



Issue 2

February 2026

Your *The Longest Yarn*® updates



The Longest Yarn supporting Forces Veterans Afloat Charity

Welcome to Our Second Newsletter

There is so much happening behind the scenes at the moment that it's hard to know where to begin.

February could be a landmark month for us — and I'm saying that cautiously!

The Longest Yarn 1 is due to return from the USA at the end of the month. If this final hurdle is safely crossed, the keys to our permanent home — the church — will be handed to us on 23rd February.

United Airlines have indicated they will be flying the installation back free of

charge, and we are currently awaiting final confirmation from Head Office. Rather than get carried away, I'm focusing on what is happening — and that is plenty.

Veteran Partnerships – Real Progress



Our links with veteran charities are now properly taking shape, and we are beginning to be recognised within that world.

I am especially delighted that Forces Veterans Afloat (FVA) has been chosen as Charity of the Year by Armed Forces T-Shirt Day — and even more thrilled that our logo will appear on this year's T-Shirt alongside theirs.

Each year, one veteran charity is selected. On 1st September, veterans and supporters are encouraged to wear a Forces T-Shirt and donate £5 to the chosen charity. Participants can wear their former unit shirt or purchase a specially designed one through the network — which this year means you will be able to wear an FVA / The Longest Yarn shirt with pride.

There is also a major festival, At Ease, and we have been invited to host a stand

there. We will need volunteers to support this — so if that sparks your interest, please do let us know.

This is exactly the kind of meaningful partnership we have been working towards.

The Peterborough Drop



The Peterborough Drop is gathering pace — but we do need more teams involved. Peterborough Cathedral has generously opened its doors on two occasions in April, allowing groups to work together inside the magnificent surroundings of the cathedral itself to prepare cascades in situ.

This is a rare opportunity — and a powerful one.

If you can gather a team, now is the moment.

We are standing at the edge of something significant. There is a great deal of careful work going on beneath the surface — and if February unfolds as we hope, it will mark the beginning of a new chapter for The Longest Yarn.

Steady steps. Quiet determination. And onward we go.

Enniskillen – Why This Stop Matters So Deeply



Some venues are important because of footfall.

Some because of architecture.

And some because of history that still echoes.

Enniskillen is the latter.

In 1987, on Remembrance Sunday, a bomb exploded at the town's war memorial during a wreath-laying ceremony. Eleven people were killed. Many more were injured. It was an act that struck at the very heart of remembrance itself.

That tragedy changed Enniskillen forever.

And yet — this town has also become a symbol of reconciliation and peace. Over the years, it has stood as a place where remembrance is not about division, but about honouring all who suffered.

A key moment in that journey was the visit of Queen Elizabeth II. Her walk between the town's two cathedrals — St Macartin's Cathedral and St Michael's Church — was profoundly symbolic. The quiet leadership of Dean Hall in facilitating that moment helped create an image of unity that resonated far beyond Northern Ireland. It was not theatre. It was careful, courageous bridge-building.

And it is Dean Hall who has twice been the instigator of bringing The Longest Yarn to Enniskillen.

That matters.

This is not a random booking on a tour schedule. It is a deliberate invitation. A recognition that this exhibition — rooted in remembrance, community and wartime endurance — belongs in a town that understands both sacrifice and reconciliation.

For me, this venue is personal.

I left Northern Ireland in 1972. I have not driven through the town where I was born since. Returning now, with The Longest Yarn, feels like closing a circle. My own family's wartime service — RAF, Bomber Command, Belfast during the Blitz — sits alongside the layered history of this place. Remembrance has always been part of my life. In Enniskillen, it takes on another depth.

We are here because this exhibition is about ordinary people enduring extraordinary times. About communities under pressure. About loss. About rebuilding.

In a town where remembrance was once violently attacked, bringing an exhibition that honours wartime sacrifice in wool feels both fitting and important.

Enniskillen is not just another stop on the tour.

It is intentional.

It is symbolic.

It is personal.

That remembrance should unite.

That stories should be handled with care.

That peace is fragile — and worth protecting.

And that threads, when woven together, can say something powerful about who we choose to be.

Blackburn Cathedral – What a Finish!



When The Longest Yarn opened at Blackburn Cathedral, we quietly wondered how it would be received. Cathedrals can be unpredictable — some days steady, some days slow — and in the first couple of weeks it was calm and measured.

But then something shifted.

