



DOBCROSS DIARY

March 2026

Issue No.270 Supporting local clubs, societies and facilities. Produced and delivered free of charge by volunteers.

Dobcross Village Store - listening to what customers want

Our cosy coffee corner is a big hit with young and old alike; it's become a nice place for our younger customers to relax after school, play games, have a drink and chat. But these young customers have also been using our suggestion box and we've listened to what they want- and so we now stock brain lickers, toxic waste, blue lollies and a range of squishy and squeeze stress toys.



"It's great to see our young people visit us after a day in school, they bring so much fun with them and now there is a whole new range of sweets and the stuff they asked for," says Michelle.

Looking forward, the DVS committee has put together a survey of what villagers might want from the store and post office. There is a copy enclosed in this Dobcross Diary and will also be distributed soon via the pub, band club, church and Post Office, where the forms can also be dropped off. We'd really appreciate your thoughts, and the forms will be reviewed in due course.

"We have a new retail group who are evaluating what's in the store, and as Spring approaches we want to be stocking the produce you want. We want people to be honest and open, it not just about more pies, but it's a bit more detailed - who are customers are? Where they come from? How we can encourage more? And in advance of the next share offer we will hopefully be able to act on the results of the

survey and bring more news to members at the Spring meeting," said Nathan, chair of the DVS. "We're coming out of our busiest Winter and now it's time to use the store to stock up on Easter eggs and get that holiday currency," he added.

Recently the store held it's first Members' Loyalty Lottery. Customers who have a loyalty card can buy a raffle ticket and on the first Saturday of every month a draw will be made. The winner takes 50% of the cash collected, second place is 25% of the pot in points to spend in the shop and third place will be donated to the Dobcross Village Community, or the Coffee Shop both of whom will choose a worthy cause to support. Our first winner was Steve O'Mara, who won £200 and in second place was Bob Taylor. More news about the causes supported in due course.



Finally, it's time to once again thank our volunteers who came in for an early spring clean on a Sunday afternoon.

If anyone has just moved into the village or is now interested in volunteering, more information can be obtained in store or on the website www.dobcrossvillagestore.com



The Dobcross Village Community AGM

9th March in Holy Trinity Church at 7.00pm.

Find out what the DVC has done during the last year, who has benefitted from donations and what plans are being made for 2026. New members and new ideas are always welcome. We meet the second Monday of every month.

200 CLUB HTD

February's winner!

The winner of this month's draw with share number 87 is:

Peter Whiffin.

(Promoter: Mr Peter J Whiffin, 22 Nudger Green, Dobcross, Oldham, OL3 5AW)



Thank you again.
A local resident has kindly sponsored this edition of the Diary and he still likes Paddington!

Holy Trinity Church Services

March

| | | |
|--------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|
| Sunday 1 st | 09:30am | All Age Eucharist (CW) |
| Sunday, 8 th | 09:30am | Morning Praise (NPW) |
| Sunday, 15 th | 09:30am | Mothering Sunday Eucharist (CW) |
| Sunday, 22 nd | 09:30am | Lent Eucharist (CW) |
| Sunday, 29 th | 09:30am | Palm Sunday Eucharist (CW) |

Whit Friday: 29th May 2026 - could you spare an hour to help? could you donate?

We hope that you have this year's Whit Friday clearly marked on your calendar. As always it takes a large number of volunteers to enable the event to happen. Thank you so much to those that have agreed to continue to help this year. We do need some additional volunteers, so why not get in contact to offer an hour or two to help, either on or near to the day - it's also a great way to get to know new people in the village.

The roles on the day include:

- ◆ Carrying Church banners in the morning procession.
- ◆ Helping with the children's sports afternoon.
- ◆ Various roles during the band contest itself, eg with booking in, marshalling, board carrying, selling programmes.

And close to the day

- ◆ House to house collections of donations.
- ◆ Making sandwiches for the children's lunches on Thursday.
- ◆ Setting up Church Fields on Thursday evening.

Please contact **Sue Skinner** on purplesue23@gmail.com / 07938 826989.

As always, generous donations from villagers will be very important to help towards costs. Please consider donating by using the QR code for our Go Fund Me page:

gofundme[™]



Scan to donate to Dobcross's fundraiser

DOBCROSS WHIT FRIDAY 2026

To put in your diaries - 2026 DVC Village Fundraisers:

6th June : Back to the 60s with Frankie Valli

17th October : Robbie Williams

21st November : Autumn Quiz

More details coming soon or contact Sue Skinner 07938 826989

This Diary is distributed free to every home in Dobcross and also available via email. It is now also available to read on the Dobcross Shop website, together with a welcome pack: dobcrossvillagestore.com We try to include all village events. If you have any articles for the next issue, please contact Patricia on 01457 878814 or by emailing diary@dobcross.com.

