



SETTLE AREA SWIMMING POOL

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2026



One of the flags due to displayed by the pool boundary wall

PUT OUT MORE FLAGS

Visitors to Settle Pool will soon be greeted by a display of flags advertising the range of activities they can enjoy at the centre. Four advertising banners are due to go up along the carpark wall promoting the pool, gym, fitSpace and the café. The move is part of a promotional exercise to draw attention to the full extent of what the pool has to offer.

New posters are also in the pipeline and the local hospitality sector – holiday cottages, campsites etc are being offered leaflets promoting the pool so that

visitors this summer will be fully aware of what we have to offer – especially in days when it is not fit for walking the hills. Copies are available from the reception desk.

We are also revamping the website and have recently upgraded the booking system.

Meanwhile, use of the centre is increasing and membership now stands at close to 200 – with members able to enjoy full use of the gym, classes and the pool.

NO PRICE RISES THIS SPRING

All prices at Settle Pool are being held for the second year running. The annual customer survey, conducted earlier this year, again showed that a number of pool users drew attention to the fact that swim prices at Settle are higher than local authority pools in places like Skipton and Clitheroe. The reason is that unlike council-run centres we receive no regular public subsidy. We have to cover our costs from admissions charges and crucially from the income we receive from our fund-raising shops.

This year thanks to the efforts of the volunteers who staff the shops and, especially, the new unit, our income from that source has increased substantially, meaning we are able to cover rising costs, without an increase in admission charges.

We have also seen an increase usage of the pool and, especially, a rise in numbers attending the classes in fitSpace. Membership has risen too and it is worth remembering the best way to get value for money is by becoming a member and making regular use of the facilities.

PAINTING THE POOL HALL BLUE



The newly painted pool hall

Earlier this spring a group of staff and volunteers gave up part of their weekend and took up paint brushes to give the pool hall a much-needed coat of light blue paint. The pool was closed for the day but the effect was a bright new hall and the chance for a good spring clean. Thanks to all who took part.

PRIMARY GALA -A BIG SUCCESS

“This is why we volunteer to keep the pool going” that was the response of pool trustee chair Chris Hirst after a morning in which 100 children, aged 7-11 from

eight primary schools across North Craven came to Settle Area Swimming Pool to take part in their annual swimming gala.

Providing a safe facility in which local children could learn to swim was the prime motivation behind the efforts to build Settle pool more than fifty years ago. It remains the reason why our volunteers work all year round at our fundraising shops and unit.

The value of the work was never more apparent than in the event, held in early spring, where young children from this large rural area were able not just to swim but to participate in a fun event competing in different disciplines against other schools in the area. Eight schools took part in what has become an annual event. They were Hellifield, Giggleswick, Long Preston, Settle, Kirkby Malham, Bentham, Austwick and Ingleton.

Finding a suitable date for the event and organising transport for the 12 participants from each school is a formidable task that falls to Marcus Harrison, the Craven Primary Clusters Schools sports co-ordinator. But on this occasion Marcus was unable to attend so the organisation on the day fell to Settle College year-12 student Jess Oakey, who is training to be a life guard and is hoping for a career in sports management. She had helped in a previous event and was able to recruit fellow sixth formers to help on the day.

The event consists of races of a single length each in three disciplines, breaststroke, crawl and backstroke plus a relay event. Recording the results and announcing the winners was part of Jess’s job, but the challenge came when one of the coaches bringing participants got delayed and the programme had to be revised. Arranging the changing facilities, school by school, was a further challenge. Marcus said: “I want to thank Jess for doing a great job but also want to give a big shout out to Tash and the team at the pool for letting us use the facilities.”

Praise also came from Ken Larkins, pool treasurer, who is a qualified swimming referee, who was present at the event and commended the organisation. The final word goes to Jess who thought her greatest achievement was that there were no tears from the participants.

CUSTOMER SURVEY 2026



You praised our friendly staff

In early 2026 we conducted our second annual survey of pool users and supporters. We received 154 responses. Whilst this was down on the number received for the previous survey in 2025, it still provided a good sample.

