the Rec**, showcasing local bands including up and coming newcomers. There will be a bar and food, so come along and help make it fly!

Finally, on **Thursday 5 November** the annual **Bonfire and Fireworks Display** will take place at Town End, with food and refreshments available as always.

Obviously all our events are outside and are therefore weather dependent, so cross your collective fingers!

More details will be published on the Crich Fete Facebook page – view via the QR code. To contact us, email crichfete@gmail.com



Photos by David Lane



Crich Monument Race is back – and it's backwards!

After a year off in 2025 the annual Crich Monument Race is back this year, with a few changes to the volunteer organising committee as well as an updated course.

This challenging 11-12km trail run starts and finishes at Crich Fête, and is always popular with runners and supporters. Even if you've taken part before, this year offers something a little bit different – the course goes in the opposite direction!

The race welcomes both unaffiliated and affiliated entries (UKA), and is registered with the Trail Running Association. Entries are £20 (unaffiliated) or £18 (affiliated), and the race starts at 1.30pm from the Crich Fête on Saturday 11 July.

The behind-the-scenes work commenced in January, but as ever we always welcome additional help on the day. If you are up for being a race marshal to help guide the runners out on the course, keep them safe and cheer them on, please do get in contact. No previous experience necessary as you'll get a full briefing ... and the use of a high-vis vest for the day!

Enter the race or get in touch via our Facebook page, or email crichmonumentrace@gmail.com

Photo by Louise Maskill



Oddsocks Productions bring Romeo and Juliet to Crich Recreation Ground

Locally-based professional theatre company Oddsocks Productions is mounting their latest outdoor show at Crich Recreation Ground on Saturday 20 June.

"*Romeo and Juliet* is Shakespeare's most iconic tragedy, and we embrace the drama of the piece," says Creative Producer Elli Mackenzie who plays Juliet's nurse. "Oddsocks is known for its comedic approach to plays, so you will have to come along to see how we do it. It will be a lot of fun!"

Oddsocks rehearses at Lea Chapel, their home since moving during lockdown. "We'll be touring from Cumbria to the Channel Islands and just about everywhere in between, so a chance to call in and check the veg garden during the tour is a bonus," says Director Andy, who also appears as Juliet's controlling father Lord Capulet.

"It's thanks to the support and enthusiasm of the Glebe Community Centre management that this performance is able to go ahead. Their willingness to work with us and bring our production home and to the local community is what makes this possible. We just need people to turn up and have some fun! You never know, it might become an annual feature of the village," concluded Elli.

The performance will go ahead in all but the very worst weather, so do make sure to wear appropriate clothing and bring seating. Suitable for all from 7 to 107. The performance starts at 6.00pm, and there will be a licensed bar from 5.00pm.

To book tickets go to: www.oddsocks.co.uk/box-office

Plant a Shoe 2026

To encourage children, non-gardeners and retired gardeners, Crich Open Gardens introduced the accessible 'Plant A Shoe' activity in 2025.

Recently someone commented how lovely it was to see so many planted shoes when they visited Crich last year. This year we hope to extend this village practice, and we're happy to support schools, groups, churches and individuals.

All you need is an old shoe, some seeds or a small plant – even one bought from a supermarket will teach watering and dead heading. The Open Gardeners are planning to plant up two shoes each and gift one to a non-gardening household to place by their door.

It will be great to see this village tradition grow. If anyone would like to sponsor a prize or two, we'd love to hear from you.



Well Dressing 2026

Thinking of all the green spaces we have in Crich – the Recreation Ground, St. Mary's Churchyard, the garden at Crich Junior School – we decided that this year's theme for our community well dressing would be 'Gardens'. There are so many ways in which this could be interpreted – we're looking forward to seeing the finished designs.

The date for your diary is Saturday 4 July. The blessing will take place in the Market Place at 12.00pm. There will be entertainment, and Rev. Jo would like to hold a short thanksgiving service at St. Mary's Church later in the afternoon.

We hope to have two or three new organisations contributing this year, and there will be a raffle on the day, too!

Hopefully the weather will be kind enough for the well dressings to survive until the following Saturday for the Village Fête.

We will be holding a cake stall outside the butcher's on the morning of Saturday 9 May to raise funds to cover our costs, and to allow us to donate to a water aid charity and a worthy cause within the village.

Please look out for up-to-date information nearer the time on Facebook, newsletters etc. This will be the ninth year of well dressing in Crich – thank you to everyone who gets involved each year.

A thank you to Phil Dolby

By Andrew, Chair of Trustees

As a well-known face in our community for so many reasons, it was no surprise back in 2020 when Phil Dolby stepped forward to work with others as part of a new team of trustees and management committee volunteers at the Crich Glebe. For the past five and a half years Phil has worked extremely hard as part of our busy team, acting as Treasurer, leading us through a significant governance change, helping with the Men's Group and rolling up his sleeves to do countless maintenance and refurbishment jobs.

Phil has now stepped down from the Board, and we would like to express our huge gratitude for all the work he has done in this role. He has left big shoes to fill. Thank you, Phil.

Artstand – What's on this year

By Janet Amos

The ArtStand group of artists and artisans based in Crich continues to go from strength to strength. Our group celebrates creativity in Crich, Whatstandwell and other nearby communities. Members of the group are well-known professional artists in their chosen fields, who exhibit their work widely across Derbyshire and beyond. During the last year we are fortunate that several new members have joined us, bringing their particular expertise and experience in watercolour landscapes, cyanotypes and exquisite handmade sculptures.

This year we will be venturing further afield and taking **ArtStand to Bakewell Town Hall on Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 June**. Do call in to see the exhibition and sale of our latest pieces of work. Later in the year our Annual Art Exhibition and Sale of Work at the Glebe will be from

10.00am on **Saturday 21 November**, with a preview evening on **Friday 20 November** from 6.00pm to 8.00pm, when you are invited to join us for a free glass of wine. We are pleased to announce that the newly-formed Crich Community WI will be joining us on the Saturday to serve delicious coffees, homemade cakes and light lunches, all at very reasonable prices.

As a group, ArtStand members are keen to get involved in local events and work towards developing the arts in the community. Several of our members run masterclass workshops, aiming to generate greater interest in their chosen medium and develop creativity. **If this sounds interesting and you'd like more information, please contact the group co-ordinator David Hunns on 07835 886595 or email helloartstand@gmail.com**



A fond farewell to Mr Orridge

At the end of the summer term Crich Junior School will bid a fond farewell to Headteacher Chris Orridge. A familiar face in Crich community since joining the school in September 2003, Mr O's kind, friendly and funny nature has nurtured the children of Crich for over 20 years.

Becoming Head in 2021 after a period of Acting Headship, the children at Crich Junior School have Mr Orridge to thank for many of their favourite school activities such as Metacognition Days and the end-of-year Festival of Fun celebration. As well as many lasting memories of a happy childhood at Crich Juniors, Chris will also



leave a physical legacy in the form of the new Rotunda to the rear of the school. This eco-building will house the new school library, and also provide the school with a flexible learning space.

Mr Orridge has placed great importance on a practical, hands-on approach to learning which Crich Junior School has become renowned for, allowing children opportunities to develop problem solving skills, team work, perseverance, independence and resilience. Ensuring curriculum time is dedicated to gardening projects and looking after livestock provides a link with the past as well as preparing children for their roles as custodians of our environment. He has also championed music and performance at Crich Junior School with time devoted to the tuition of various instruments, whole school performances and external competitions such as the Derby Arts Festival.

Chris will be greatly missed by children, staff, governors, families and the wider community of Crich. Many in our community will have fond memories of Mr Orridge from their time at Crich Junior School; if you have any stories you'd like to share, or you would like to pass on your best wishes as he moves on, do get in touch with the school: info@crich-jun.derbyshire.sch.uk

Crich Glebe Community Centre

While we contemplate the alarming fact that we are already nearly halfway through the year, we can also look back and smile at the year so far!

With so much going on at the Glebe and in the wider community, and with the summer months being a little quieter, we thought now would be a great time to remind you of some of the great facilities that the Glebe has to offer, which you may not be aware of.

Did you know that the Glebe:

- Has small therapy and meeting rooms. We have five smaller rooms ideal for therapies and treatments which can be hired from an ad hoc basis through to exclusive rental agreements. We're always keen to add more services for the community, so if you have or know someone who has a business, please do think about hiring space at the Glebe and offering your service to the local community. These rooms are also great for hot-desk/office hire or for small meetings.
- Is a licensed venue. This means that we can provide a full bar for your party, function or event. (Please note that due to licensing conditions, external bars are only permitted following prior discussion, arrangement and agreement of terms.)
- Has a full kitchen and offers catering for parties, functions and events. We offer a range of menus, and can provide bespoke catering as required.
- Has a large mounted screen and professional visual and audio system. These can be used for cinema/

film screenings (please speak to us about licensing requirements) and for professional standard presentations.

