The WordPress block editor

last revised 22 Nov 2026

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The Cambridge Rambling Club's website uses a globally popular framework called Wordpress. For pages and posts, we have switched from the classic Wordpress editor to the block, or Gutenberg editor. This document is intended to help with this migration. Events will continue to be defined using the classic editor for now.

Why did we do this? Wordpress made the block editor the default in 2018 and has made it the focus for new features and development. To benefit from this work, we need to use the new editor. You'll see the block editor when creating or editing pages and posts.

The "offficial" documentation on the block editor is available at https://wordpress.org/documentation/article/wordpress-block-editor/.
This covers a lot of the same material and you may find it clearer. It also includes a link to a demo site where you can try out the editor.

Broadly speaking, the classic editor sees content as a sequence of characters, while the block editor sees a sequence of blocks, arranged vertically. The most common blocks are paragraphs. Other kinds of blocks include headers, lists, images and tables. There is also a classic block which will allow the block's content to be maintained using the classic editor.

Visual guide to the block editor

The block editor will look unfamiliar at first and it may not be obvious how to use it. The exact appearance may vary depending on your screen size. Adding a new post will bring up a screen like this:



Look at the icons at the top. Hovering over them will help to remind you of the meanings below.

Starting from the left, the “<” symbol will leave the editor.
The blue plus sign will offer to insert a block.
The left and right arrows are undo and redo.
The three horizontal lines bring up a left sidebar showing every block in the post. Click it again to hide the sidebar.
After “Save draft”, the next symbol offers to preview the post.
The black symbol will open or close a right sidebar showing post or block settings. It is open in the example above.
Publish makes your changes live.

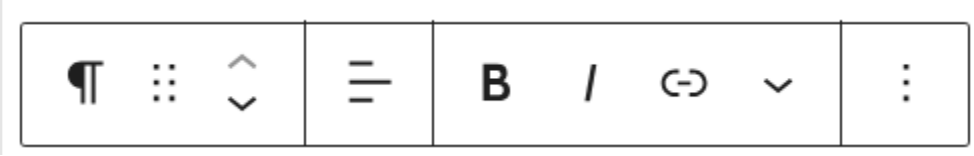
You can click on Add title and type in a suitable title for your post.

You can click on “Type / to choose a block”. There are three ways to insert a block.

1. If you are inserting a paragraph, you can just start typing your text as you would in the classic editor. Hitting the return key after writing text will finish the paragraph.
2. Typing a / will bring up a list of commonly used blocks to choose from.
3. Clicking on the blue plus sign at top left will bring up a comprehensive list of blocks to choose from.

The paragraph block

If you click on a previously entered block (such as a paragraph), the editor will pop up a menu specific to that block type. For a paragraph it looks like this:



The leftmost symbol denotes the block type but can also be clicked on and may offer options to transform the block into other types.

The six dots allow the block to be dragged into a different position in the post or page.

The arrows allow the block to be moved above the previous block or after the subsequent block.

The three horizontal lines control alignment.

B is for bold face, I for italics.

The chain link symbol is used to insert a link (first select the text you want to contain the ilnk).

The down arrow brings up a menu specific to this block type.

The three vertical dots show a menu generic to all blocks. Included in this menu are the options “Add before” and “Add after”. You can use these to add blocks before or after the current block.

Saving and exiting

If you want to save your work and come back to it later, click Save Draft and use the exit button (described earlier) to exit the editor.

If you want to preview your post or page, click on the View button next to Save Draft and follow the instructions.

If you are ready to make your changes visible, click Publish.