Nature Notes

There are lots of small hazel trees along the canal and river in Saddleworth, and they come into flower as early as January. The yellow catkins open long before the leaves start to emerge and, in spite of the relentless rain of the last two months, they have been shedding their pollen to the wind whenever there has been a brief dry interlude. The female flowers are tiny clusters of sticky red stamens, and when they have been pollinated the nuts will start to develop and ripen by autumn (if the squirrels don't take them before).

Hazel catkins are by far the earliest to develop, but other trees including silver birches also have catkins. These can already be seen on the trees, but won't open out until later in the spring.

Traditionally, field boundaries in upland Saddleworth are dry stone walls, but these are expensive to build or repair these days and there are some hedges in the Diggle valley. There are also increasing numbers of isolated hawthorns which have developed from seeds in bird droppings in fields which are less intensively grazed. They will start coming into leaf soon, but hawthorn blossom doesn't appear until late May. Any hedges covered with white blossom in March or April will be the related blackthorn. Their fruits in the autumn are sloes - impossibly tart to eat but much loved as a flavouring for gin.

Athene Noctua

PROPOSED PERMANENT CLOSURE OF MOORGATE LEVEL CROSSING. UPPERMILL

Thank you to those who responded to the article in the December/January Diary. There have been so many objections that a Public Inquiry is to be held in June and those of us involved with that are preparing Statements of Case which have to be submitted by 23 February.

Network Rail (NR) promised 'engagement' with objectors, but this has not happened and we have been told to await sight of their Statement of Case. We are delighted that Oldham Council has objected to the closure and are in favour of a footbridge. Oldham has also raised serious concerns about the impact on access to Saddleworth during the closure of the road bridge at Greenfield Station. Everybody is supporting the upgrade of the railway, but it is the implications of delivering it that are being questioned.

I am confident we can win on this one because of the requirements of the Transport and Works Act and the precedent set by previous decisions which have rejected closure orders. It is patently obvious to us that the proposal to use a partially upgraded alternative path with 65 steps, a steep gradient, inadequate width, 440 metres longer and an exit onto Oldham Road where there is no proper footway does not meet the requirement of being 'suitable and convenient for existing users'. This should be sufficient for the Secretary of State to reject the closure and agree to a footbridge.

The temporary closure of the crossing expires on 27 February and NR has applied for an 18-month extension which we have opposed and await a decision from the Department of Transport.

Kevin Lawton

DOBCROSS BOWLERS

Not much to report this month and this will be my last article as I hand over to Mike Lucas to continue the updates as we move into the new outdoor bowling season from the end of March.

One really positive piece of news is that we have been successful in a bid to enter a new team into a mixed league in Rochdale. That will take us up to 14 teams and no doubt further information will be provided in due course. In the meantime, we continue with indoor bowling on a Tuesday afternoon and there will be some further work on the green to ensure that it maintains its tip-top condition.

Best Wishes to all our bowlers as we look forward to another successful season in 2026

Kevin Lawton – Chairman 07929 892 657



200 CLUB

'Our community fund'

HTD

Would you like to join Holy Trinity Church Dobcross 200 Club?

April marks the annual renewal of the 200 Club and we would like to invite you and your family and friends to join, either again or for the first time.

The cost of each share remains as it has been for many years. For a one-off payment of £12.00 you would be entered into 12 monthly draws (starting in April) with a chance to win £25 each month, and one additional draw at Christmas with a chance to win £100. All prize winners are notified personally and draw results are published. Each share is allocated an individual number and is present in every draw. Participants must be over 16 years of age.

This year we are continuing the option to complete the membership form online and then make the payment using e-banking.

Please go online at www.coeis.uk/HTD-200Club or use the QR Code to complete the form and then make your payment by e-banking.

If you would rather use a paper form and cheque (or cash), pop into church and grab a few forms for yourself, friends and family from just inside the door. For further details please contact Peter Whiffin on 01457 872386 or Paul Wooding on 07836 248844

(Promoter: Mr Peter J Whiffin, 22 Nudger Green, Dobcross, Oldham, OL3 5AW)



Dobcross Youth Band

As I mentioned in last month's article, we heard of the passing of Ted Griffiths our former MD. On 18th January Jenny and I attended Ted's funeral, along with several ex-members of the band who remembered him well. It was a very moving service filled with glorious music played by the Hammonds Band. A fitting goodbye to a great man.