- Has professional surround-sound music equipment and mounted disco lights. These can be hired as an affordable alternative to hiring a DJ, or to create the perfect sensory atmosphere.
- Offers staging for parties, events and functions. Our stage can be custom-built to your needs, offering the most appropriate size and height.
- Offers room hire for parties, functions or special occasions. You can hire one or two rooms, or the whole centre. From simply hiring a room through to themed packages, you can let us take away some of the hassle with catering deals and party extras.

Thank you to all those who have completed our questionnaire over the last few months. If you haven't completed a questionnaire but would like to, please contact the office for a link or paper copy. These questionnaires are vital in shaping the Glebe Community Centre and ensuring we continue to meet the needs of everyone in the community.

To stay up to date with everything happening at the Glebe:

Sign up to our e-newsletter
crichglebe.org/news/newsletter-signup

Follow us on Facebook facebook.com/crichglebe

Follow us on Instagram instagram.com/crichglebecommunitycentre

Contact us: Phone: 01773 857894
Email: office@crichglebe.org

New 'years' – Parish Council update

We all celebrated New Year, welcoming 2026 at the start of January, but we have other 'new years' as well. School children and students start their year in September, and if you have to deal with financial matters you will know that the financial year starts in April. Government has its own new year too, starting in May. That's one of the reasons why the Annual Parish Meeting is in April, so we can look back and review what has happened over the last twelve months.

Although it's not a meeting of the Parish Council, we usually hold our annual meetings on the same date as a Council meeting. The Annual Parish Meeting this year was set for 13 April – we don't hold Parish Council meetings on bank holidays, so it was later than usual. Anyone can come along and raise an issue, but we do start with an agenda, the main item on which is usually a report by the Chair of the Parish Council. The key points this year included:

- **Traffic** – this was one of the main concerns raised when we talked to people at Crich Fête. Unfortunately setting speed limits is the responsibility of Derbyshire County Council, but we are getting a speed indicator device (generally known as SID) which will flash with a smiley face if drivers are within the speed limit or frown if they are going too fast. We are also helping to set up a Community Speed Watch group of volunteers, supported by the police. Please email clerk@crich-pc.gov.uk to register your interest in the Community Speed Watch group.

- **The burial ground** – new regulations mean that headstones have to be tested, and if they are unstable they have to be fixed, since a falling headstone could cause serious injury. We have been alarmed to find that some have had their warning notices removed without the vital repairs being done.
- **Work in progress** – we are working with Amber Valley to secure a long-term lease on the public toilets so that we can refurbish them. We are also bidding for funding from Sport England so we can put a basketball hoop on the recreation ground. Consultation so far has been very much in favour of this, and of course we will have to get planning permission as well, so everyone can make their views known as part of that process.

As well as these developments there have been the usual ongoing routine tasks around maintenance, Christmas lights and summer flowers. Working alongside the many community groups and residents of Crich parish, we hope that we have been able to meet our aim of making our parish 'a better place to live, work and visit'.

A short history of Crich public houses

By Peter Patilla

Recently there has been much publicity about the loss of public houses in small rural communities. Crich has a very rich history in terms of the influence of its pubs, inns, taverns and beer houses on the parish.

There were fifteen documented pubs and inns in the parish recorded from the 1800s:

Lord Nelson at the bottom of
Bullbridge Hill
Canal Inn in Bullbridge
Red Lion in Fritchley
Shoulder of Mutton in Fritchley
Kings Arms on Crich Common
Royal Oak opposite the old Parish Room
Rising Sun at the top of the Dimple
Black Swan at the foot of Bowns Hill
Jovial Dutchman at the Cross
Greyhound on Roes Lane
Wheatsheaf on Wheatsheaf Lane
Bulls Head opposite the Church
Cliff Inn at Town End on Cliffside
Wheatsheaf at Whatstandwell
Miners Hack at Wakebridge

There were also references to parish pubs about which little is known:

Last Drink Out on Causeway Lane
Blue Bell Inn at Fritchley
Chadwicknick Inn
White Swan on Crich Market Place
The Victory on The Common
Iron Gates at Crich Carr

Various unnamed beerhouses are referenced. Beerhouses were in direct competition with pubs and were usually in private houses. They were brought into regulation by the 1830 Beerhouse Act when a licence costing two guineas was required, and they were subject to inspection at any time night or day.

The regulations for licensed pubs were enforced either very strictly or rather more leniently depending on the police officer of the time and whether his seniors were demanding a clampdown. As well as opening and closing times there were regulations as to which activities could take place. Dominoes and bagatelle were banned, and on one occasion in 1897 there was an undercover operation employed by local police to catch players at various pubs. On the next page is how it was wonderfully reported in the newspaper:

Derby Mercury, Wednesday 17 March 1897

A MYSTERIOUS RAILWAY PORTER AMONGST THE PUBLICANS

Albert E. SLACK of the Black Swan Inn, Crich, was charged with permitting gaming to take place on his licensed premises, contrary to section 17 of the Licensing Act 1872, on the 19th February, at Crich. Mr. R. S. CLIFFORD, Derby, appeared for the police, and Mr. J. POTTER, Matlock and Derby, defended. In opening the case, Mr. CLIFFORD said that in consequence of complaints Superintendent McDONALD sent an officer in private dress, in the attire of a railway porter. Police-constable WALLIS stated that he entered the house about seven o'clock. The landlord was present, with five or six others. In the presence of the landlord remarks were made that games had been played, and a quart had come in. Joseph SLACK asked for dominoes, and a game was played, the loser paying. Witness had a drink of the beer. He paid for beer for men from whom he received information. Police-constable COSGROVE deposed to visiting the house and saw dominoes, but they were not in use, and Mr. POTTER asked the Bench to say the evidence was not sufficient to commit a man of good character. The only witness he suggested had told falsehoods by the bushel to ingratiate himself in the graces of the men he associated with at the house. The defendant was called and said he allowed the dominoes to be taken into the room on condition that money or beer were not played for. Luke WRAGG, quarryman, Crich, stated that the officer, WALLIS, wore a railway porter's cap. In conversation WALLIS talked glibly, and had got a very good story prepared. There was no liquor paid for by men who lost at dominoes. John WRAGG, Crich, deposed that he was at the house and had a game of dominoes. It was a friendly game for amusement. The landlord did not stand by and see a game played, over which the bargain was for the loser to pay. – The Bench convicted in a penalty of £2 and costs. – Thomas B. HALLSWORTH, of the Bull's Head, Crich, was charged with a like offence by permitting the playing of bagatelle. Mr. CLIFFORD prosecuted and Mr. POTTER defended. Police-constable WALLIS stated that he went to the Bull's Head and saw a French bagatelle board. Four men were playing, and one of them told him they were having a game of 140 up, and the two losers paid, Walter SELLORS and KNEEBONE. The landlord told the men to be quiet and keep the door shut. A second game was arranged, but he did not stay to see it played. Police-constable COSGROVE gave evidence, and then the defendant was examined and denied that anything took place at the bagatelle board to arouse suspicion. John HEAPY said he had played many times on the board, but never gambled. John GREENHOUGH was examined and said he was at the house, but saw no gambling over

the bagatelle. The Bench imposed a penalty of £2 and costs. – Samuel STOCKS, Royal Oak, Crich, was charged with a like offence by allowing dominoes to be played on February 10th. Mr. CLIFFORD again prosecuted and Mr. POTTER defended. – Police-constable WALLIS spoke to seeing a game of five chalks up. The landlord seemed a bit fly, but he was not quite fly enough. There was cheating detected. On the table was a cloth, and everything was done brazen enough. – Mary Ann LAMBERT, daughter of the landlord, denied that beer was played for, and there was no suggestion that money was at issue. – Mrs. STOCKS, wife of the defendant, said it was untrue that a bargain was made to play points up for beer. – Henry COWLISHAW and Thomas SELLORS were called, and the latter said they had a game, but there was no end to it because it was all friendly. Other witnesses said the game was merely played for pastime. In this case the Bench convicted in a penalty of £2 and costs.

