



Official Programme

**Ilkley
Carnival
2026**
CHILDREN'S BOOKS

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WELCOME TO THE ILKLEY CARNIVAL

**Ilkley
Carnival
2026
CHILDREN'S BOOKS**

Welcome to the 2026 Ilkley Carnival!

With 2026 marking the National Year of Reading, this year's theme – *'Children's Books'* – feels like the perfect fit. Expect a parade bursting with colour, creativity and imagination, showcasing incredible talent within our community.

If you've never seen the parade before, don't miss it. It sets off from Grove Road at 11am on May Day, winding through town to the Carnival Showground opposite the Lido. A huge thank you to everyone involved – the time, effort and craftsmanship behind the costumes is extraordinary. It's the highlight of the day, and for many, the highlight of the year.

This year, we're adding even more atmosphere in town before the parade begins, with live music to entertain the crowds. Thanks to the Ilkley Live team for assisting with this – and do check out their website for details of upcoming events, including the Busking Festival on 8 May and Night of the Blues on 23 May.

We have some wonderful entertainment on the Showground this year. Headline acts 'The BMX Show' and 'The Mini Pony Show' bring very different performances to the main arena. Rosie from 'The Mini Pony Show' first appeared at the Carnival as part of 'The Galloping Acrobatics' way back in 2013 and reappeared again in 2019. We are excited to see the new act, which promises audience participation. 'The BMX Show' are one of the most spectacular bike acts in the country, featuring Red Bull athletes performing breath-taking tricks and stunts. Don't miss them!

Of course, it wouldn't be Ilkley Carnival without the appearance of stalwarts 'Owl Adventures' Flying Show and Ilkley Gym Club. 'Owl Adventures' first appeared back in 2012 and it wouldn't be Carnival day without seeing their outstanding act. There is always lots of audience participation and a chance to see the birds up close throughout the day. We are so lucky to have the multi-award-winning Ilkley Gym Club on our doorstep. Nic and the team first appeared in 2019 and have performed in every weather imaginable since, never letting us down for which we are so grateful. We're also excited to introduce something new this year, as Ashleigh Murphy brings a search dog demonstration to the arena – and yes, the audience will be part of the action!

There's plenty more to enjoy once you're on the Showground, with free entertainment including Punch & Judy, a magician, circus skills, a craft tent and much more.

Music has always been a massive part of Ilkley Carnival and we love that we can help showcase local acts. The 'Ilkley Rocks' stage first appeared as a dedicated music area in 2014 and we added the 'Acoustic Marquee' in 2018. We have seen some outstanding performances over the years. Local band 'Apollo Junction' appeared in 2016, in what they tell me was their first outdoor event. Since then, they have gone on to record four albums and will headline the River Stage at this year's Isle of Wight Festival. There are performances taking place all afternoon and having seen '13th Day' perform last year I would advise catching them.

It's set to be a fantastic day – so come down, get involved, and enjoy everything Ilkley Carnival has to offer!

Andrew Stacey
Chairman, Ilkley Carnival



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WHAT'S ON

Ilkley
Carnival
2026
CHILDREN'S BOOKS

The Parade

Starts at 11.00am
on The Grove

ON THE FIELD

Discover Ilkley Arena

11.45am – 12.30pm

Parade, Presentations

12.40pm – 1.00pm

The Mini Pony Show

1.05pm – 1.35pm

BMX Show

1.40pm – 2.10pm

Owl Adventures Flying Show

2.15pm – 2.30pm

Ilkley Gym Club

2.35pm – 2.55pm

The Mini Pony Show

3.00pm – 3.30pm

BMX Show

3.35pm – 3.50pm

Ashleigh Murphy with
Boss & Ozzy performing a
Search Dog Demonstration

3.55pm – 4.15pm

The Mini Pony Show

4.20pm – 4.50pm

Owl Adventures Flying Show

Dog Show

1.00pm – 3.30pm

Ilkley Rocks Stage

12.00pm – 4.00pm

Live music

Acoustic Stage

12.00pm – 4.00pm

Live music



THE BMX SHOW



MINI PONY SHOW



FALCONRY DISPLAY

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DOG SHOW

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The classes include:

- Class 1 Most Fabulous Fella –
(Best Male Dog) 1+ years
- Class 2 Loveliest Lady –
(Best Female Dog) 1+ years
- Class 3 Cool Pup –
(Best Puppy) up to 1 year
- Class 4 Best Furry Family
(2 or more dogs)
- Class 5 Best Rescue
All ages
- Class 6 Golden Oldie
8+ years
- Class 7 Best Trick
All ages
- Class 8 Happiest Dog
All ages
- Class 9 Scruffiest dog
All ages
- Class 10 Best young handler
All ages
- Class 11 Best in Show

Each class winner is entitled to enter the line up to compete for best in show



Ears up and tails wagging! Get ready for the tenth exciting year of Ilkley Carnival's Fun Dog Show.