Word began to spread.

By the final stretch, we were experiencing **queues of up to 45 minutes** to enter. Families, veterans, school groups and visitors from far beyond Lancashire stood patiently outside the doors, waiting to walk through the 80+ knitted and crocheted scenes depicting Britain during the Second World War.

That doesn't happen by chance.

It tells us something important: this exhibition resonates.

One extraordinary day saw **80 books sold** — in a single day. Not just browsed. Bought. Taken home. That means 80 households chose to carry the story forward, to share it with children and grandchildren, to keep those wartime stories alive in wool and print.

Inside the Cathedral, the scale of the space gave the exhibition a new dimension. The height of the nave, the light filtering through stained glass, the sense of quiet reflection — it added depth and weight to the work. Visitors described it as “moving”, “unexpected”, and “far bigger than we imagined.”

Queues are inconvenient, yes. But they are also evidence.

Evidence that textile art can hold serious history.

Evidence that community craft has power.

Evidence that people are still hungry to understand how Britain endured — not through textbooks, but through human stories.

Blackburn finished strongly. Very strongly.

And if this is the trajectory as we move forward, we need to be ready — because the appetite for this work is clearly growing.

Onwards.

Knitting as Protest – More Than “Just Wool”



In recent years, the image of thousands of women wearing bright pink knitted hats during the 2017 Women's Marches in the United States became one of the defining protest visuals of a generation. The so-called "pussyhat" was simple, handmade, and instantly recognisable. It turned wool into a unifying symbol — quiet, domestic craft transformed into collective political voice.

That moment surprised many people.

It shouldn't have.

Because knitting has been threaded through protest, resistance and solidarity for far longer than we often acknowledge.

Wartime Needles and Quiet Resistance

During the Second World War, knitting was officially encouraged. Women across Britain and America knitted socks, balaclavas and gloves for soldiers. It was framed as patriotic duty — something practical and morale-boosting.

But alongside that, there are enduring stories — some documented, some part of resistance folklore — of women using knitting as a cover for observation. The rhythmic movement of needles allowed women to sit near railway stations, docks or checkpoints without suspicion. Patterns, dropped stitches or variations were sometimes said to encode information.

Historians debate how widespread or formalised these methods were. What isn't debated is this: knitting allowed women to occupy space invisibly. It gave them presence without threat. And in wartime Europe especially, that mattered.

Even when not overtly "coded," knitting circles were information hubs. News was shared. Opinions formed. Morale sustained. Craft created community — and community is always powerful.

Craft as Identity and Defiance

Handmade clothing has long been used to signal belonging or dissent.

In America, the red liberty cap in the 18th century symbolised revolution. During the French Resistance, small textile symbols quietly marked allegiance. Across decades, suffragettes used colour — purple, white and green — in garments and accessories to make a statement without shouting.

The pink protest hats of 2017 followed that same lineage.

They were not aggressive. They were not violent. They were visible.

And that visibility was the point.

When thousands of people wear something handmade, it says:

- We made this ourselves.
- We showed up.
- We stand together.

That is not trivial. That is organised solidarity.

Why This Matters

Knitting is often dismissed as domestic. Gentle. Apolitical.

History shows otherwise.

Textile craft has always been tied to survival — keeping families warm, supporting troops, raising funds, signalling allegiance, preserving stories. It travels between generations quietly, but it carries weight.

When people knit in protest, they are doing something deeply symbolic. They are reclaiming a traditionally “feminine” craft and placing it in the public square. They are saying that care work, domestic skill, and community effort are not passive — they are foundational.

Wool can warm a body.

It can also carry a message.

And perhaps that is why knitted protest items resonate so strongly. They combine patience with purpose. Softness with strength. Tradition with change.

Knitting has never just been about yarn.

It has always been about people — and what they are willing to stand for.

In Our Next Issue



In our next issue, you'll discover the fascinating process behind the creation of the hair and wigs for our life-size heroes. Get ready to see how these stunning details and techniques bring our characters to life in ways you've never imagined!

Tansy & The Longest Yarn® Team



SHARE IT WITH YOUR FRIENDS

Liked this issue? Don't forget to spread it out!



[Privacy](#) [Terms](#) [Press](#) [Blog](#)

The Longest Yarn

48 La Croix Pan, Hoesville

Carentan-les-Marais

France

You received this email because you signed up on our website or made a purchase from us.

[Unsubscribe](#)