During the 1800s drunkenness was rife in the parish, and newspapers would refer to Crich as the "Gothem City of Derbyshire". Here's a typical report:

Derby Mercury, Wednesday 27 May 1896

BELPER PETTY SESSIONS INEBRIATES

William COWLISHAW, Crich, quarryman, pleaded guilty to being drunk and refusing to quit the licensed premises of Harriet ROWE, at Crich, May 2nd. In reply to the Bench, Mrs ROWE said she had to carry the defendant out. The Chairman: you surely did not carry a big man like that? – Witness: I carry bigger men than him out (Laughter). A fine of £1 0s 6d, including costs was imposed.

Harriet Rowe was probably Harriet Roe of the Greyhound. The Roe family ran the pub for many years, and it is thought that Roes Lane, on which the Greyhound was sited, was named after them

It is rather sad that in 2026 our parish has been reduced to only three pubs: the Cliff Inn, the Black Swan and the Canal. A more detailed history of the Crich parish pubs and their influence (especially related to the football and sports teams) can be found on the Crich Parish history website www.crichparish.co.uk

Crich and Fritchley Open Gardens

By Ruth Senogles, Open Gardens Co-ordinator

Established in 2018 and offering free entry, Open Gardens was conceived to allow everyone to visit one or all of our gardens, as they wish. We are not show gardens, but we do offer growing options and encouragement for villagers to try in their own patches.

As the number of open gardens grows annually, so too does the diversity of styles. Every garden is different, with flowers, veggies, trees, ponds, wildlife – there's something of interest to be found for everyone.

Public toilets and extra parking at the Glebe facilitates a beautiful village walk. Crich Junior School joins us again this year, offering much appreciated refreshments and children's activities in their playground and presenting the most amazing recent garden makeover. They are doing a lot to engage our next generation of gardeners.

Individual gardens offer plant sales, refreshments, children's treasure hunts, live music, organic information and free heritage seeds. Many visitors have commented on the diversity of gardens, and how pleasurable it is to wander around. One of the greatest pleasures is meeting up with fellow visitors walking the route, recognisable by the map in their hands. Children particularly enjoying the Google Maps experience.

Each garden has autonomy to donate any voluntary contributions to a charity of their own choice, plus a percentage towards our map production costs. Free maps are available from village shops and pubs,

and on the day from the telephone box in the Market Place.

We use yellow fabric bunting, the colour of friendship, to identify all our Open Gardens. Dogs and children are actively encouraged to enjoy the gardens.

The format of the Open Gardens events year:

Meet and Greet at the Black Swan, early in the growing year

First Open Gardens event on the last Saturday in June

Second Open Gardens event on the last Saturday in July

Review Day in early September, for all Open Gardeners to discuss progress

Christmas Party at the Glebe, for all Open Gardeners to celebrate progress

We're a friendly bunch, sharing gardening tips, seeds, plants, holiday watering and so on. Every day's a school day, especially for gardeners, and we are all still learning.

We would welcome and encourage anyone new to gardening, whatever age or stage you're at. Eating and enjoying something you've grown yourself is so good for your physical and mental health; even if it's only strawberries in a tub or beans in an old boot, it's still gardening.



Crich Standard – from seeds of thought to a quarterly publication

We thought we'd put together a short series over the next few editions of *Crich Standard* looking at how this magazine makes its way onto over 1,800 doormats across the parish four times a year.

From the very first idea to the final delivery round, there is a surprising amount of work involved – and a large team of dedicated volunteers behind it all. This first article looks at the beginning of the journey, creating and developing the content.

Unbelievably, for most of the *Crich Standard* committee the process begins almost as soon as the previous edition has been “put to bed” – we never fail to be surprised when the next meeting is called!

Shortly after the magazine has been delivered across the parish, the committee gathers. These meetings often start with a sense of “what are we going to fill the next issue with?”, but by the end (and helped along by a little liquid inspiration) we usually emerge with a healthy list of topics and features.

The content of *Crich Standard* broadly falls into two categories:

Updates from local groups and organisations – including the church, schools, Parish Council, Scouts, and many other community groups

Feature articles – pieces on topics of wider interest or relevance to parish life. These have ranged from local history and astronomy (“The Sky at Night”) to short stories, personal profiles, and all sorts of fascinating aspects of parish life.

And this is where the real work begins.

The process starts with the ideas meeting, usually a couple of months before publication. From there, the team begins gathering information from a wide range of contributors. Emails are sent to regular contacts to gently (and occasionally firmly!) remind them of looming deadlines, ensuring that all the updates, events and news from across the parish are captured in time.

Alongside this, the editorial team begins pulling together the feature ideas – researching topics, conducting interviews

and, where necessary, doing a bit of polite nosing around to develop interesting stories. These pieces are then written and refined into articles that aim to be engaging, relevant, and enjoyable for readers across the community.

Once the copy deadline arrives the email inbox is carefully combed through to make sure nothing has been missed, and the shape of the next edition begins to emerge. More often than not there's a moment of mild panic about whether we have enough content – followed by relief as everything somehow comes together (with the occasional last-minute addition or, very rarely, a bit of creative problem-solving).

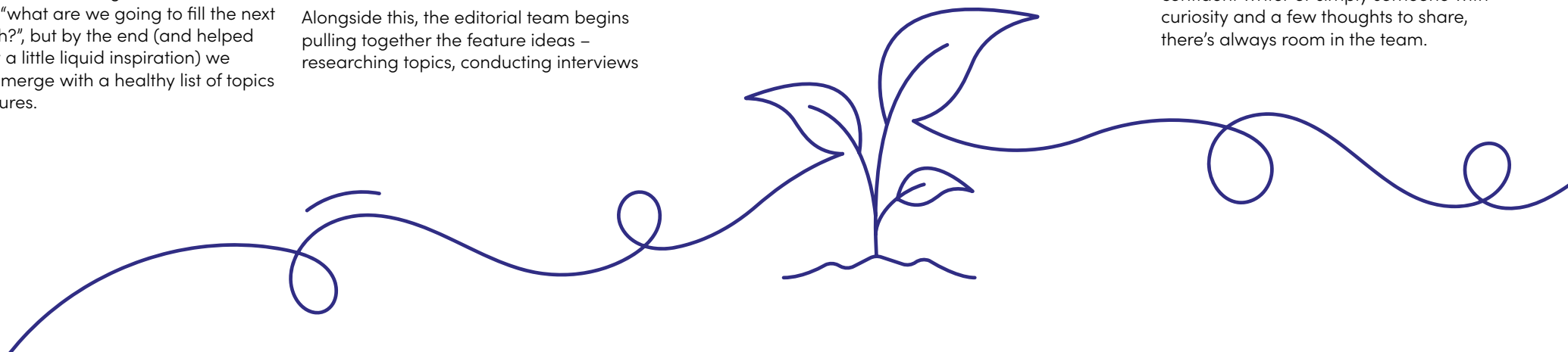
After all the submissions are gathered into our shared drive, along with any supporting images, the checking process begins. Headlines are created, interesting snippets are highlighted, and articles are edited for clarity and consistency.

Then everything is passed to proofreading. This involves checking spelling, grammar and consistency, but also ensuring accuracy – verifying dates, links, and details, and making sure everything aligns with the *Crich Standard* house style.

The next stage in the process sees all the text, images and a surprising number of comments handed over to the design stage ... but more on that in the next edition.

A huge thank you to everyone who contributes to *Crich Standard*, whether regularly or occasionally. Your ideas, writing and creativity are what make the magazine such a varied and interesting reflection of parish life.

And we are always keen to welcome more help! If you've ever thought “I could write a paragraph or two” or “I've got an idea but I'm not sure what to do with it”, we would love to hear from you. Whether you're a confident writer or simply someone with curiosity and a few thoughts to share, there's always room in the team.



Ric of Ric's Autos is retiring

By Martyn Offord

When we heard that Ric of Ric's Autos was retiring at the end of August, our first reaction was that we'll now have to subscribe to the AA Homestart package. We will no longer be able to rely on Ric popping down the road with jump leads or lending me a battery charger. Nor will we be able to come back from holiday to find that Ric had taken the car, put it through its MOT and returned it with its certificate on the front seat. This has been the experience of many, with Ric cheerfully helping out in an emergency – and where else would you get a bill for a job in single figures or nothing at all?

How many other garage proprietors would simply tell you to drop in and pay sometime? Ric says he has been able to operate like this because his customers

have always paid their bills, so he has been able to trust them in return.

Eric Coulton (how many of you knew that was his name?) remembers his first car, a Mark 3 Cortina, which he rebuilt the year before he left school. At 16, in the days of Morris Minors and Austin A14s, he started a 7-year apprenticeship with Norman Thorpe of Holloway and passed his driving test 3 weeks after turning 17.

