

News

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Community awards shortlist announced

North Yorkshire County Council has drawn up a shortlist of entries for its new community awards scheme which recognises and celebrates voluntary work carried out by individuals and organisations countywide.

The shortlist has been selected from 114 nominations the council received from a diverse range of community groups and organisations from across the county, including community cafes, day centres and cultural groups.

The judging panel has been particularly impressed with the quality of the nominees, all of whom carry out great work within their communities. All nominations were judged on how the individual, organisation or project has:

- Tackled issues that affect people living in the North Yorkshire County Council area;
- Made a positive difference to their community;
- Helped get other people involved;
- Inspired others;
- Tried new things;
- Had a lasting impact;
- Worked with partners; and
- Made the most of funds available.

"We have been delighted not only with the quantity of entries but also the outstanding quality", said County Councillor David Jeffels, North Yorkshire's chairman. "Selecting a shortlist was not an easy task. The entries prove just how much hard work is put into helping our communities in North Yorkshire.

"The County Council has always recognised that community involvement is key to the excellent quality of life we enjoy in the county and these excellent entries have proved it. This county-wide competition is demonstrating the valuable contribution so many people make to supporting North Yorkshire's residents of all ages and helping them appreciate just what a splendid part of the country we live in."

The shortlist is made up of:

Best community group

Pink Fluffy Ketchup Covered Flower Ponies (Craven)

Parish of Hemingbrough Historical / Heritage Society (Selby)



Osmotherley Community Group (Hambleton)

Best community project

Corrina and Friends Homeless and Vulnerable Project (Harrogate)
The Hovingham Village Market (Ryedale)
Clapham Village Store / Clapham Community Shop Ltd (Craven)

Volunteer of the year

Kevin Axelby (Ryedale)
John Scoble (Ryedale)

Ian Robinson (Richmondshire)

Young people volunteering

Lucy Taylor (Craven)
Easingwold School Youthy Peer Mentors (Hambleton)
North Yorkshire Railway Junior Volunteers Group (Ryedale & Scarborough)

The judging panel includes the council's Chairman and Deputy Chairman, young people, and representatives from the voluntary and business sectors. Judges have interviewed all the shortlisted entrants, and the winners will be announced at a ceremony to be held during the North Yorkshire Wider Partnership Conference at The Pavilions in Harrogate on 16 October. The winners will receive a prize of £1,000 for their project, group or a nominated local charity.

As well as the individuals and groups nominated, the council recognises that there are many more fantastic volunteers in North Yorkshire, all of whom carry out a vital role in our communities.

The full list of community awards nominees is available on the North Yorkshire County Council website at <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/communityawards>.

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Notes for editors:

Further details of each shortlisted entry can be found below.

Best community group

[Pink Fluffy Ketchup Covered Flower Ponies \(Craven\)](#)

Team Ketchup is the only children's comic collective designing, drawing, printing and selling their own comics in the country. They offer a way for young people in Craven to gain access to the arts through involvement with the British Comic Awards and Thought Bubble Arts Festival, putting them in contact with professional artists and creators.

The team run a number of free events, which are open to everyone from Skipton and the wider area. They encourage children and adults to join in comic-jams and drawing events, which not only develop creative skills, but also provide them with business and entrepreneurial skills. Rural isolation is a risk for many of the children from the area; working with Team Ketchup gives them the opportunity to experience time in Leeds and at Thought Bubble where they meet people from all over the country.

Parish of Hemingbrough Historical / Heritage Society (Selby)

The society turned a disused petrol station at the entrance to Hemingbrough into a beautiful memorial garden. They purchased the site for £1 from the Crown and had the old petrol station demolished and the petrol tanks made safe.

The entrance to the village is now much improved, with raised beds, over 2,000 bulbs planted, accessible pathways and seating, a dramatic memorial stone, stone walls, fencing and rails. Beautiful walks are now accessible with filled in historic ponds now teeming with life.

The group have also developed an on-going programme of educational talks to inspire young people about active citizenship, what communities can achieve and the importance of local heritage.

Osmotherley Community Group (Hambleton)

The group tackle issues of social isolation and loneliness in a rural community. They provide opportunities for social interaction between people of all ages, including young children and families, the elderly, recently bereaved, men living alone, those with recent health issues, and the housebound.

Through its monthly coffee mornings and soup lunches, the group enables people from a variety of ages and backgrounds to come together and get involved. They provide opportunities for social interaction between people of all ages, including young children and families, the elderly, recently bereaved, men living alone, those with recent health issues, and the housebound. They also build community links by setting up events that expand the local volunteer base and promote opportunities for volunteers to develop their skills.

As well as tackling issues of social isolation and loneliness in a rural community, the group raises money for a wide range of local and national charities.

Best community project

Corrina and Friends Homeless and Vulnerable Project (Harrogate)

After nearly losing her home when her partner had cancer, Corrina set up the Corrina's Homeless and Vulnerable Project to support residents who are forced to sleep rough or can't afford food to

feed their families. The project revealed the scale of hidden homelessness in the town with nearly 150 referrals to its No Second Night Out scheme, with a café providing nutritious, hot meals to those in need.

The project and the cafe are making a real difference to the community. Between 1 May and the end of June, the cafe has served 1186 meals to the homeless and vulnerable, and have had approximately 2400 customers through the doors. There are now over 35 volunteers that work in the café; all food is donated by local businesses and the general public. The project also supplies furniture for local people in need who require items to furnish their home.

