

Peter Hanks has made an outstanding contribution to chess in Ulverston, the local area (Furness) and Cumbria more generally.

For the past few years Peter has been running a weekly after-school chess club in the local library for primary and secondary aged children, co-opting other Ulverston chess club members to support him in this initiative. Following the relocation of the library he has continued to run the after-school club, but now in Ulverston covered market.

He has also been running chess clubs in a couple of local primary schools, again with the help of other club members. In support of this he has provided chess sets, boards and clocks to the schools using a grant which he obtained from Ulverston Town Council.

Peter runs Ulverston chess club in the bar of a local pub, the Stan Laurel. We play in the bar area amongst other patrons of the pub, creating some interesting discussions about chess. Whilst various clubs in Cumbria have folded in recent years, Ulverston has thrived under Peter's leadership. It has continued to gain more members, many new to attending a chess club. This season alone six members of the club have played their first ever ECF rated games of chess.

Peter has raised the profile of chess in the community through large-set exhibition games during Charter Festival weekends and similar local festivals. Each summer he runs a rapid play events in the beer garden of another Ulverston pub, again leading to discussion about chess with other patrons.

Peter ensures the club's ethos is inclusive, positive and welcoming to all - including those with mental health difficulties, autism, and in the case of a popular and ever-present member, severe learning difficulties. There is no membership charge, which means that many of our unemployed or unsalaried members are able to find a 'home' at the club. He also prints and distributes club competition details, scorebooks to members, and using his skills as a retired turner and toolmaker to create shields and trophies, which are awarded to prize winners free of charge.

Peter is the instigator and chairman of Furness Junior Chess Association, formed in Autumn 2024. It has now held two junior congresses in Ulverston's Coronation Hall. Peter arranged for the Mayor of Ulverston to present the prizes and the event was reported in the Westmorland Gazette (<https://www.thewestmorlandgazette.co.uk/news/24947185.young-chess-players-compete-coronation-hall-ulverston/>).

He is also non-playing captain of the club's three teams which plays in the South Cumbria League. He arranges all fixtures, providing transport and home-baked cakes for participants in all home matches. For the first time in its history, the club's A-team won the local league in 2022/23 and repeated the feat in the following two seasons. For a town of its size, competing with clubs like Barrow and Kendal, this is a real achievement.

Peter has taken keen local juniors to tournaments in Greater Manchester, to provide them with the experience of competitive play outside of the Cumbria.

He takes particular care to encourage female juniors, to attempt to redress the well-known gender participation gap. One such girl has made great progress and now plays for the club in the local evening league.

Peter is also the organiser and Tournament Director for the annual Cumbria Individual Championships.

In all of these activities Peter's motivation is purely intrinsic, driven by his love of chess and his enthusiasm for sharing its joys with others. Whilst Peter is not a strong chess player he is a great organiser and encourager of chess in the local community.