For about 18 months Ric sold car parts in the tiny shop that once stood on the concrete area beside the current business. It had previously been a butcher's and a model railway shop, and in 1989 his mother took it over to sell pet food when Ric moved next-door into what had been a disco equipment supplier and before



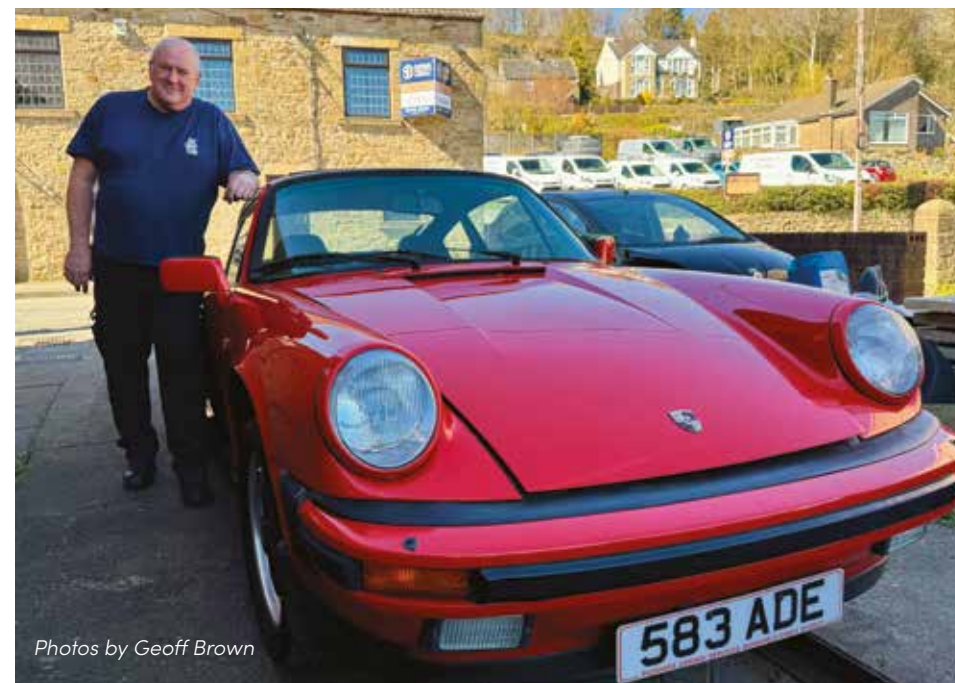
that the old Co-op. As any visitor will tell you, bits of old cars and accessories have been accumulating there ever since!

Ric found early cars like Capris and Escorts easy to work with, with their plugs and points. The odd Porsche has been on his forecourt too, but his favourite car remains a Saab. From the late 1980s onwards he had to keep up with the trend towards more electronics, which he largely did by working it out for himself. Now in the mid-2020s, however, we are entering a new era with increasingly sophisticated hybrid and electric cars – and of course, these days you can't just replace a simple part without buying a whole unit.

Cars licensed since 2021 require a big investment in diagnostics, so at 62 Ric thinks this is a good time to retire. For

a moment we mused about the future: driverless cars and robotic vehicles weaving in and out among the parked cars and potholes of Crich? Yes – this certainly feels like a good time to take more holidays, go on cruises, work on the allotment and tinker with his own cars.

Ric will continue to be around in the village (in a non-mechanical capacity) and wishes to thank all his customers for their business, friendliness and goodwill. At the big dealerships we rarely see the mechanic who serviced our car. We may receive a video and a checklist report from a receptionist, but with Ric we were able to engage directly with a real personality. We will miss his kindness, courtesy, skill, generosity, patience and good humour, and we wish him a long and happy retirement.



Photos by Geoff Brown

Community Diary

CRICH WRITERS' GROUP

A small group of writers meeting informally every few weeks at the Black Swan in Crich.

Upcoming dates:

Thursday 28 May

Thursday 25 June

Thursday 30 July

Thursday 27 August

Writers in any genre, either professional or for leisure, are very welcome. Email louise@lmaskill.com for more information.

FRITCHLEY QUAKERS

We welcome you to Meeting for Worship, 11.00am every Sunday at the Friends Meeting House, Chapel Street, Fritchley. All welcome. For more information please email plumcot@phonecoop.coop or call 01773 856072.

CRICH COMMUNITY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

We usually meet at Crich Glebe Community Centre on the last Wednesday of every month at 7.00pm. See page 29 for our upcoming dates and more info

See our Facebook page (search Crich Community WI) for details closer to the events, or ring Dawn (07791 559394).

PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB AT THE PUB

First Monday of each month, 7.30pm at the Old Black Swan, Crich. Open to all photography enthusiasts and beginners, sharing skills and experience with monthly themes and an annual competition.

Free to attend, £1 donation appreciated.

CRICH HERITAGE

The Crich Heritage Partnership Society have a talk from Terry Bishop entitled '1914 - your country needs you - Crich goes to war.' Come along and hear an overview of overview of the role played by people from our area who volunteered, with a particular focus on those who didn't survive.

Thursday 25 June at the Glebe Community Centre (admission charge for non-members).

What happens at Crich Glebe Community Centre?



www.crichglebe.org
Crich Glebe Community Centre
Email: office@crichglebe.org
Tel: 01773 857894

MONDAY

Derbyshire Toy Libraries Stay & Play
Crich Family Lunch Club
Kurling (Autumn & winter only)
Dru Yoga

9:30 – 11am
11am – 12:30pm
12 – 2pm
3 – 4:30pm

TUESDAY

Gentle Yoga (fortnightly)
Tuesday Club (meal – book in advance)
Sarah's Aerobics/Dancefit
Table Tennis

10am – 12pm
12:15 – 1:30pm
6:30 – 7:30pm
7 – 9pm

WEDNESDAY

Luncheon Club
Starlight Social Club (monthly)
Crich Community W.I. (monthly last Weds)

10:30am – 1:00pm
7 – 11pm
7 – 9pm

THURSDAY

Move It or Lose It
Children's Dance Classes
Youth Club
Crich Crafters (monthly: 2nd Thurs)
Make Do & Mend (monthly: 3rd Thurs)
Crich Heritage Group (monthly: last Thurs)

2 – 2:45pm
4:45–6:15pm
7 – 9pm
6 – 8pm
7 – 9pm
7:30 – 8:30pm

FRIDAY

Yoga with Rachel
Art Group
Indoor Bowls (Sept to April)
Crich Cinema Club (monthly – 2nd Friday)

9:30 – 11am
10am – 1pm
2 – 4pm
from 6pm

PLUS

The Head House Hair Salon
for appointment please phone
Audra: 07925378295 or Jodie: 07508495690
Foot Health Clinic – Thursdays.
Crich Parish Council meet 1st Monday
Crich Live – regular shows.
Share & Repair Café – Quarterly Saturday.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CHECK THE WEBSITE OR GET IN TOUCH WITH US FOR INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY CONTACT DETAILS.

Please check with groups directly if you would like to attend any of these events or meetings, to check dates and times. Crich Standard cannot guarantee the accuracy of these listings, which may be subject to alteration after publication.

Crich night sky: summer and the zodiac

By Tom Scutt

The zodiac continues its slow march across the night sky as we move into summer, bringing with it some of the most famous constellations – and, frustratingly for us in the UK, some of the hardest to see.

At this time of year the ecliptic sits low in the southern sky during the evening. This means that the next three zodiac constellations – **Libra**, **Scorpius** and **Sagittarius** – never climb very high above the horizon. Add in long summer twilight and the ever-present threat of British cloud, and you'll need a clear view to the south and a bit of luck to spot them properly.

Libra (the Scales): Libra is the only zodiac constellation that represents an inanimate object (all the others are animals or mythological characters), and it's fair to say it's not the most striking. Its stars are relatively faint and its shape is not immediately obvious; under dark skies you may be able to trace out a rough quadrilateral, but in most conditions it appears as a rather unremarkable patch of sky.

It hasn't always been this way, though – the stars of Libra were once considered part of neighbouring Scorpio, forming the claws of the scorpion. Once you know this, it makes a bit more sense why Libra feels slightly like an afterthought.

Scorpius (the Scorpion): In contrast, Scorpius is one of the finest constellations in the sky – if you can see it. In southern latitudes it dominates the heavens with its many bright stars, but from the UK we only get a partial view as it skims the horizon.

Even so, its brightest star **Antares**, a deep red supergiant, is hard to miss. The name means "rival of Mars", because of its distinctive reddish colour. In good conditions you may also be able to trace the scorpion's distinctive curved tail stretching down towards the horizon, although part of it will likely remain hidden from view. Because it straddles the Milky Way, Scorpius contains many deep-sky objects – star clusters and nebulae.