The band's first event of the year, in February was the splendid Festival of Young Brass held at Halifax Minster. This is an opportunity for local Youth Bands including Elland Starters, Trainers and Youth, Macclesfield Youth and Trainers and Dobcross Trainers and Youth. The minster has fabulous acoustics and the performances of all the bands were entertaining and musical. At events like this we know the future of Brass Banding is in safe hands thanks to the dedication and inspiration of the MD's who work tirelessly with all these young people.

On Friday February 13th the Youth Band performed the iconic first performance of 'Wallace and Gromit, A Grand Day Out' where the band plays the music live along with the film. Played during the first part of the programme, 'Beyond Horizons', narrated by Mia Davies, was '2001:A Space Odyssey', 'Eve of the War', a beautiful solo rendition by

Bethany Oliver of 'A Pacific Melody', followed by the test piece 'Neverland'. The music was absolutely stunning. Thanks to Ryan Broad, for setting up all the tech, film, lights, sound. It was a fabulous evening, with a sell out audience. The band hopes to be performing this programme again at future dates, so watch this space.

The Youth Band is now working hard on the test piece 'Indian Summer' for the North West Area regional championships in Blackpool on March 1st. The Training Band and Beginners are working hard on their programmes for Music for Youth at Rochdale Town Hall on March 7th, and the National Youth Championships to be held at Edgbaston on March 28th. I will hopefully be bringing you all some good results from these contests.

Monies raised over the Christmas period for our designated charities totalled £753.00 which has been divided with £253.00 distributed each to Parkinson's UK, Our Community Wardrobe Oldham, and Breast Cancer Now. Well done to all our children for their efforts and thanks to the community for their donations.

Sue Crook, Chairman



What's on in March

Sunday 1st 5.00 - 8.00 The Live Lounge Open Mic Event. If you'd like to perform, please contact Chris Bell: 07840 219401 or Chris.ct.bell@gmail.com. Dobcross Band Club.

Monday 2nd 7.30 Saddleworth Film Society 'In the Nguyen Kitchen' (12A) French Vietnamese. Millgate Arts Centre, Delph.

Friday 6th & Saturday 7th 7.00 'Girls Like That'.

Saddleworth Players Youth Theatre. Millgate Arts Centre

Saturday 7th 10.00 -12.00 Coffee Shop. Dobcross Band Club. Donations to Oldham Food Bank welcome.

Monday 9th 7.00 DVC AGM Meeting. Holy Trinity Church.

Tuesday 10th 7.30 Dobcross Ladies. Wine tasting by Simon Woods, Holy Trinity Church. Members only.

Friday 13th 7.30 National Theatre Live. Helen Mirren in 'The Audience'. Millgate Arts Centre Delph.

Saturday 14th 7.00 A Night with Elvis. Dobcross Band Club.

Denshaw Cinema. 'Springsteen: Deliver me from Nowhere (15). Dedicated booking number. Please text (preferred) or phone 07845698551

Wednesday 18th 7.30 Saddleworth Concerts Society. 50th Anniversary year. 'Where The Wind Speaks.' Millgate Delph.

Friday 20th 6.00 Murder Mystery Night. Millgate Delph.

Saturday 21st 7.30 Dobcross Silver Band. Millgate Delph

Friday 27th 7.30 Millgate Folk. With multi instrumentalist Ian F Ball. Millgate Arts Centre Delph.

Saturday 28th Denshaw Cinema. 'I Swear'(15) Details above.

Sunday 29th 2.00-4.00 Showcase Brass. Band - TBC

Monday 30th 7.30 Saddleworth Film Society 'OnFalling' (15) Millgate Arts Centre.

Weekly events

Wednesday 7 - 8.30pm Creative writing, in The Swan.

Contact Cathy for more info: cathyrcabb@gmail.com

Tuesday 1-3 Indoor Bowling at the Band Club

Natasha's Morning Classes at the Band Club: 07852 576 107

£8 per session (£14 for 2, if taken in the same week)

Pilates: Monday :9.30-10.15 & 10.30-11.15

Thursday : 10.30-11.15

Saturday 14th March. A Night with Elvis.

The return of the popular Award winning Kirk Kreole

Elvis Tribute artist. Doors open 6.30 - 7pm until late.

Tickets £20 each including sharing platters for your table.

Please phone Adele - 07734 257634 to reserve your tickets.



Its come to our notice via Adele at the Band Club that John Holden has a special birthday in March.



Happy 70th Birthday John from all of us

Dobcross Silver Band

February began with a superb concert from Scottish champions Whitburn Band, great entertainment for a big audience, including several amazing soloists. Once again we were treated to brass music of the very highest quality here in Dobcross!