The Hovingham Village Market (Ryedale)

The market is a monthly social focus for locals in Hovingham to come together and meet their friends, which helps to combat rural isolation, particularly of the elderly. At the same time, it provides a place where they can buy fresh local produce, crafts, which also supports and nurtures local businesses.

The market is a space where local community groups can run community cafes and stalls, allowing their volunteers to raise funds, promote their organisation and recruit new members. To date these groups have been able to raise over £50,000.

Local produce is high on the market's agenda, with quality, value for money and affordable local options available. The market is a not-for-profit group and surpluses are donated to local community groups.

Clapham Village Store / Clapham Community Shop Ltd (Craven)

In May 2014, Clapham Village Shop closed. Prior to closing, the owner approached a group of residents to suggest taking over the shop as a community led project. Villagers were invited to meetings to discuss the feasibility and all were behind the scheme. Being a rural village, some residents had relied heavily on the shop and its post office services, so being without it resulted in some hardship.

The shop reopened in March 2015, after a formal feasibility study was carried out, during which the volunteers liaised with Ingleborough Estate, who own the premises, raising the necessary funding for the project.

On opening day, the shop was busy with residents, and it continues to be well supported, to the extent that targets have not only been met, but surpassed. The shop has become a social hub within the village, resulting in new friendships and paid employment, and local produce is sourced where possible, so local suppliers also benefit from the project.

Volunteer of the year

Kevin Axelby (Ryedale)

Despite dealing with a number of health issues, Kevin set up an IT suite at the Next Steps Mental Health Resource Centre, where he helps people who want to get back to work. As an IT Buddy, he teaches people how to use the computers and iPads, as well as acting as an advocate for clients at

appointments. Kevin has helped a number of people to find jobs and has supported homeless people with online applications. The service users look up to him as a confidante and a support mechanism.

Kevin's on-going support has given people confidence to use computers, they have made friends whilst at Next Steps and become volunteers. He has now become a trustee and is heavily involved with the organisation's partnership working. He also visits people in their homes, hospital, provides advocacy support, transport and provides general support by taking people to appointments.

John Scoble (Ryedale)

After retiring from his post as a primary school head teacher, John read that learning a new musical instrument helps to ward off Alzheimer's and memory loss and decided to learn to play the ukulele. Eighteen months ago, in the Ryedale area, he initiated a 'Music in the Community' project, aimed at all ages, with Inclusion being its driving force. No previous musical experience was necessary!

With seven ukulele sessions every week, he now provides free ukulele tuition to a variety of different groups in the Ryedale and Scarborough areas (e.g. Sight Support). These groups have gone on to perform in public, helping to raise thousands of pounds for charity and entertain many hundreds of people. John's love of music and his enthusiasm have enriched the lives of a large number of people aged nine to 90.

Ian Robinson (Richmondshire)

As a Parish Councillor, Ian accepted the task of developing and documenting an effective resilience scheme for Scorton Village, working with the county council and other agencies to ensure that emergency plans were in place to help the residents and in particular the elderly, deal with issues such as flood, severe weather, power loss and events that cause people to leave their homes.

This was extended to include support to the elderly and vulnerable residents during the winter months, helping them with tasks like snow clearing, collecting medication, shopping and going to the doctor. With a small team of volunteers, Ian now has a gritting team in place and has set up a village befriending scheme, Scorton Community Buddies, with the aim of reducing social isolation and loneliness in Scorton.

Young people volunteering

Lucy Taylor (Craven)

Lucy has engaged in the Football Futures project at Skipton Juniors FC, which gives young people aged 12-24 the opportunity to engage in volunteering in football leadership roles. Aged just 14, Lucy became a qualified football referee and now regularly referees grassroots football in the local area. She has also completed the Junior Football Leaders Award and has gone on to coach alongside her refereeing, working with the u12 girls' football team at Skipton Juniors FC, as well as assisting with coaching football to the younger students at The Skipton Academy.

She is an inspiration to the young players she works with, especially since there are a limited number of female role models in football.

Easingwold School Youth Peer Mentors (Hambleton)

The peer mentors help other young people with many issues: the transition from primary to secondary school, confidence and self-esteem issues, family issues, socialisation, illness, sexuality and gender, equality, resilience, responsibility.

The group are now recognised as a support within school and are written into policies directly. The mentors do a lot of work around self-esteem and can signpost their mentees to other agencies when needed; because of their age and the trust built between them, they have much success in this area.

North Yorkshire Railway Junior Volunteers Group (Ryedale & Scarborough)

The Junior Volunteers Group provides volunteering opportunities for young people aged 10 to 16 on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. In doing so, it supports the activities of NYMR and helps to maintain the infrastructure. The railway provides employment for a good number of local people and without volunteer support from people of all ages, these jobs would not exist.

Many ex-junior volunteers stay on to help run the railway as full volunteers. So far they have become firemen, loco cleaners, travelling ticket inspectors, guards, booking office clerks, support staff for special events, station maintenance workers and so on. Five ex-junior volunteer have become apprentices for Network Rail or other railway companies, three have become apprentices on NYMR and one has joined the Navy on the basis of their experience as junior volunteers and assistant supervisors (16 and 17 year olds).