

The Stanegate

Newbrough, Fourstones, Warden
and surrounding hamlets

* * * * *

Open Gardens '26 A Blooming Good Day Out

Discover the Hidden Beauty of Newbrough and Fourstones

We're delighted to announce the return of Open Gardens, after more than a decade away! Join us for a wonderful afternoon exploring a selection of ten stunning private gardens across Newbrough and Fourstones; the perfect opportunity to soak up the sights, scents, and serenity right on your doorstep.



Date: Sunday, 7th June : Time: 13:00 – 16:30

- Visit 10 charming local gardens, each with its own character and planting style.
- Transport provided between gardens – simply let us know if you'd like a lift.
- Browse the plant sale at the Town Hall courtyard and in selected gardens for a spot of green-fingered inspiration.
- Enjoy homemade refreshments at the Town Hall and some garden stops along the way.

Entry: £5 per person – all funds raised go directly towards vital Town Hall

Look out soon for our full programme and individual garden highlights.

To secure your ticket, visit www.ticketsource.co.uk and search for 'Newbrough'.

Tickets can also be reserved in advance on 07775 991237 and can also be purchased on the day at the Town Hall, or at the garden gates.

For further enquiries, contact Nick Springham at 07533 356443 or email nick.springham@btinternet.com.

Don't miss this rare chance to experience our community's best-kept secrets and support the heart of our village!

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Letters to the Editors.....

Dear Stanegate readers, Members of the Newbrough Bunkhouse Committee and Newbrough Town Hall Committee,

I would like to extend my deepest thanks to everyone involved in running and organising Newbrough Bunkhouse and Newbrough Town Hall. You allowed me to become part of your community during a time when I was experiencing homelessness, for that I will always be profoundly grateful. Each of you took time out of your lives to listen, understand my situation, offering kindness without judgement.

My dog, Tom and I were fortunate enough to stay in this amazing space between November 2025 and March 2026. This support came at a time of real difficulty for us. Through no fault of our own, in January 2024 our landlord of ten years informed us that we would need to vacate our home due to the property being sold. Coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, we were already facing significant challenges – having lost our jobs, and being forced to close our businesses. The rising cost of renting and the shortage of available housing made finding stability incredibly difficult.

Before arriving at Newbrough Bunkhouse, the three of us had been sofa surfing, house sitting, staying in our car, and on the occasional blessed night in hotels or B&Bs. It was a very uncertain and exhausting time.

We are truly grateful for the opportunity to have had a safe place to stay and to begin rebuilding our lives. Your kindness helped us return to something like normal living again.

I would also like to thank the kindness of strangers we met along the way – those who took time during long walks around the area to offer a smile, a conversation, or a moment of human connection. Those small gestures meant more than words can fully express.

To everyone who supported me and my family on this journey – who helped us find stability, rebuild, create new products allowing us to once again work, and begin healing.

thank you.

What a place, and what a community.

With heartfelt gratitude,
Silver & Tom

Letters continued overleaf.....

Calendar of Events

MAY

- 2nd - 4th
Art Exhibition at the Hall
10am - 4pm Free entry
See p11
- 4th Newbrough Parish Council
Town Hall, 7pm
- 5th Newbrough Cricket :
All Stars starting, see p18
- 6th Taster Tai Chi for health
11.30 - 12.45 See p10
- 11th Beginners learn to crochet
Workshop, Town Hall
10am - 12.30pm, see p10
- 11th Crochet Café, 1pm
Town Hall lounge. See p10
- 11th Warden Parish Council.
Town Hall, 7pm
- 14th Newbrough WI
Town Hall, 7pm
- 17th "On Sycamore Gap"
Music and poetry
Kate Fox, Town Hall see p10
- 28th Town Hall Quiz, 8pm
Doors open at 7.15pm

Advertising

Commercial advertising rates per
year (11 issues)

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1/4 page	6.0x18cm	£90
1/9 page	8.2x5cm	£45
1/12 page	6.0x5cm	£30

Commercial monthly advertising
rates available on application.
Please call 01434 674451

Thank you !

A very big thank you to those who gave up their time to collect the rubbish that had been left in hedgerows, roadsides, riverside and many other places.

A few bags of rubbish (not just litter) was collected (including a credit card and fishing permit, both of which were returned to their rightful owner) helping to keep our villages nice places to live .

Thanks also go to the team from NCC for supporting us by provind equipment and collecting The rubbish bags.

Cllr Gill Charlton

Warden, Fourstones, Newbrough - picturesque but peppered with poo!

On my daily walks in all areas of our lovely villages, I have noticed a massive increase in dog poo left behind. So kind of the dog owner to share !

It is anti-social, selfish & a health hazard, especially to children running around & coming into contact with it. I despair.