Sagittarius (the Archer): Just to the east of Scorpio lies Sagittarius. You might expect a heroic centaur archer, but what you're actually looking for is something rather less glamorous – a shape commonly known as the "teapot". Unfortunately, as with Scorpius, Sagittarius never rises far above the horizon.

Once you've spotted it, though, it's surprisingly obvious – handle on the left, spout on the right, with a lid perched on top. This unassuming asterism marks the direction of the centre of our galaxy – Sagittarius A*, a supermassive black hole with a mass roughly 4 million times that of our Sun. On a dark night you may even see the faint band of the Milky Way appearing to rise like steam from the teapot's spout.

Other things to look for:

- On 18 May a close pairing of the Moon and Venus will be visible just after sunset in the western sky. Venus will shine brilliantly, with a thin crescent Moon nearby – an easy and rewarding sight.
- On 8–9 June Venus and Jupiter will be very bright and very close together – what is known as a conjunction. You'll need a clear, unobstructed view of the western horizon in the hour or so after sunset to have a chance of spotting them. Venus remains a bright "evening star" through late spring and early summer, dominating the western sky after sunset, while Jupiter is visible earlier in the season before gradually sinking into the twilight.
- One for the calendar: on 12 August a **partial solar eclipse** will be visible from the UK – the best we've seen since 1999, and well worth making time for. At around 6.15pm the Moon will start to gradually move across the face of the Sun, covering up to **90% of it at maximum** at around 7.10pm. You should notice a distinct dimming of the light, and perhaps even a slight drop in temperature. As always, **never look directly at the Sun**. Use proper eclipse glasses (ordinary sunglasses aren't enough) or a simple pinhole projector (make a hole in a piece of card or foil and let the sun shine through it onto a piece of white paper) to view it safely.

Summer stargazing in the UK can require a bit more patience than in winter – shorter nights, lighter skies, and low-hanging constellations all conspire against you. Nevertheless, on a warm, clear evening there's something special about standing outside as the stars slowly emerge, with the distant centre of our galaxy just visible on the southern horizon.



Celebrating 20 years of Popalong

By Martyn Offord and Lynda Gray

In the autumn this year Popalong will celebrate its 20th anniversary. That means there are young adults in their late teens and early 20s who once attended this thriving village baby and toddler group. There are even some who claim to remember bouncing about to the iconic Jig Jog song. There are certainly many parents who found support and permanent family friendships at Popalong; we remember the mum who, as her second child moved on, said it would almost be worth having a third so she could continue coming. Among the carers who brought and still bring their children are a lot of grandparents as well as mums and dads, and they, along with the helpers, all enjoy being part of the lives of young people.

So this is something worth celebrating, and some of the present group are organising an event to do just that. It is hoped that lots of people, whatever their age, who have attended or helped at Popalong during these last 20 years will come along to the Comrades Club on Saturday 19 September from 2.30pm to chat and enjoy refreshments. There will be play and songs for the little ones and a bar for the older ones, and there is an unconfirmed rumour that the celebratory Jig Jog Ale might be available. There could also be an opportunity to relive bouncing on knees to that song. **If you'd like to come please email martynofford@gmail.com so we can organise food, and if you'd like to contribute in some way let us know.**

So how and why did Popalong begin two decades ago?

Lynda takes up the story: Popalong in its previous incarnation had stopped, but on moving to Crich in 2003 I got to know a few families who had attended. We re-formed the group and met in parents' homes for two years, and then we were offered the use of the Wesley Chapel on Chapel Lane. The Methodists had taken out the pews and refurbished the space to make a lovely area to meet, plus storage space.

It became clear that parents in Crich wanted a baby and toddler group, and looked to me to start it. I prayed to God, "Help, I don't know how to do this!", and He brought a number of helpful people into my life to advise. Parents chose a Friday morning as the best time, and we formed a team from both St Mary's and the Wesley Chapel to lead the group, meeting frequently to plan how it would be structured. Some tables and toys were donated and we started on 6 October 2006 with 20 children under two years old, plus their parents and grandparents. This number has fluctuated, but there has always been a team of grandparents from the churches to run the group.

Soon after we started, a very helpful member of staff at the Amber Valley CVS in Ripley encouraged me to apply for a grant towards equipment and toys, and after much perusal of catalogues and form-filling, in January 2007 we were awarded a grant of over £4,500 from the Local Network Fund. This paid for our folding tables, toddler climbing frame, soft play cushions, toy kitchen and much more, and these are still in use today.

Before Popalong: the beginnings

By Jan Brown

The Popalong we know today grew from much earlier beginnings...

In early 1987 when my son was a few months old, I joined a small group for adults and young children called the Pram Service which met monthly at the parish Church. Here I met Dawn Shortland (Dennis Hooton's daughter) and her baby. The following year Dawn, I and a few other parents decided that the group needed to be updated and made more accessible and welcoming. We decided to rename the group "Popalong" so that parents and carers of young children could do just that – pop along whenever they could.

The first meeting of the new Popalong group was in October 1988 at the old vicarage, hosted by Jennie Colbourn (the wife of John Colbourn, the vicar at that time). The group met every fortnight. Carers with children from new-born to school age came for the company, friendship and support. There were many activities including Christmas parties and enjoyable summer meetings on the vicarage lawn.

In St Mary's Church there are still two cross-stitched kneelers dedicated to Popalong. These were made in the early 1990s in conjunction with the Crich Craft group.



Popalong is still a happy, supportive group for mums with new babies and also for dads and grandparents, some of whom stay with us until their children move on to pre-school or school. It is not cliquey, and we get some lovely encouraging feedback. Do seek us out and "pop along" for a coffee to meet us!



Fritchley Community Association News

First of all, a big thank-you to our “newly hatched” volunteers in the village; we promise not to overwork you, not to pay you, and not to ask for your CV. In fact, we promise only to be eternally grateful to you for supporting events whenever you can, for sharing your ideas, and for the community feel you help to bring to the village.

Onwards, then – it’s time to remind you all to check your annual brochures for upcoming events, and to tell you about our next new venture – **afternoon tea on the village green** (or in the hall if the weather is inclement) with, of course, Chris’ delectable home-made cakes spilling over the plates! Make sure to book your places, as tickets are quite limited for both sittings on **Saturday 13 June at 2.00pm or 4.00pm** (your choice).

After eating cakes aplenty you’ll want to get in training for the **Fritchley Annual Run on Sunday 20 September** – but I must warn you, there will be more cakes at the finish line! Not to be left out, and requiring a roll of drums, is the **Fritchley Annual Village Show on Saturday 29 August**, so get your seeds sown, sit up all night nurturing them and enter your produce. Wonky veg very welcome.

We do now have quite a few regular hall bookings for which we are thankful as they bring in much needed income, but if you have more ideas for bringing people together for group gatherings, do let us know and we can help get you started. It

could be something as simple as a coffee morning once a month. The Fritchley OAP group met monthly for over 30 years, but unfortunately they have had to discontinue; this is a shame as the village now lacks a group that meets for social wellbeing and a good natter. However, we are extremely grateful to their former committee for their donation to the windows fund and the donation they are making to the Fritchley Community Association fund.

Another new venture that Jill Holley and I would like to get going is a poetry group. The Book Group is thriving, and to complement it we thought some of you out there might enjoy sharing poetry. This is not meant as a poetry writers’ group; it is for those who love to share favourite poems, newly-found poems and poems not yet found. If you are interested (start date to be decided), do give me, Elaine, a ring on 07974 510067.

If you have never popped your head round the village hall door, please do so. We are constantly striving to update and upgrade the space; the stage is now ready for anyone who would like to resurrect the annual Fritchley pantomime (and if there never was one, perhaps there ought to be!). In fact the hall lends itself to any events and performances that require a stage, and the acoustics are really good. Come and check us out – we’ll be happy to show you round.

See you soon

Help establish a swift colony in Crich

A collaborative effort involving St. Mary’s Church, Derbyshire Swifts, Peak Boxes, and Transition Crich has led to the installation of four dual-purpose swift and bat boxes at St. Mary’s Church. This initiative was made possible through funding from Derbyshire Wildlife Trust.

Constructed from laser-printed, biodegradable materials like fermented corn-starch and sawdust, these eco-friendly boxes are a significant improvement over traditional plywood designs. As the first of their kind in Derbyshire, they are designed to endure for up to 200 years, providing a secure habitat for future generations of swifts and bats.