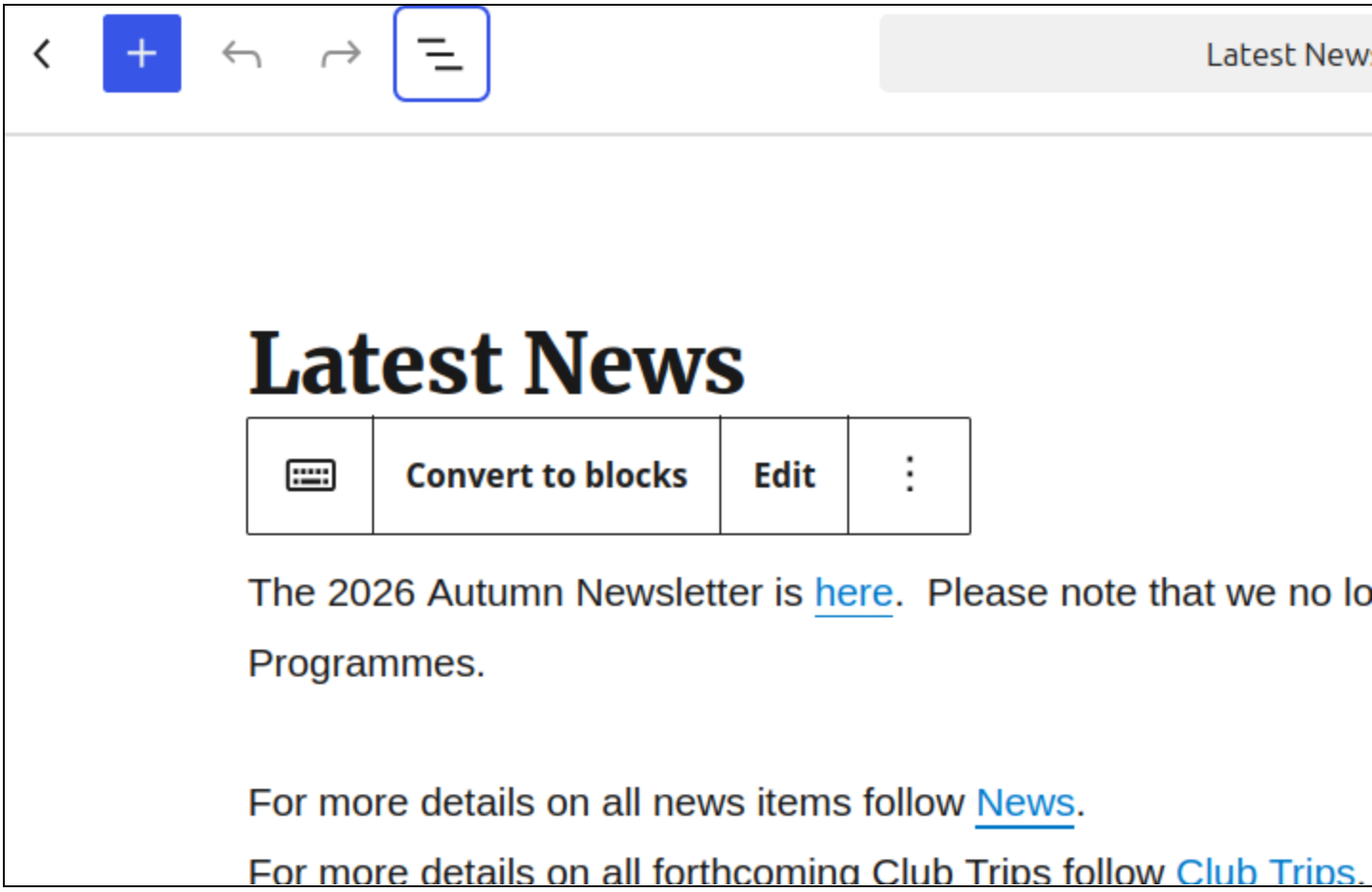
Deleting a post or page

There are two ways to delete. If content has been added, then the right sidebar with Post selected will include a Move to Bin button. Alternatively, you can leave the editor and look at the list of posts or pages. If you hover over the title of your post or page you should see some options including Edit, Quick Edit, Bin and Preview. Click on Bin to delete.

The classic block

This block allows you to edit text with the classic editor, from within the block editor. If a post or page was created using the classic editor, then its content will appear as a single classic block within the block editor. The classic block will offer to convert its content to new-style blocks, but if you avoid this then you can continue to use the classic editor within that block. Here is an example.

Opening the Latest News post shows the expected text in the content area. Clicking on the text brings up options for the classic block:



If you would like to keep using the classic editor for this, do not click on “Convert to blocks”. Instead, click Edit. An overlay window will open allowing you to alter the text using the classic editor. When finished, click Save (or Cancel if you wish to discard the changes) and then follow the usual procedures in Saving and Exiting above.