Why oh why do the dog owners not pick up ?? Is it that they can't afford the bags or just can't be bothered to pick up ?! Irresponsible dog owners give the responsible ones a bad name.

My plea to the **poopertraters** is please, please, pick up the poo !!

From a picker upper !!

Methodist Chapel upright piano

Is no longer needed

Marshall and Rose

'Bruce Moore, W Hartlepool' written on it

Please contact Margaret, Fourstones Chapel
674207

Plants Please

In order make our Open Gardens '26 plant stall a huge success, we need plants!

So please think of us when sowing, dividing or lifting plants. Save some for the Town Hall.

Plants (preferably labeled) can be left at the Town Hall courtyard from 10.00 onwards on Saturday 6th June.

Please help us make the sale a success and raise money for the urgent renovation of the Town Hall.
Thanks.

Nick Springham (0753 356 443, nick.springham@btinternet.com)

Community Led Full Fibre Broadband Initiative Expands Across Northumberland

Broadband for the Rural North (B4RN) – a **community owned, not for profit, full fibre broadband provider** – is encouraging residents across Northumberland to register their interest as new areas are assessed for network expansion.

Established to address long standing issues with rural connectivity, **B4RN** builds and delivers **gigabit capable fibre to the home networks** in areas often overlooked by commercial providers. As a **Community Benefit Society**, all surplus funds are reinvested back into the communities we serve. Our delivery model is built on partnership with residents alongside volunteers, who help shape and support each project, creating long term community involvement and resilience.

B4RN is currently expanding into **Humshaugh and Warden, Hexham West, and Hexhamshire**, with local demand guiding the pace and direction of progress. **Humshaugh Village** is the next area scheduled to be connected, with neighbouring communities expected to follow shortly.

Call for Expressions of Interest

Residents in these areas are invited to submit an **Expression of Interest (EOI)** through the B4RN website. EOIs help **B4RN** identify where demand is strongest and prioritise build phases accordingly.

Proven Benefits in Connected Communities

Nearby villages already connected to **B4RN** report major improvements in reliability and speed. Colin Horncastle, a Catton resident and County Councillor, described his previous service as “unreliable at best,” adding that the B4RN connection had “completely transformed” how he works from and relaxes at home.

Others have highlighted the sense of community pride that comes from delivering a locally led project.

A Community Driven Ethos

B4RN’s approach centres on **community empowerment**:

- Projects progress where residents show demand and engagement.
- Volunteers from your community play a key role in our projects.

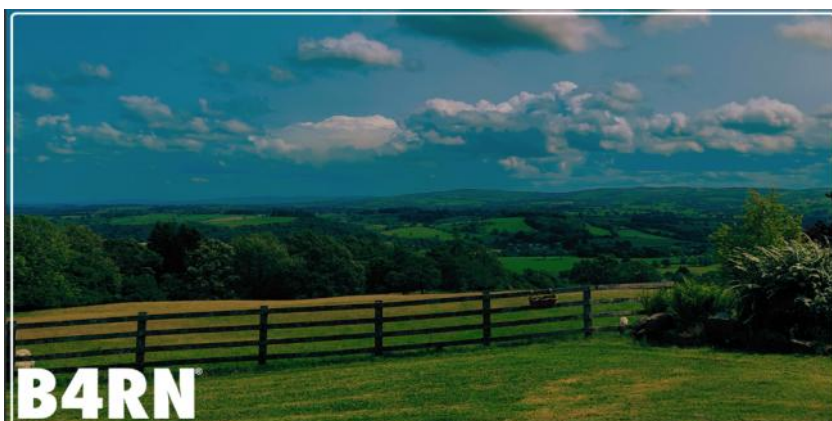
All connections are full fibre to the premises, offering long term, future proof digital infrastructure.

Sally Wilkinson, the new **B4RN project coordinator for the North East** noted: “Many people may not yet know who we are or how we work, I am here to help you to understand our ethos and what makes us different. Registering interest is the first step. It helps us understand local demand and opens the door to conversations about what a community led broadband project could look like. If you would like further information or to have a chat, please reach out to me directly”

Next Steps

With **Phase 1 now underway in Humshaugh Village and Chollerford**, B4RN encourages residents in the wider **Humshaugh and Warden** areas to learn more and register their interest as planning progresses toward Phase 2.

For more information or to submit an EOI, visit www.b4rn.org.uk.



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Newbrough Womens Institute

Meeting : Thursday 9th April

The President, Judith Kirby, welcomed members for our evening meeting and we sung Jerusalem.

Teresa Bessant dealt with the correspondence and Northumberland News, outlining assorted items including an opportunity to visit Woodhorn Archives, a visit to Newburgh Priory, a zoom Party for the National Annual meeting and lunch with our Northumberland Federation Chairman.