All furry friends and their owners are invited to join in the fun, proudly sponsored by Tyler James and Aireborough Skip Hire.

Our judges are on the lookout for the perfect team bond between dog and owner, celebrating happy, healthy, and well-rounded pets.

All class winners will compete for the ultimate title of Best in Show, rounding off this tail-wagging event in style.

Thanks to Tyler James Pet Supplies of Ilkley, there are plenty of pawsome prizes, rosettes, and treats up for grabs, plus a special thank you to Maria Walters for stepping in as today's judge.

To enter, simply visit the tent next to the dog show ring to register from 12 noon. Show starts at 1.00pm and all classes are £2.00 per entry.





MOORFIELD

SCHOOL

Moorfield School and Nursery in Ilkley has joined Bradford Grammar School in a move that secures the school's long-term future and strengthens independent education across the region. The partnership brings Moorfield into the BGS Foundation while retaining its distinctive ethos, leadership and identity.

An outstanding independent school and nursery for children ages 2 to 11

We are extremely proud of our outstanding school and impressive facilities. Our events are a wonderful opportunity for you to meet us and discover what the new partnership with the Bradford Grammar School Foundation can offer prospective families and children.

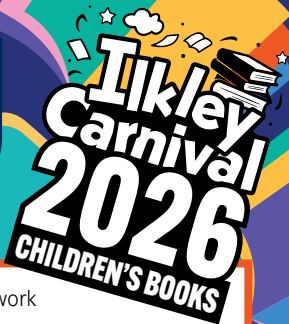
**Whole School
Welcome Evening
Tuesday 19th May
2026 6pm – 7.30pm**

Sign up today!



**Bradford
Grammar
School**

CREATIVE COMPETITION



Four young people were carnival competition winners after creating artwork reflecting our 2026 Children's Books theme!

Burley Woodhead's Flora Steel (6), Saskia White (15) from Ilkley, Lily Cherrill (13) from Bradford Grammar and Sasha Wilkinson (11) from Burley Oaks Primary were voted category winners in this year's Ilkley Carnival Creative Competition, with Sasha announced overall winner, securing her design on the cover of this year's event programme.

The art enthusiasts were among over 350 local pupils who created incredible carnival artwork. The competition received its highest ever number of entries from local schools including Addingham, Ilkley and Burley-in-Wharfedale and every child involved should be very proud of their work, which is on display in Booths, Clarendon Fine Art and other Ilkley retailers.

Sponsors Bradford Grammar School donate the prizes and have invited Sasha and her classmates to an arts class in June.

BGS Head of Art Sarah Horsfield said: "Sasha's entry is a stunning blend of children's classics cleverly intertwined with Ilkley's iconic Cow and Calf rocks. We particularly enjoyed the BFG representing Rombald behind the moors and the parade of children's book characters processing along The Grove!"

Describing Flora's 5-8 category entry the judges said: "We're impressed by Flora's imagination and loved her signposting of Ilkley alongside storybook places with characters set against the backdrop of a vibrant Oz-inspired rainbow."

Regarding Saskia's 12-16 category entry they said: "This stunning artwork weaves Ilkley's White Wells into an Elmer-styled patchwork moors with vibrantly illustrated storybook characters within and bursting from a detailed, open book."

Announcing Lily's Special Commendation Award, they said: "The discreet bookshelf nod to classic children's stories meant every time we looked at Lily's creation, we saw something different! The perspective and creativity is impressive."



Flora Steel



Saskia White



Lily Cherrill



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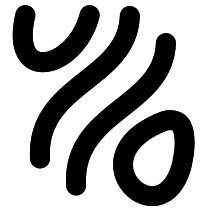


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ILKLEY CARNIVAL IN THE COMMUNITY

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The day before Ilkley Carnival once again delivered something special, as over 100 children and families from the LS29 and AWARE support groups enjoyed two hours of free rides, generously provided by Marshalls Amusements/Ridezone, operators of the Carnival funfair.