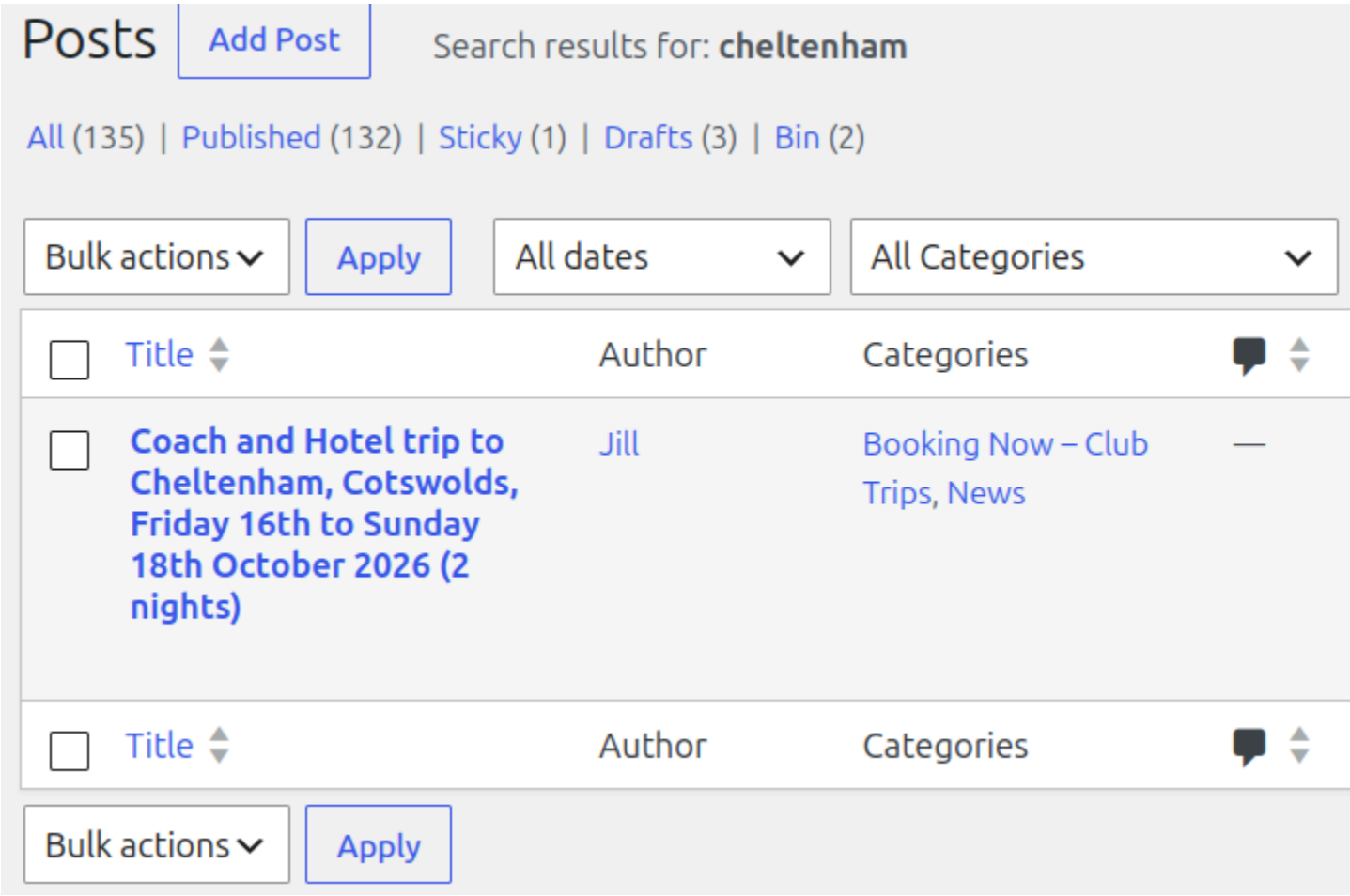
It is possible to create new classic blocks, and have other block types interleaved with them. There should be no issue with continuing to use classic blocks for now but new functionality may only be available in other blocks.

To create a new classic block, you can type a slash when prompted with “Type / to choose a block”. One of the options offered should be the classic block.

Linking to posts

This describes a method of linking from text in, for example, the Latest News post to another post. It will work for any post, however. Let's say that you want to link from post A to post B.

Step 1. You need to pick up the URL (the link) of post B. Go to the list of posts and find your post B. In this example I have used the search box to find Cheltenham posts.



Use the mouse or pointer to hover over the post title in the left hand column. You should see a line appearing with Edit | Quick Edit | Bin | View. Right-click on View and choose Copy Link (or Copy Link address - this might vary depending on your browser). This should copy the URL into the clipboard. If you wish, you can paste it into a temporary Word document so as not to lose it.

Step 2. Edit post A, the post you want to link from. Choose a classic block and click Edit. Use the mouse to highlight the text you want to form the link.

Step 3. Click the chain (link) symbol on the toolbar above. This should open a box to insert the URL. Paste it from the clipboard (typically by holding the Control key down and pressing v. On mobile devices you might need to long press inside the block and choose Paste). Click the blue arrow to the right of the box to Apply. Save the post and check that the link works.

If you are using a Paragraph block rather than the classic block, just select the text you wish to form the link. The chain/link symbol appears in the block menu above. Click on it and follow the same procedure.