We also discussed preparations for and asked for members willing to participate in the catering for the South Tyne Group Party on the 16th of April. There was also a further call for ideas for our summer outing on 11th June. We will need to decide on a venue soon so that transport can be arranged.

The Dominoes Team played Thropton WI on the 10th of April and they won. Thropton were gracious in their defeat and treated us all to a delicious home baked tea. Well done team! Our next opponents are likely be Hepple WI.

The guest speaker for the evening was our very own entertainment secretary, Ann Wodzinski. Ann certainly entertained us with the history of her nursing career from Trainee Nurse to Sister in the National Health Service. The development of the NHS in the span of Ann's career was mind boggling, but, as she pointed out, not always to the advantage of the patient. She worked in many fields of nursing across the country in London, Gateshead, Leeds and Sheffield.

Her self-professed liking for "Action" found her at the front end of care many times, experiencing and working on disaster situations such as the IRA bombings in London and Hillsborough in Sheffield.

Some points stood out, certainly the advances in medicines and technology, but what struck me the most was, when Ann began working as a nurse they were actively discouraged from wearing any gloves or protective equipment, an unthinkable scenario in present times. Ann outlined a varied and caring career which she clearly loved doing. A very entertaining evening for us all.

Gill Devereux won the raffle, Maureen Carr won the flowers donated by Lucy Fisher and the competition was won by Catherine Grant with Doreen Dodd runner up.

The next meeting on 8th May is a closed meeting as it is Newbrough's Annual Meeting. We encourage all members to attend as we will be voting on the roles of the current President, the Committee and on the resolution going forward to the National Annual Meeting on the 4th June. The choices are "Access to Public Toilets" or "Action on Womens Homelessness".

Judith Kirby

Fourstones and Newbrough Monthly Weather Information for March 2026

Lowest temperature was -4.2C at 7.31 AM on the 7th
Highest temperature was 17.8C at 2.45 PM on the 18th
Strongest wind gust was 43mph at 7.46 AM on the 24th
Highest daily rainfall was 17.2mm on the 12th
Monthly rainfall total was 47.6mm

Several days in March had strong winds with 42mph being recorded on the 11th, 12th and 29th.
Not far behind was 40mph on the 13th. Windiest day overall was the 24th.



News from Newbrough C of E Primary School

At Newbrough C of E Primary School, this term has been both a proud and reflective one for our whole community. In March, we welcomed inspectors as part of our recent Ofsted inspection under the new framework. We were very pleased with the outcome and I look forward to sharing the full report with you all soon.

I could not be more proud of our children, who approached the process with confidence, honesty and maturity, truly demonstrating what it means to be part of our school. Our staff team, as always, showed unwavering commitment and professionalism throughout. I would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our parents and carers for their incredibly kind and supportive comments during the inspection, these meant a great deal to us all.

We are also delighted to share some exciting news for the future of our outdoor learning. A huge thank you goes to our dedicated PTA, and especially to Mrs Witchell, for her successful application to Northumberland County Council's Environmental Climate Fund. Thanks to this effort, the school has secured £4,500 towards the installation of a new polytunnel. This will provide fantastic opportunities for the children to develop their understanding of sustainability, food growing, and the natural environment, as well as offering valuable hands-on learning experiences across the curriculum. We very much look forward to seeing it in action later in the year.

Finally, it is with both sadness and gratitude that we say farewell to a much-valued member of our school family. Mrs Stevens, who has given so many years of dedicated service, will be leaving us to embark on a new adventure in her, very well-earned, early retirement. Mrs Stevens has been a constant presence in the life of the school, offering care, wisdom and warmth to many children and colleagues. She will be greatly missed by us all, and we wish her every happiness as she begins this exciting new chapter.

As we look ahead to the summer term, we hope to see many familiar and new faces at our upcoming summer fair, it promises to be a wonderful community event.

Mike Boucetla
Executive Headteacher,
Newbrough and Wark C of E Primary Schools
DNDLT

Do you have a story, an image, an idea or feedback you'd like to share in the Stanegate, then please send to the editorial team :

Janice Baylis, Dave Spearman, Sophie Straker & Chris Tolan-Smith

at thestanegate@hotmail.com

**the deadline for the June edition is
Friday 12th May 2026**

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Chairman's Report 2025 - 2026

One of the highlights of the year was to award the Honorary Freedom of the Parish to Dennis Bowman. The Parish Council has adopted a Freemanship policy to enable the Honorary Freedom of the Parish to be awarded to individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the Parish. Amongst many other contributions to the community, Dennis served on the Parish Council for over 50 years, and was considered to be the ideal recipient of the first such award.