The swift population in the UK plummeted by over 60% between 1995 and 2022, which has resulted in their inclusion on the UK Red List of Birds of Conservation Concern. This decline is attributed to habitat loss, pesticide use and climate change, making this initiative both critical and timely. Swifts are social birds that flourish in colonies, so adding more boxes throughout the village is the next logical step.

Thanks to funding secured by Councillor Kate Smith from Amber Valley Borough Council and a generous anonymous donation, we are ready to move forward with the next phase! If you’re interested in being part of this exciting project or might consider adding a swift box to your property, please email us at transitioncrich@gmail.com



All aboard!

Formerly known as Crich Tramway Village, the newly refreshed **National Tramway Museum** reopened for the season on Saturday 14 March, unveiling a bold new identity designed to better reflect who we are.

The refreshed brand also reflects a wider ambition: to challenge perceptions of what a “museum” can be. This is not a place to quietly walk past displays – it’s a living, moving experience where history is heard, felt and ridden.

The rebrand marks an exciting new chapter for the museum, celebrating over 60 years of tramway heritage while confidently looking to the future. Shorter, clearer and easier to recognise, the National Tramway Museum name (NTM for short) puts trams – and the stories they carry – firmly at the heart of the experience.

Tramway still sits at the centre of everything we do. We embody the innovation, the craftsmanship, and the preservation of Britain’s tramway heritage, bringing history to life through movement, stories and experience.

Leading up to the new season, CEO Graham Bennett said: “As one of Derbyshire’s most distinctive attractions, we have made the exciting decision to refresh our brand ready for the new season. The new identity reflects both our national collection and the unique experience we offer here – a working tramway where visitors can step into the past, ride historic vehicles and explore a truly special



heritage site. We’re looking forward to welcoming both familiar faces and first-time visitors when we reopen in March.”

Since mid-March visitors have been able to step back in time aboard beautifully restored vintage trams, travelling through a recreated historic village street and out into the breathtaking Derbyshire countryside. With unlimited tram rides included for every visitor, guests are free to hop on and off throughout the day.

Alongside the working tramway the site offers engaging exhibitions, a scenic woodland trail and sculptures, indoor and outdoor play areas, and a full day of food and drink options – from the Tram Stop Café and Barnett’s Sweet Shop to the ever-popular Red Lion pub and ice cream kiosk. Dogs are welcome too, making it an ideal day out for the whole family.

So, whether you visit our incredibly popular events throughout the year or plan to bring the children every weekend with your annual pass, we can’t wait to welcome to you back.

That’s a wrap on season two of Crich Cinema Club!

It’s been great to welcome so many of you to our community cinema experience – and a special thank you to those of you who haven’t missed a single screening!

Viewers have enjoyed an eclectic mix of films ranging from true stories, foreign language films and light-hearted entertainment through to political thrillers – and not forgetting our special Christmas screenings, including our relaxed family-friendly festive afternoon show!

Thank you to everyone who has joined us for our Cinema Club screenings over the past season. We look forward to welcoming you back for season three, and hopefully seeing a few new faces too.

Season three of Cinema Club will return after a short summer break, screening films from September to May at 7.00pm on the second Friday of the month.

Our popular licensed Cinema Café will also be back, serving alcoholic, soft and hot drinks plus fresh popcorn, Bluebell Dairy ice cream, Pringles, snacks and of course our Maxine’s homemade cakes!

Crich Community WI

Crich Community WI are celebrating our first anniversary, and we have lots booked for the coming months. We meet on the last Wednesday of every month, usually at 7.00pm at the Glebe Community Centre. Upcoming meetings and activities are:

27 May

Wingfield Station tour and talk on Wingfield Manor

24 June

Pottery with Maggie

11 July

See us at Crich Fête

29 July

Rhiannon Moore, “My Assistance Dog and Me”

26 Aug

Walk; meet outside the Glebe (free)

30 Sept

Aquabox, a charity based in Cromford which provides safe drinking water through the use of filtration units, and humanitarian aid to crisis zones around the world

Non-members are welcome to come to two trial meetings (there is a £5 charge). For some meetings, such as the Wingfield Station tour, we need to know numbers in advance. For more information or to contact us please email CrichCommunityWI@dfwi.co.uk, send a message via the Crich Community WI Facebook page or follow [crichcommunitywi](#) on Instagram.

Crich Heritage – Herbert Key and his works

By Sylvia Hill

The painter Herbert Key was a well-known character around Crich, with his Jack Russell dogs, first Patch and then the friendlier Pip, depicted in every painting. He wrote humorous articles for Crich Standard, and created wooden toys and household furniture.

His love of trains started with the train line that ran past the garden of his childhood home in Ripley. He loved to paint the local trains and villages in a historical context, and this led to requests from local people for paintings of their favourite places, with trains that were depicted in their historical time.

One of the most outstanding is his depiction of the 'mechanical horse' developed in 1813 by William Brunton,

a Scottish engineer. This was created to replace the horses that formerly hauled wagons up the 3.3% gradient hill to Crich quarry after delivering the limestone for smelting to limestone kilns at Bullbridge. This was fifteen years before Stevenson's Rocket was constructed.

After he passed away in 2014 at the age of 72, twenty of Herbert's paintings were gifted to Crich Heritage by his brother Brian. Chris Deethe has had eight of these set into two frames, and they are now on display at in Deeley's Café at Swanwick Junction, not far from where Herbert was born and now part of the Midland Railway, Butterley. There is also an information board on the Gang Road situated on the opposite side of Swanwick Station.



What a season! And it's not over yet

To wrap up the current Crich Live season, we have a real treat in store for the whole community. The local professional theatre company Oddsocks are returning to Crich in June, with a special outdoor performance of their latest show Romeo and Juliet!

In a break from tradition and our usual venue of Crich Glebe Community Centre, Romeo and Juliet will take place on Crich Recreation Ground. We submitted an early request to the weather gods for beautiful sunny conditions, but while the weather can't be guaranteed, a fantastic show and great community atmosphere absolutely can!

Please join us for this special show featuring Oddsocks' new take on this well-loved classic, finding laughs and pathos in the most dramatic of tragedies featuring the original star-crossed lovers.

Saturday 20 June @ 6.00pm
(doors open at 5.00pm)

Crich Recreation Ground, DE4 5DW

Licensed bar.



Thank you to everyone who joined us over the past season! Here's a quick recap of the diverse range of shows we've enjoyed.

We kicked off the season with Oddsocks and two performances of *Florence Nightingale – The Lady with the Hammer*, funded by Crich Live. The first entertained over 80 children from Crich Junior School, while the second was enjoyed by an audience of over 100!

We had music from Harp & A Monkey and their poignant *Remembrance Show: War Stories*, folk music from Paul Walker and Karen Pfeiffer, classic comedy with Just Like That! The Tommy Cooper Show, quirky humour with *How to Survive and Thrive in an Impossible World – With a Piano*, three community pantomime performances from JKB Productions and their original panto *Ali Baba and the 40 Raindrops*, and of course our local crime investigators John and Sally from True Crime Investigators UK exploring two historic cases.

Crich Live works to bring, and make accessible, live performance to the Crich community. We look forward to welcoming you back in the autumn for a new season of live entertainment.

CRICHLIVE

Crich Scouts thriving thanks to community support

By Duncan Ganthony

In the last issue of Crich Standard we wrote about how we needed more Scout leaders to keep the group running. Well, thanks to the readership of the Standard in and around Crich, this request has been answered – we have had 3 new volunteers who are able to help run the Scout group. Martin, Isaac, and Katharine – welcome to Crich Scouts! All the new leaders are interested in outdoors activities, so I think that the Scouts will be learning new skills and doing more adventurous activities in the future.

If you are interested in helping with any part of the Scout group in Crich, you haven't missed out; please contact us to talk about where you could fit in. Even with the new leaders we could always accommodate new volunteers. If you have been mulling it over, please get in touch – you could offer a one-off session if you have an interest to share with the young people, you could help with running sessions on a more regular basis, or by supporting the group on the committee.

We will soon be getting ready for Crich Fête, where we will be running the BBQ again. Please come along and support the Scout group by eating burgers and hot dogs; your full bellies help to support the group financially. We always try to source the food as locally as possible so the whole community benefits.

The Scouts camped out in St Mary's churchyard in mid-March, and some of our Beavers and Cubs also camped out in their back gardens. The aim was to raise money for homeless veterans, and this year we managed to raise £921. The Scouts also helped with the Mother's Day service, which saw the first outing of the Scouts Choir helped by Kate and Jim. Annette led the service and the Scouts took an active part, and also served teas, coffees and cakes at the end. There were positive comments from the congregation, so hopefully everyone enjoyed it as much as we did.