This much-loved tradition began in 2012, when LS29 was chosen as the Carnival's main beneficiary. Its success was immediate and it has remained a cherished part of Carnival weekend ever since. Support from local business Aireborough Skip Hire, alongside Marshalls Amusements/Ridezone, is a wonderful example of the community spirit at the heart of Ilkley Carnival.

Penny Southgate from AWARE said "This event means so much to the children and families. Some would find the main Carnival day overwhelming, so this gives them the chance to enjoy the fun in a calmer setting. It's also precious time together as families. Many have asked me to pass on their thanks to Darran, Deana and all the ride operators." Darran Church of Marshalls Amusements added "All the ride operators love being part of this Sunday event. This is our twelfth year, and it's incredibly rewarding to see the joy it brings. Ilkley Carnival is a fantastic family occasion, and we're proud to play our part."

The ownership of Aireborough Skip Hire has recently changed but we are delighted the new owners have continued to support this important element, which helps to make Ilkley carnival so special. Thank you and please support Aireborough Skip Hire in return for this wonderful gesture.

Andrew Stacey

Chairman, Ilkley Carnival



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TUESDAY

Ilkley

Rugby Club
Stacks Field, Denton Road,
Ilkley,
LS29 0BZ
9.30am

WEDNESDAY

Burley in Wharfedale

Community Library
Grange Road,
Burley in Wharfedale,
LS29 7HD
5.00pm and 6.30pm

THURSDAY

Guiseley

Baptist Church
59a Oxford Road,
Guiseley,
LS20 8AB
5.00pm and 6.30pm

Contact Sarah for details of how you may be entitled to a **12 week Countdown FREE** and to stay up to date with special offers, recipes and success stories.

Sarah 07512 717321

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BENEFICIARIES

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Welcome back to Ilkley Carnival! We're delighted you're joining us in our annual celebration of community! We hope you have a wonderful time and enjoy revelling in all our amazing town has to offer.

The carnival committee dedicates time and energy to providing a spectacular event for the local town, surrounding areas and visitors from further afield. This year's event is packed with activities and attractions to enjoy while helping raise much needed funds for local projects which engage and enrich our community.

Every year local groups and organisations enjoy a share of the profits generated by Ilkley Carnival and since 2012, we have distributed almost £170k to local groups and organisations.

In a break from the usual primary beneficiary format where 50% of profits are donated to one local charity or organisation, the committee this year pledged to offer more financial support to those groups which support on carnival weekend. It's another way of saying thank you for the incredible support and hard work that local people dedicate towards making Ilkley Carnival happen.

If you think you could offer your time, energy, ideas, skills and/or enthusiasm towards making next year's Ilkley Carnival the best and most impactful yet, please contact our Chair Andrew Stacey at chair@ilkleycarnival.org. You will be welcomed with open arms and become part of a close team working towards providing profits to share between worthwhile causes and a much-loved annual event. It's hard work, but such a lot of fun and friends have been made for life!!

Here's to a successful day for us all and to planning ahead for Ilkley Carnival 2027!

Suzanne Watson
Ilkley Carnival



Welcome back to Ilkley Rocks!

Welcome to another Ilkley Rocks which encompasses the main Ilkley Rocks stage and also the Acoustic Marquee, celebrating live music in our community. The first Ilkley Rocks took place in 2014 at the Hollygarth Social Club before moving to the main Carnival site the year after. It then expanded to encompass the two performance areas and last year it grew again with a larger acoustic marquee. This year promises even more exciting acts, fresh faces, and a few surprises along the way to keep everyone entertained and inspired throughout the day.

The Carnival Committee are immensely grateful to the team from the School Of Rock & Media (SORM) and particularly to Tony and John for their support of Ilkley Rocks. SORM provide all of the equipment

plus expertise in the setting up, sound and running of the two stages. We are extremely lucky to have such professionals dedicating their time for free to the benefit of our community.

The idea of this little corner of Ilkley Carnival is to showcase some of the fantastic local talent and we have certainly done that over the years. In 2016 Leeds based indie band 'Apollo Junction' made their outside venue debut at Ilkley Carnival and as they say, the rest is history! Apollo Junction's third album reached number 68 in the charts. We like to think that first performance at 'Ilkley Rocks' set them on their way...