Another highlight was the repair and refurbishment of the Community MUGA at Newbrough First School. This was funded via grants from County Cllr's Morphet and Azocar-Nevin, Warden and Newbrough Parish Councils, and Greenrigg Wind Farm. Huge thanks to Cllr Foot for the work he has done to coordinate the project.

The Parish Council supported a number of local organisations with grant funding during the year. We agreed to jointly fund the pensioners' bus trip with Newbrough PC up to the sum of £350, and grant £100 to Hexham Forum towards the Tyne Valley Film Festival event at Newbrough Town Hall. Other grants included £60 to Tynedale Hospital at Home, £50 to the British Legion, £60 to Sports Tynedale, and £500 to St Michael and All Angels church.

The general environment of the villages is important to our residents. The Parish Gardeners continue to provide an excellent service in maintaining our green spaces. This has been supplemented by the work carried out by residents attending the litter picks organised by Cllr Charlton.

The Parish Council has commented on a number of planning applications during the past year. The most significant being the two solar farm applications. The first application was by Eden Renewables for a solar farm and associated infrastructure to the north of Fourstones Sub-Station, and the second, submitted by Landpro on behalf of ARM Dev Energy Ltd, to develop a ground mounted solar park (and associated infrastructure) on land south of Carr Hill Plantation to

the north of Fourstones. The general consensus was that a transition to renewable energy is essential to combat climate change and promote energy security, however the location of new solar farms should minimise the impact on high quality landscape and agricultural land. For this reason (and the cumulative impact of the two adjacent proposals) the Parish Council has objected to the Eden Renewable's application, and is awaiting further reports of ecological and archaeological impact before commenting formally on the Landpro scheme.

Preliminary works have commenced at the quarry including tree felling and laying hardcore for the access road.

The other planning application of note is to convert the former Railway Inn into two dwelling houses and build a three bedroom bungalow on the car park. The Parish Council did not object to the principle of residential development but suggested that the development should be restricted to two dwellings to ensure sufficient parking and access arrangements could be provided. The outcome of this application is awaited.

We welcomed the investment and associated development at the Filling Station and Frankham Kennels and supported the associated planning applications.

It is worth noting that the County Council is conducting a consultation on Community Governance. As part of this we responded saying we are in favour of combining with the adjacent Parish Council as we are essentially one community sharing common interest. The outcome of this review is awaited.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank fellow Parish Councillors for the contributions they have made during the year, the fantastic support from Cllr Antonia Azocar-Nevin in her first year as a County Councillor, and the professional advice and support we receive from the Parish Clerk. It is important that we continue to support the well-being of our community to the best of our ability.

Newbrough Parish Council

Space is always reserved for notes from Warden and Newbrough PC meetings,
None have been forthcoming to date from Newbrough's March meeting



Newbrough Town Hall and Bunkhouse

Sheron Robson, Co-Chair

As usual it's been a busy month for Hall volunteers and committee members with lots of planning for the upcoming open gardens event and the usual maintenance issues that come with a building of this vintage! – this month's challenge being the gutters and drain-pipes which will get much needed attention. Your regular "Friends of the Hall" contributions help so much with this.

May events

From 2nd -4th May we welcome back the annual **Hexham Art exhibition** at the Hall – free entry 10am – 4pm. Drop in and view the work of lots of different artists, browser items and cards, all very reasonably priced.

Wednesday 6th May **FREE taster class Tai Chi for Health**. Tai Chi for Health classes are designed for everyone, all ages and body types, regardless of fitness level. Kathryn leads each session beginning with warm-up exercises and offers a shortened "form" – a series of movements that delivers a full body workout, incorporating all the essential elements of Tai Chi. The exercise style is smooth, gentle, and focused, while still challenging balance and coordination. Whether you're seeking stress relief, improved flexibility, or simply a peaceful midweek escape, this class is perfect for you. Subsequent classes £10, see contact details below for any questions or to book.

Beginners learn to crochet workshop :

Monday 11th May 10am-12.30pm, places limited to 4 for individual support. Cost £30 includes a kit to take away, including 4mm hook, ball of yarn and resource pack. 1-1 teaching of basic crochet skills including how to tension, how to read a pattern, various resources, different types of yarn, tools, terminology, and basic stitches. Contact Anne on riffic15@yahoo.co.uk to book. This will be the last beginners workshop until the Autumn.

Monthly crochet café with Anne and Gill is Monday 11th May 1-3pm. Cost £10 refreshments provided. The café aims to encourage beginners and those who want to develop their skills.

Contact Anne on riffic15@yahoo.co.uk to book or drop in.