The most common comment was that you like the pool and are happy with the way we do things. Many of you commented on the friendliness and professionalism of the staff, which we appreciate. You like the facilities and the variety of sessions both in the pool and the classes that we offer in fitSpace.

A number of you were critical of the fact that some areas, especially the changing village and showers, were not always kept as clean as you would like. We acknowledge the problem and are doing what we can to raise standards. It is difficult to keep up with cleaning when the place gets so much use, but we have now introduced regular deep clean sessions and are confident this will make a difference. We also recently spent a day on major repainting and cleaning to repair damage to the walls of the pool hall and the showers (*see above*). We hope you will notice the difference, but do let us know of particular problems you encounter.

This year there were fewer comments regarding water temperature. Once again, we do our best to meet the needs both of children learning to swim, who need warmer water, and lane swimmers who want lower temperatures.

Other comments concerned the timetable: inevitably our session and class times will not suit everyone but

with increased usage, classes are often full to capacity, and the introduction of new sessions such as tai chi, we think we are getting better at meeting customers' requirements.

Some customers asked for longer opening hours at weekends and ask that we open on days such as New Year's Eve. Our assessment is that whilst such sessions might attract some users they are unlikely to attract the sort of numbers to justify opening, but we do keep looking at our opening hours and how best to meet customer requirements.



We share the carpark with the college

Some of you commented on difficulties finding parking space. We recognise that some customers arriving by car find it hard to find a space to park at busy times. Unfortunately, we do not have control over the carpark. It is owned by North Yorkshire Council and shared between us and Settle College, who need it for the coaches used by Bibby's for school transport. We are looking at what we might do to improve the situation but there is no obvious answer.

A number of you reminded us of your long-term ambitions for facilities such as a sauna, learner pool and climbing wall. We share those ambitions and hope in the long term to extend facilities, but for now our priorities have to be to ensure we continue to cover our costs and pay off the loans that made possible the major development undertaken in the early 2020s.

We appreciate your feedback, welcome your praise and will attempt to meet criticisms as best we can.

Do not forget you can give us your feedback throughout the year, either in writing at the pool

reception or by email at info@settlefloatingpool.co.uk.

You can find a fuller review of the 2026 customer survey on the website at [\(link\)](#)

RUNNING ON SUNSHINE



Pool manager Tash Ward with the new batteries

Grants from North Yorkshire Council and npower have funded the installation of solar batteries at the rear of the pool building. These enable us to make maximum use both of our solar panels and cheap electricity that fill the batteries in the early hours of the morning.

By monitoring our electricity use following the installation of the batteries we were able to see that by topping up the batteries at the cheap rate we did not use any full price power until well after 10am – by which time in the summer even on dull days our solar batteries will be providing all the electricity that we need.

MORE VOLUNTEERS WANTED

With our fund-raising shops thriving and the unit at Sowarth Industrial Estate exceeding all expectations we are now in need of more volunteers to ensure we can cope with the number of donations we receive and help keep the pool afloat.

Whether it is working on the till at one of the three centres for a few hours a week, or sorting goods, the tasks are varied and interesting. You also get to work with a great group of people and of course help the

pool. Think you could assist us? Get in touch with Anne Galloway for details at anne.gal@hotmail.com

LEARN TO SWIM

Places on our popular learn to swim courses fill up fast so whether you are looking for a place for your child or are an adult want to learn, or just improve your techniques check out our website at

BIKE AROUND TONY

A second-hand bicycle purchased for just £20 from one of the pool's fund-raising outlets played a key role in a four month, two thousand journey round Britain, by a Clapham based former police inspector who used the trip to raise funds for people suffering in war-torn Ukraine.

You can read Tony Walker's amazing story in the on the website Craven Herald website at [Retired Yorkshire Dales police inspector walks, cycles 2,000 miles | Craven Herald](#) .

You too can also get great bargains at our fund-raising outlet.

Tony is now planning a trip around Ireland – again accompanied by the bike.



Tony Walker with bike and dog

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