As usual January and February are dominated by intensive rehearsals for the forthcoming North West Regional Finals in Blackpool, this year on 1st March. After a magnificent 2025 when we were crowned National 3rd Section champions we now are promoted to a highly competitive 2nd Section and are looking forward to the challenge!

We are so grateful to Peter Young and Cheryl Buckley for putting on a quite sensational 'Legends' night at the Band Club, raising funds for the Silver Band. Superb entertainment from Neil Diamond, Elvis and his Magical Band, the Harper Brothers and even a virtuoso appearance from Frank Rothwell OBE. On behalf of all members of the Silver Band we would like to thank all event sponsors and indeed everyone who supported this memorable occasion!



Later in March we have a concert at the beautiful Millgate Theatre in Delph. Please come along and support this. Tickets are on sale now via the Millgate website, a discounted price available to all our Club members.

After Easter the Contest season will be with us again, more details will follow in the April article, and Whit Friday preparations are already underway. As we reflect on a memorable anniversary year we still have Commemorative Coins available to purchase together with other merchandise such as key rings badges and tote bags! Please ask at the Club.

The Silver Band is in a great place at the moment. With Jason our Musical Director at the helm we know the Band will be well prepared for the challenge in Blackpool and we will represent our village with pride as always.

Thank you as always for your ongoing support..

Andy Black (Silver Band Chairman) on 07907 635397

Saddleworth Gardening Club

Meet in the Civic Centre in Uppermill

at 1.30pm - 3.30pm

Guests are always welcome and there is a charge of £3 for non members which includes refreshments.

Monday March 2nd

Margaret Herbert - garden designer - Spring into Life

As spring arrives, this talk takes a close look at the world around us, 'waking up' after the winter, and think about for the year ahead as we try not to rush too hastily into seed sowing!

Queries or further information from Lesley 07784793410



Dobcross Village Store and Post Office – Community Survey

We're a community-owned Village Store & Post Office and would love to hear your views. Whether you use the shop regularly, occasionally, or not at all, your answers will help us improve it for everyone. The questionnaire is really quick, will take just a moment or two to complete, and is completely anonymous.

Q1. Which best describes your current use of the Dobcross Village Store and Post Office?

- I use it regularly (once a week)
 - I rarely use it
 - I use it occasionally (once a month)
 - I don't currently use it
-

Q2. What do you mainly use it for at the moment? Please tick all that apply. (If you don't use it, please skip this question)

- Post Office services
 - Everyday essentials (milk, bread, eggs etc.)
 - Banking
 - Fruit & Vegetables
 - Cupboard staples (pasta, beans etc)
 - Wine or Beer
 - Biscuits, Crisps & Confectionery
 - Fresh pies and pastries
 - Household Cleaning products
 - Newspapers / magazines
 - Local products e.g. honey, piccalilli
 - Community Corner, Coffee Machine
 - Other:.....
 -
-

Q3. If you don't use it much or at all, what are the main reasons? Please tick any that apply.

- I usually shop elsewhere out of habit
- Opening hours don't suit me
- Prices feel higher than alternatives
- I didn't realise what services were available
- It doesn't stock what I usually need
- Queues / Service
- Parking / access isn't convenient
- I use online services instead
- Other:
-



Dobcross Village Society Ltd

The 'Dobcross Village Society Ltd' is a Community Benefit Society registered with the Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. Registration no. 9169. Trading as the Dobcross Village Store and Post Office. A member of The Plunkett Foundation.



Funded by UK Government



Q4. What would encourage you to use the shop more often? (Please tick any that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> More convenient opening hours | <input type="checkbox"/> Better range of everyday essentials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Better value on key items | <input type="checkbox"/> More local produce, gifts or cards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clearer information about services | <input type="checkbox"/> Refill facilities for toiletries/cleaning products |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improved loyalty scheme / special offers | <input type="checkbox"/> More Community events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Home Delivery Service | <input type="checkbox"/> Nothing would change my usage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |
| | |
-

Q5. Overall, how do you feel about the Dobcross Village Store and Post Office?

- Very positive Quite positive Neutral Negative
-

Q6. Is there one thing you would most like to see improved or introduced?

.....

.....

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.....

Q7. Are you a Member and/or live in Dobcross or nearby?

- Member Loyalty member Dobcross Nearby village in Saddleworth
-

You can place completed forms in collection boxes at the Post Office, the Band Club, the Swan Inn or at Dobcross Church. **Thanks to all for your kind help and generous support.**



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