Sunday May 17th We are lucky to have secured a Highlights North event -

Kate Fox - "on Sycamore Gap" Join poet Kate and musicians Staithe in a performance of music and poetry, inspired by the shocking act of vandalism in 2023 that resulted in the felling of the world-famous tree. Kate's beautifully crafted verse, supported by the haunting music of Staithe, helps to fill the void with hope. Tickets available at www.highlightsnorth.co.uk

Quiz is May 28th. Testing questions (The music round will be on the 2000s), great value bar, tasty snacks, and a round of drinks for the winners (at the next quiz). Doors at 7.15pm, quiz starts at 8pm £2 entry, teams of up to six. If you want to come along but don't have a team, there's always a team of 'Hall helpers' that you could join in with.

Weekly classes in the Hall, all open to new members:

MONDAY

Pilates 12.15 Val blends traditional and contemporary Pilates with functional exercise and fun variations to keep things fresh and challenging. See www.valravelle.com for details.

Yoga 6.30pm Friendly group, Jane adapts for those less/more bendy. See www.jiyoga83.com for more information and how to book or drop in on the day.

WEDNESDAY

NEW CLASS Tai Chi for Health 11.30 – 12.45.

Enhance your wellbeing through gentle movement. Contact Kathryn on wellbeingfromwithin@outlook.com or 07721 494315 for more details.

Bowls - 7pm. Fancy a go? Or come to watch, this is a friendly non-competitive group who enjoy playing a gentle addictive game, alongside a cuppa, biscuits and a natter. Contact 01434 674406

FRIDAY

Zumba 6pm, more than just a workout, it's a party with a purpose! Find **dance.zumba.with.val** on Facebook or just drop in.

Line Dancing

7pm great exercise, social and welcoming, easy to learn and hard to quit! **linedancewithval** on Facebook or just turn up.

continued overleaf

For dates and updates check : **Facebook:** Newbrough Town Hall **Instagram:** newbrough_town_hall

Our Friends of the Hall scheme gives much needed regular income towards the upkeep of the Hall as a community asset. If you have already pledged, thank you. We put your funds to good use every month. If you haven't yet joined, you can contribute from as little as £2 a month. Contact us on secretarynewbroughtownhall@gmail.com for more details.

* * * * *

Upcoming Dates for your diary:

Open Gardens Sunday 7th June 1-4.30pm
10 Gardens, plant sale at Hall Refreshments available.
£5 per person
Tickets at www.ticketsource.co.uk (search for Newbrough)



A Public (in)Convenience

You may have notice that sometimes the door to the public toilet outside the Hall is locked.

We have had to take this measure due to repeated, and escalating, acts of vandalism.

We are currently relying on volunteers coming to open up and close the loo at 9.30am and 4pm which allows for the regular users, dog walkers and hikers to have some access to the only public toilet in the area.



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Lemon Custard Cake

Lemon Custard Cake is a quick and easy dessert recipe, perfect for summer.
This cake is soft and creamy, with refreshing lemon flavour.

Lemon Custard Cake

Prep time : 15 minutes Cook time : 45 minutes

Ingredients

4 eggs (room temperature) separated
¾ cup sugar
½ cup unsalted butter - melted and slightly cooled
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¾ cup self raising flour
¼ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
Grated zest from 2 large lemons
1¾ cups milk - lukewarm
Icing sugar for dusting



Method

1. Pre-heat the oven to 325oF. Line an 8 x 8 “ baking dish with parchment paper, leaving overhang the sides. Lightly grease with cooking spray, then set aside.
2. Whip the egg whites until STIFF peaks form. Set aside
3. Beat the egg yolks and sugar until pale yellow
4. Add melted butter and vanilla and mix until evenly combined
5. Mix in flour until evenly incorporated
6. Add lemon juice and lemon zest and mix until combined
7. Slowly beat in the milk until well combined
8. Add egg whites and whisk by hand You don't need to fold it in completely. Leave small egg whites lumps. When you pour it into the pan, lumps will float on the surface and create the top layer during the baking.
NOTES : the batter is very very thin !!
9. Pour the batter into the pan and bake for 40 - 60 minutes until the cake is barely jiggy in the center, but the top is firm to touch. Baking time might vary depending on your oven or pan you use, but start checking after 35 minutes, If the top browns quickly, you can cover the cake with aluminum foil. Do not overbake it, or the cake will turn out rubbery and not custardy in the centre.
10. Cool the cake completely before dusting it with powdered sugar.
11. Store leftovers in the fridge.

Recipes

If you have a recipe you would like
to include in a future edition of
The Stanegate
please let us know by emailing :

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NHS Trained

Birds, Birds, Birds

Stanegate local and family history section

Rob Tindall

I grew up just south of Haydon Bridge, about three miles from Fourstones, as the crow flies. Our walks home from school were punctuated by the 'little bit of bread but no cheese' chirruping of yellowhammers and we often found their → nests, containing purple scribbled eggs in the hedge-banks. I hadn't seen or heard one for years but was delighted to find a pair on Frankham bank. This set me thinking about other differences in populations of birds then and now in what is a small geographical area.