For St George's Day we're hosting a district event at the National Tramway Museum. This will involve multiple Beaver, Cub and Scout groups from all over the area coming together for a fun day out and to renew their Scouting promise. Thank you to the NTM for supporting us with this event.

What is the Comrades Club?

By Kev Oliver, committee member

The Comrades Club is independently operated by an annually elected committee that represents its members. We host the Crich Branch of the Royal British Legion, and we provide a meeting space for local groups and organisations as well as accommodating Crich Junior School for daily school lunches. Anyone over 18 can become a member (just ask at the bar), and children are welcome accompanied by their parents.

In the beginning

Following the conclusion of the First World War, veterans and their associates established the Crich Branch of the Comrades of the Great War. Through public subscriptions and fundraising events they amassed sufficient resources to open the Comrades Club in 1921.

In the same year the Club was officially registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act. Membership fees were set at five shillings per annum (equivalent to 25p), with an initial enrolment of 118 members.

The official opening ceremony occurred on 17 September 1921, presided over by Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Deacon of Chase Cliffe House, Whatstandwell. The event included a formal address and a billiards match between Leslie Wright of the Butterley Ironworks Company and Joseph Payne, the Club Chairman; the outcome of the game was not recorded.

Through the decades

In 1931 the Royal British Legion and the Comrades Club marked their tenth anniversary with a joint celebration, a church parade and a free cinema show for Crich Parish children, who received commemorative medallions and sweets.

During the Second World War the Club raised funds through games and lotteries, bought War Bonds, and supported initiatives like Warship Week, Salute the Soldier, Wings for Victory and the Local Comfort Fund.

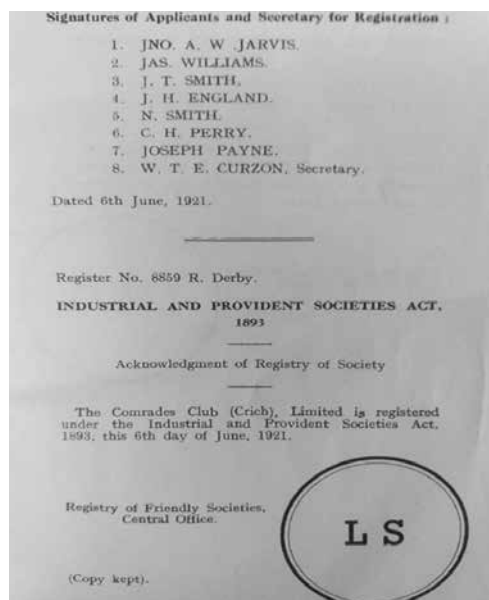
Electric lighting was installed in the Club in 1941, and gas central heating followed in 1950. The Club expanded in 1951 to improve toilet facilities. Ladies' nights started with a trial in 1956, and by 1961 women could join as members; children were allowed on weekends from 1962. A second extension was built in 1964, serving first as a committee room and then as a TV room. It is currently our pool room.

From the 1970s to the early 2000s the Club hosted successful teams in billiards, snooker, darts, dominoes and skittles, and was a popular bingo venue. Currently, only the snooker team remains active. The snooker room was constructed between 1991–1992 and was officially opened by the Crich-born actress Gwen Taylor in 1992.

In the 2000s the building underwent a series of essential renovations and improvements, including new windows, cladding, roof repairs and the addition of an outdoor seating area. Interior upgrades comprised new ceilings, lighting, furniture and bar fittings.

The future

The committee is dedicated to organising a diverse selection of entertainment, including live music performances, discos, weekly quizzes and more recently bingo, as well as various fundraising events. For further details on upcoming activities, please contact the Club directly, visit our Facebook page Crich Comrades Club or website www.crichcomradesclub.com, or look out for our posters displayed throughout the local area.



Images of the first members and the commemorative medallion



2026 National Year of Reading

Celebrating the volunteer readers in our schools

Many years ago, and in the language of that time, it was said that "reading maketh the man". However, recent times have seen a concerning decline in the habit and joy of reading as part of everyday life. This is being addressed this year by the National Year of Reading, a wide-ranging Department for Education and Literacy Trust initiative which is the most ambitious campaign of its type in a generation.

In the Crich Parish schools, however, such efforts knock at an already open door. Each day of every school year is already a stepping stone to literacy.

Volunteering is at the heart of the national initiative, and in our parish pupils at infant and junior level have been assisted in their weekly reading for many years, with time given by selfless volunteer readers who have stepped forward from the community.

Our volunteers, from diverse former workplace backgrounds, support the primary role of parents and schools in helping children to achieve their full reading potential. All learning, however necessary, should be fun, and instilling a

full sense of the enjoyment of reading and the real benefits of literacy is no exception.

Volunteers also gain much from their involvement. For example, Heather Baleri, having retired as a foster carer, now visits Crich Infant School weekly and cultivates the ready enthusiasm of very young children for the world of words, stories, and exploration. "The stories are really exciting," says one youngster – and this, in a nutshell, is what it is all about.

At **Crich Junior School**, Margaret Scott has worked with pupils for many years since her own retirement from high street banking. Margaret's patient work helps the children to navigate the various carefully structured levels of reading material, and she shares the pleasure and sense of achievement every time a higher level is attained. To be greeted at the school gate by a child wanting to be the first to read that day, when only two or so terms previously that same child was reluctant to read at all, is extremely rewarding.

Crich Carr Primary School

enjoys the volunteer assistance of Jo Linthwaite ("Mrs Jo"), a retired teacher who has a particular interest in grammar and comprehension. Jo welcomes the opportunity to provide an additional layer of support, particularly for pupils who require extra help where the time of school colleagues is at a premium.

Fritchley Junior School

is fortunate to have volunteer readers most days of the week. Di Fretwell, another retired teacher, supports teachers and teaching assistants in rolling out the new phonics scheme.

Common to all our volunteers is a sense of satisfaction and inspiration at enabling youngsters to do their very best, while at the same time sharing their fears and aspirations. To bring the historical quotation which opened this article up to date: "Reading does indeed maketh the child, and enables young people to become well informed and knowledgeable citizens of the future."



**GO
ALL
IN.**

**National
Year of
Reading
2026**

A new chapter

As 2026 celebrates the National Year of Reading, it seemed completely fitting that two Crich residents have recently realised their dream of opening a bookshop. Emma Nicol (the person behind the layout of Crich Standard) and Zoe Cliff opened Brown Onion Books at the beginning of March 2026, over in Ashbourne at the start of the Tissington Trail.

Back in 2007 they both attended an Introduction to Bookselling course in London, just as the Kindle and ebooks were about to launch; everyone told them it was a crazy idea and the physical book would be dead in a matter of years. Nearly 20 years on and 10 years since moving to Derbyshire, the idea bubbled to the surface again after finding the perfect location in nearby Ashbourne, a market town that they thought was crying out for an independent bookshop.

The concept behind the name Brown Onion Books is that the humble brown onion is easily grown, abundant and accessible, just like stories/books. It's the world's most universal ingredient and the staple ingredient of many culinary dishes that transport us around the world. Emma and Zoe think that books do the same. Books plant seeds of inspiration, knowledge and learning.

With the world becoming increasingly digital and remote, the aspiration and purpose of the bookshop is to create a space and moment for a simple human exchange of conversation and a smile.

Brown Onion Books stocks a carefully curated range of both fact and fiction and will be engaging with schools and the community to put on author events, run book clubs and create book subscriptions for gifts.

You can support Brown Onion Books in a number of ways:

1. Visit them. The shop is located at: 9 Church Street, Ashbourne DE6 1AE
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They can take payments over the phone/payment link and could deliver the books to you (if you live in the Crich Parish).

3. Order online through Bookshop.org. If you're in the UK, you can order almost any book from them for home delivery. We'll receive 30% of the cover price from any purchase. The books are then delivered to you directly.



Crich Juniors update

This term we've taken a thrilling dive into the incredible world of the Vikings!

The children had an exciting and immersive Viking Metacognition Day, where they channelled their creativity and problem-solving skills into building their own Viking longships. From designing sturdy hulls to decorating shields inspired by Norse patterns, the pupils explored how Vikings travelled, traded and lived. The project sparked lively discussion and thoughtful reflection on how people in the past overcame challenges – just as the children did during their shipbuilding tasks. Now, with their longships proudly on display the pupils are eagerly looking forward to their upcoming visit to the Jorvik Viking Centre in York, where they will see real Viking artefacts and deepen their understanding of this fascinating period in history.