Showcasing local talent is important, particularly in giving younger performers

the opportunity to be able to perform before a large crowd in Ilkley. Please do check out the talent on both stages and if it inspires you to want to play next year then please get in touch via our social media platforms through the links on our website www.ilkleycarnival.org

Performing on the main stage are:

12.10pm - 12.40pm
Saint Roy

1.10pm - 1.40pm
**Mosh n Josh
and the Static Riots**

2.10pm - 2.40pm
13th Day

3.10pm - 3.40pm
The Vinegar Strokes

4.10pm - 4.40pm
Strid

PARADE ENTRANTS

Ilkley
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CHILDREN'S BOOKS



Winding through the streets of Ilkley, the Carnival Day procession is a bright and joyful celebration that brings the whole community together before arriving at the Carnival showground. In 2026, the parade embraces the theme of Children's Books, marking the National Year of Reading, and promises a colourful showcase of imagination, storytelling and creativity brought to life.

Following last year's City of Culture inspired theme; Ilkley Past, Present & Future, this year's event has once again attracted an exceptional number of entrants, with over 1,000 children from local schools and organisations taking part. Expect a magical journey through much-loved stories, classic characters and imaginative worlds as the parade transforms Ilkley into a living library.

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who contributes to making the carnival such a success each year, and are delighted to recognise this year's story tellers: Moorfield School, Westville House School, Sacred Heart School, Ben Rhydding Pre-School, All Saints Primary School, Leeds Hospital Charity, Outside The Box, Burley Oaks Primary School, Ashlands Primary School, Ilkley Pride and Diversity Group, Burley Woodhead Primary School, WTA Dance Academy, Ashlands Veterinary Centre, Ghyll Royd, 1st Ben Rhydding Scouts, Upstagers, 1224 Air Cadets, and Ben Rhydding Primary School.

The parade will once again be brought to life by a fantastic line-up of performers and supporters, including our Town Crier, Leeds Pipe Band, Otley Brass Band, Banda Na Rua, Jamba Samba Band and Mark Stuart-Wood - ensuring a truly memorable and uplifting experience for all.

Tom Harris
Parade, Ilkley Carnival

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At the heart of Ilkley Carnival lies something truly special – the dedication of the people who make it all possible. This year we proudly celebrate our incredible volunteers – they are the heartbeat of our event.

From the earliest stages of planning to the final moments of celebration (and clearing the field back down!) your energy, commitment and generosity in time shine through the entire weekend. You give your time selflessly, often behind the scenes, driven not by recognition, but a shared love of our community event and a desire to create something special for everyone to enjoy, and always with a SMILE!

Because of you, Ilkley Carnival is more than an event – it is a tradition, a gathering of community spirit and a true reflection of what can be achieved when people come together with a passion and purpose. Your efforts bring smiles to families, laughter to friends and memories which last long after our event is over.

To each and every Volunteer: thank you. Your dedication does not go unnoticed and your impact keeps the town and entire Committee truly thankful. We couldn't do this without you!

In 2025, the groups who assisted us included, 1st Ben Rhydding Scouts, 2nd Ilkley Guides, 3rd Ben Rhydding Scouts, Addingham Scouts, All Saints Church, Baildon Carnival, Ben Rhydding Sports Club, Bradford Olympian Trampoline Club, Ilkley Clarke Foley Centre, Cookridge Camera Club, Ilkley Camera Club, Ilkley Creative, Ilkley Food Bank, Friends of Ilkley Riverside Parks, Friends of Martin House, Ilkley Grammar School, Ilkley Gym Club, Ilkley Pride, Ilkley Round Table, Ilkley Rugby Club, Menston Area Nature Trust, Reva Scouts refurb project, Salvation Army Keighley, Soroptomists Ilkley, Silsden Gala team, 1224 Air Cadets and West Yorkshire Scouts Project Peru.

We look forward to seeing everyone again next year and beyond. If you'd like to help in 2027, visit our website for updates or email Mary on helpers@ilkleycarnival.org.

Mary Moore
Volunteer Co-ordinator



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Join us at one of our Open Events

Thursday 17 September 2026 9.15am – 12pm

Saturday 3 October 2026 9.30am – 12.30pm

Tuesday 10 November 2026 9.15am – 12pm

Tuesday 4 May 2027 9.15am – 12pm

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