As a youth I never saw a buzzard, goldfinch, chiff-chaff, bullfinch, kingfisher, swift or long tailed tit, whilst on this side of the river their presence is unremarkable. Rook, wood pigeon, robin and great tit seem to have survived in both areas and times. I still rejoice in the sounds of wild geese passing over our homes in the autumn.

Is it my imagination that there are more hedge sparrows these days? Our immediate hedges are busy with them defending their territories. The flock of house sparrows around the allotments at South View is redolent of those around the barns 70+ years ago.

Compared to a year ago, bright mornings are alive with the songs of skylarks. Percy Bysshe Shelley today could still rejoice in their glorious melody as he did in his 1820 poem 'To a Skylark' which begins "Hail to thee, blithe spirit. Bird thou never wert." Magpies are everywhere; their domed nests visible in roadside trees and edges of woods. Look closely and you will see that their plumage is not just black and white stripes!

And the birds I have lost or are severely diminished. I haven't seen a song thrush for ages or its mud-lined nest with sky-blue clutch of eggs. Chaffinches were once so common that we would invite our village-dwelling schoolmates to come bird-nesting to see how many nests we could find. Pete Seeger might appropriately lament "Where have all the swallows gone?"

My father knew where every peewit (we never called them lapwings) nested on the farm and, although it would be illegal now, we very occasionally had a fried peewit egg on our breakfast plate. I once knew where a green woodpecker nested in the hole of an old beech tree but now my consolation is the greater spotted woodpeckers which climb up our nearby electricity pole.

There are two birds I really miss for their calls.



← There are curlews but they are recognised as critically endangered. Any rough grazing would regularly have its resident pair or more,

rising with their keening cry as you neared their nest of three or four, almost conical, speckled khaki eggs. The true sound of Northumberland.

Another evocative sound, now gone was that of the corncrake which → used to dwell in the riverside meadows just west of the Spa Well at Haydon Bridge.



They are just memories but in seventy years' time I hope the youngsters of today will be able to recall the birdsong of their youth.



Haltwhistle Walking Festival

25th April — 4th May 2026

Information available via
www.haltwhistlewalkingfestival.org

Newbrough Cricket Club

Captains named for the upcoming season



The Club Captain will be Bertie Spence with James Forster as Vice-Captain.

The season begins on 25th April at home to Clara Vale.

The Midweek Captain's role is taken by Will Laidler and Poppy Forster is Leader of the Juniors.

Members have spent a weekend in April getting the ground ready for the season with the whole squad chipping in to tidy up the playing field and club house and a new fence being put up between the pitch and car park which looks great.

Andrew Coulson, Estate Agents, joins The Red Lion, Frankham Farm Storage and The Boatside Inn as a sponsor of the Club.

Bertie Spence



Dog Owners - be aware of new laws regarding your dog and livestock

As of 18th March 2026, the Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) Act 2025 came into force in England and Wales, introducing unlimited fines and strengthening police powers to tackle livestock worrying.

The updated law allows police to seize dogs suspected of attacking livestock. The legislation applies to public footpaths, bridleways, and roads, not just enclosed agricultural land.



"Worrying" is defined as attacking, chasing, or acting in a way that causes distress to livestock. Physical contact (such as biting) is **not** required for an offence to occur; so chasing that causes panic or injury is sufficient.

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Green Notes

Hotter, colder? Our oceans hold the key and we've damaged their 'engines'

By Malcolm Newson on behalf of Climate Action Newbrough-Fourstones

The Artemis 2 pictures of Earth are again reminding us of two facts – the planetary changes since the classic 'Earthrise' Apollo shots 15 years ago and the fact that we really live on a planet which deserves the name 'Ocean'. They cover 70% of our surface and are the flywheels of a planetary engine that distributes heat from the Equator to the Poles. Given this important role, it is no surprise that two main ocean circulations, El Niño and the AMOC' (Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation) will determine whether the UK summer and next winter are oppressively hot or freezing cold **or both**, defying tabloid headline writers and world leaders who will think this is bad science!

First Artemis 2 – with infographics becoming central to climate change communications, the world renowned 'Nature' journal is worth a look for its Apollo-Artemis comparisons (*Nature Climate Change, Vol. 16, pp. 374-375*). 'Earthrise' is credited with kicking off the environmental movement worldwide but our efforts leave us with a 40°C summer day now 20 times more likely! Remember our first one on July 19th 2022?