The children were also captivated by a visit from mountaineer Nigel Vardy, who shared his extraordinary experiences of climbing Mount McKinley (now known as Denali) in Alaska. Through dramatic videos and striking photographs, he recounted the extreme conditions he faced and the life-changing impact of severe frostbite. His honesty, resilience and determination left a powerful impression on the pupils, who were inspired by his message about overcoming adversity and learning from challenges. Many were eager to learn more after hearing about

his documentary Frostbitten, available on YouTube, which offers a deeper look into his remarkable story.

On a bright and sunny March afternoon the children eagerly took part in a mini marathon around the park, giving their all as they completed an impressive 12 laps. Though tired by the end they were proud of what they had achieved, and on completion the children were awarded a medal to celebrate their determination and effort. Their enthusiasm extended beyond the running track, too; through voluntary donations the pupils raised £74.15 in support of AIMS (Auto Immune and Multiple Sclerosis), showing wonderful community spirit and compassion for others.

Finally, what an amazing time we had on World Book Day! The children arrived in fantastic costumes as their favourite characters, and some of our teachers didn't disappoint, either – Dame Washalot, Little Red Riding Hood and the Grand High Witch from Roald Dahl's *The Witches* all made an appearance.



Crich Carr School and Nursery update

There have been lots of exciting events and activities happening for the pupils at Crich Carr Church of England Primary School and Nursery.

The school choir took part in the Young Voices event in February. The choir performed harmoniously alongside 5,000 other children in what is always an amazing experience, with parents able to watch and join in from the audience. All the children learned the song 'Power In Me', which also included some pretty slick dance moves. Well done to everyone who was involved – the whole school community is very proud of the children for taking part.

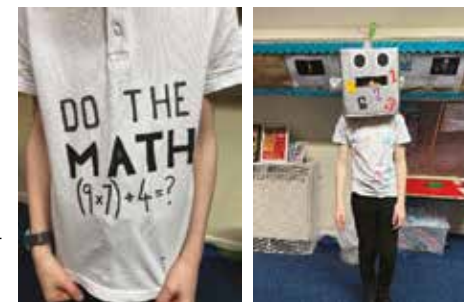
The children also had lots of fun during the NSPCC Number Day. They all looked amazing in their maths-themed outfits.

The Year 6 children had a wonderful time at a wheelchair basketball event in February. Thank you to Anthony Gell Schools Sports Partnership for allowing us to take part in this special event. The children conducted themselves with respect and had a lot of fun along the way.

Class 2 also had a great time at their Viking Day experience at Perlethorpe. The children had the chance to experience a range of different activities including dressing up in different types of Viking clothing and armour, milling wheat and shield practice, which was especially fun for all. The children were also able to draw on their Forest School skills while building Viking dens in the nearby forest.

The school community sported an array of different costumes for World Book Day 2026, including Dog Man, Miss Trunchbull from *Matilda* and Fantastic Mr Fox. We all say a huge thankyou to the parents and carers for helping to make the children's ideas a reality. A lot of hard work and creativity went into the children's costumes – well done!

Crich Carr is accepting Nursery pupils aged 3 and above, and would welcome any prospective parents to get in touch to arrange a visit to the school to see what our amazing school community and facility offers.



What's in a name?

We first experienced the African bush in 1985 in Kenya, and were quickly hooked. Helped by living in Tanzania for four years soon after, and many other trips to the continent over a 40-year period, we subsequently visited almost all of the East and sub-Saharan African countries and their many and varied national parks and reserves.

Many of the animals are the same or similar from Samburu to Ithala, Etosha to the Serengeti, though sometimes the names change. An oryx in Tanzania is a close relation of a gemsbok in Botswana, and so on.

However, collective nouns for groups of animals do usually seem to be relatively consistent – and often highly fitting. Our first and most lasting memory of this is learning that a family of warthogs is known as a **sounder**. Often moving enthusiastically and purposefully (like the White Rabbit in Alice) the name does seem to suit them, and there are many other collective nouns for other species that are just as appropriate – although some are more glamorous than others.

Seeing pink flamingos on a soda lake on the edge of the Rift Valley, their collective noun of a **flamboyance** could not be more suitable, especially when they all take to the air together. Perhaps even more apt is the collective noun for wildebeest. We viewed them gathering on the edge of the Mara River to cross from the Masai Mara to the Serengeti, braving crocodiles in the water and lions and leopards waiting on the other side. They were attracted by the abundance of grass in the Serengeti, but were also at quite some risk. In all their

milling about, no wonder their collective noun is a **confusion**!

We all know about herds, flocks, shoals and even murmurations, but have a go at some others. Which collective nouns apply to the following creatures? Maybe two or more can be right – and remember, the answers may be stranger than you think.

For a group of frogs, is it a ribbit, a hop or an army?

How about a collection of sharks? Are they a frenzy, a shiver or a fright?

It gets harder. Only one of these is incorrect for a group of rabbits: a warren, a fluffle, a gather, a herd or a flick.

Back to Africa, and another of my favourites. Is a group of rhino known as a storm, a crash or a danger? (One less-commonly used word that is also correct is, honestly, a stubbornness!)

Finally, try making up some of your own and then check to see what the actual names are. You might be surprised how close you get. Personally, I like to think of various collective nouns for groups of tourists; I find these can change depending on circumstances!

Have a great summer, everyone.

Tony

Chair

PS: This is the 30th edition of Crich Standard, out of 118 issues in total dating back to the start of CACN. Thank you for your continuing support of what we do!

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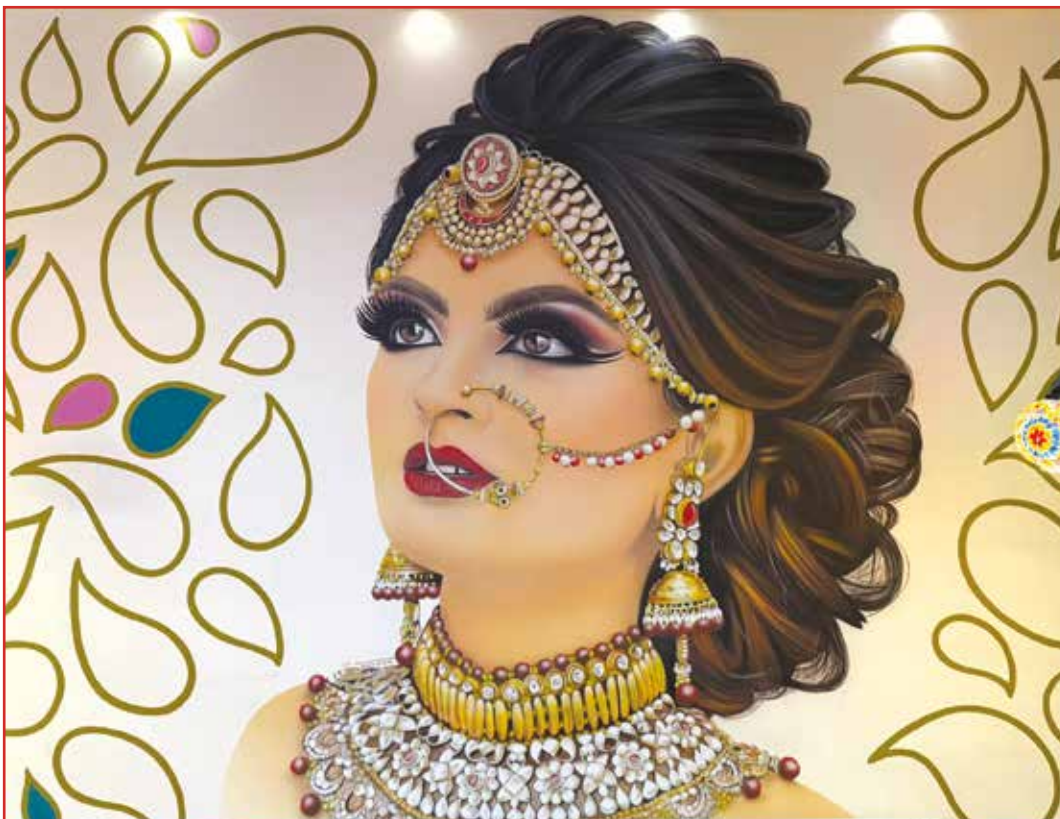


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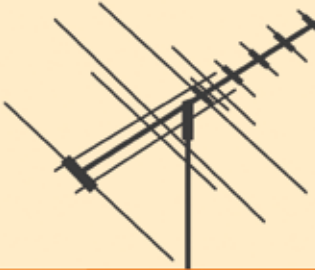
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