Starting with 'hotter' we need to look at the 'super El Nino' currently developing in the Pacific. El Nino is a period of raised ocean temperatures (up to 2.5°C) in the central and eastern Pacific. It creates a massive atmospheric upset by altering jet streams and hence precipitation patterns. Extremes include droughts in Australia, Africa and stronger autumn hurricanes in the Caribbean. Forecasts of the outcomes made in Spring will be refined by measuring ocean temperatures but one current estimate is 'the strongest El Niño in 140 years'. Forecasting and planning ahead can be of globally significant economic value, notably for food supplies (think inflation!).

The UK Met Office is putting huge effort into this and expects at least a 0.2°C rise in the atmosphere above our heads this year – also meaning more moisture, so drought followed by downpours is a possible outcome.

Moving to the AMOC – it's much closer to home, being part of what we learned at school as 'The Gulf Stream'. It brings warm, salty water from the Gulf of Mexico to the north Atlantic, keeping temperatures in western Europe milder than in e.g. Canada and Russia. Being a current, its strength is measured by its speed (at tethered buoys); measurements now exist from 2004 and AMOC is slowing down – by 10% in 22 years. Any eventual, or sudden, collapse of the circulation (which is also weakened by melting Arctic ice) would cause dramatically colder winters in Europe and could disrupt Asian and African monsoons.

Whether hotter or colder, air-con or radiators, our energy use is impacted, so action by governments and at home is even more important. Five experts recently reviewed our domestic options; number one is home insulation (as I write, our Victorian 'leaky' windows are being replaced; at current oil prices we could be recouping the costs in 3-5 years). The second option - to go 'fully electric' - is not one we can use locally but with most of our villages south-facing, what about plug-in solar panels? Other experts have been looking at the performance of government policies across the world. Some that 'work' are carbon pricing, energy efficiency and, of course, renewables.

Who dares guess from which number Artemis will the view of planet Ocean look **improved**, or is the Moon the next one we wreck?!

Mobile Library in May

Tuesday 12th May 2026

Newbrough - Home Farm Estate	14.10 - 14.30
Newbrough - Sidgate	14.35 - 14.55
Fourstones - Green Church	15.00 - 15.20



May, From the Garden

Iain O'Brien

Now that we have come to May it is always tempting to be cutting the lawns low and short and you will see people out scalping them to an inch of its life. We must remember although the temperature feels warmer to us the soil temperature is just starting to warm up. Ground temperature is still not as warm as the air temperature can be so if we start cutting our grass very low straight away, we are damaging it more than we think. We quite often get long dry Mays too which really won't help the grass recover after a harsh cut. With the soil temperature being cool but the harsh dry sunny days very short, grass increases its transpiration rate and makes it dry out quicker. Use May to grow your grass and lawns long and thick and do a much higher cut than you think it needs. This will stop your lawns going yellow and dry later in the season.

May is also the month to prune your broadleaf shrubs, not during winter when many people tend to think you should do them. We can have frost right up to May here in Northumberland and we have had a frost the first week in May for the last few years now. If you had cut back and pruned many of your shrubs during winter, you would end up with lots of dieback of fresh cut wood instead of the ends of the old branches/wood. Waiting until we know the last frosts have passed will mean we don't get any die back from our new cuts. Penstemon, Caryopteris and Fuchsia all will suffer from frost die back especially on new cuts.

Prune spring-flowering shrubs such as japonica or Japanese quince (Chaenomeles), → Choisya and Ribes after flowering.



Remove one stem in three from Kerria and Spiraea 'Arguta' and shorten the other flowered stems to a suitable sideshoot.

Evergreens such as Viburnum tinus can also still be trimmed this month.

If you have a greenhouse now is time to take softwood cuttings of deciduous shrubs such as Forsythia, Fuchsia, → Hydrangea macrophylla, Philadelphus and Spiraea.



Tie in climbing and rambling roses as near to horizontal as possible. Roses will always flower at the very top of stems due to the sap flow, so forcing the branches down horizontal will restrict the sap flow causing more side-shoots to grow along the length of stem. Therefore, more flowers will be produced.

Plant out your cannas and dahlias now and if you have had spring bedding plants in tubs or pots, wait until the end of the month and plant them in with your summer bedding into borders.

Lift and divide overcrowded daffodils clumps after flowering to improve next year's displays and keep dead heading any tulips → and daffodil flowers to put back the energy of the foliage into the bulbs.



And lastly plant out your summer bedding again once you know the last cold spells have passed.

Pleasant May everyone.

Church Pages

Who's Who

Church of England

Parishes by the Wall (East)

The Reverend Ollie Dempsey

The Vicarage

Station Yard

Haydon Bridge

NE47 6LL

Tel: 01434 671649

Methodist

Reverend Michael Holland

Tynedale Methodist Circuit

Fern House

Catton

Hexham

NE47 6QS

Tel: 01434 683732

Roman Catholic

Parish Priest : Fr Jeffrey Dodds

Assisted by Fr Paul Kilduff

St Mary's Catholic Church

Hencotes

Hexham

NE46 3EB

Tel: 01434 603119

Fourstones with Warden Methodist Church

Preachers for May

3rd Mrs J Cameron

10th Local arrangement

17th Reverend Michael Holland
Holy Communion

24th Sandra Martin
Pentecost

31st Circuit Service at Bellingham

All services are at 10.30am

Everyone welcome

* * * * *

**There will be no coffee mornings
or Messy Vintage during May**

St John of Beverley, Haydon Bridge

**If you have any queries about service times
please contact:**

**St Mary's Catholic Church,
Hencotes, Hexham**

or call 01434 603119

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Search for: St John Lee, Northumberland; St Peter's Church and add Newbrough in postcode box;
St Cuthbert's, Haydon Bridge.

Support St Aidan, Fourstones, via Justgiving

Go to: <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/4stones-st-aidans>

The Methodist Chapel Fourstones



It was exactly 150 years ago on Tuesday 31st March 2026 since the foundation stone was laid for a new Methodist Chapel at Fourstones. Unfortunately, due to a decline in numbers attending, the Chapel will close in July.

The remaining members are not allowing the occasion to go unmarked and the closure will be preceded, during June, with an exhibition called 'Memories'. Material for this is being assembled and the organisers would love to hear from anyone who has recollections of occasions and events in the Building's history.

If you have anything you feel may be of interest please get in touch with Margaret Bogie at magrach@aol.com

Thank you

The Methodist Chapel

Saturday 11th July, 11am - 4pm

An informal time of remembering and celebrating 150 years of Fourstones Methodist Chapel - an opportunity to share stories and memories of the life and ministry for the church here in Fourstones with tea and cake.

Sunday 12th July 3pm

Our final service of celebration of 150 years of faithful worship, witness and service..

All are welcome

Letter from *The Reverend Ollie*.....

Dear All,

I hope that you enjoyed reading about St Aidan's Church in the last issue of the magazine? It was interesting for me to find out a bit more about the history of the building, standing buildings and archaeology having been my background before ordination. I am very grateful to everyone who has donated to our campaign to raise funds for the upkeep of St Aidan's.

As a parish, we have to raise all of our own funds for maintenance, parish share (a contribution towards the cost of having a rector), and bills. This is all done through the generosity of parishioners' donations, and not from the Diocese of Newcastle or the Church of England.

This highlights how invaluable financial contributions are to the parish church, because it allows us to keep the lights on and get on with the things that churches have done for centuries, serving the parish and community by: offering holy worship; helping people to mark significant events in life; being a place of prayer, reflection, and community; as well as holding in trust some of the community's historical fabric and social history.

So every donation that we receive, no matter how small or large, we are extremely grateful for.

In May, the church celebrates the feast of the Ascension, when the risen Jesus ascends into heaven. It is a day that causes us to cast our eyes upward, to keep our minds on heavenly things like love, joy, hope, and peace (goodness knows we need some of those things at the moment). Yet at the same time, it is a reminder that we, as the church and a community, need to keep our feet on the ground, caring, loving, and serving one another in Christ's name.

With my best wishes and prayers,

The Rev. Ollie Dempsey
Rector of Warden with Newbrough

Pattern of Worship across the Parishes by the Wall (East)

St John Lee, Warden with Newbrough and Haydon Bridge

	0800	0930	1100
1st Sunday	St John Lee	Warden (BCP)	Haydon Bridge, St Cuthbert
2nd Sunday	no service	St John Lee	Haydon Bridge, St Cuthbert
3rd Sunday	no service	Newbrough*	Haydon Bridge, St Cuthbert
4th Sunday	Warden	St John Lee	Haydon Bridge, St Cuthbert
5th Sunday	no service	Fourstones	Haydon Bridge - Methodist Church Joint service

***Warden & Newbrough Annual meeting after the 9.30am Parish Eucharist**

Stations of the Cross

Every Wednesday afternoon during Lent, at 16.30 at S Aidan, Fourstones

Weekday Services

Morning Prayer	0800	Monday – Thursday at <i>Haydon Bridge</i>
Evening Prayer	1630	Monday – Wednesday (Monday & Tuesday at <i>Haydon Bridge</i> . Wednesday at <i>Fourstones</i>)
The Eucharist	1000	Wednesday at <i>St John Lee</i>
The Eucharist	On festival days as advertised	

The Reverend Ollie Dempsey Tel: 01434 671 649 email: fr.oliver.dempsey@outlook.com