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# inside MORPETH



**What a great Weekend of Words  
planned for 2026 book festival!**

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# inside MORPETH

**As I was writing the words for this edition's article on Morpeth Book Festival, my mind drifted back to childhood days when you could barely wait for a much-anticipated occasion to arrive, like Christmas Day, for example, and the excitement of opening presents that Santa Claus had delivered.**

Because, as I typed the words, I was thinking I can scarcely wait for the 2026 book festival weekend next March! Why? Because the line-up of writers already booked for the festival is quite phenomenal. Next year's book festival will be fourth to be jointly organised in the town by Greater Morpeth Development Trust (GMDT) and Northumberland libraries – and it is gearing up to be the best yet.

As readers will see from our exclusive report, a host of television celebrities, best-selling authors and colourful characters will be coming to Morpeth to talk about their work.

Morpeth is now one of four books festivals in Northumberland, the others being at Berwick, Alnwick and Hexham. As the newest festival, however, it has been rapidly gaining a reputation as one of the best, if not arguably more so.

What is revealing is that leading writers are now enquiring if they can speak at the event, while others have been more than happy to say they will come back, because of the enthusiastic reception they received on their first visit.

As we also report in this edition, the book festival is just one of the stand-out events has brought to Morpeth over the past two decades, including leading the repair, restoration and transformational work on first the Town Hall then Morpeth railway station.

But, back to the book festival and three key dates to make a note of. The first are March 21st and 22nd, 2026 when the 'Weekend of Words' will take place, and the third is this November 3rd when tickets go on sale. Be sure to buy them for the author's talk you want to attend, before they sell out!

*Ian Leech*  
Editor of Inside Morpeth

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Steph McGovern



Alan Johnson

# Book Festival just gets even better and better!

Inside Morpeth exclusive by Editor **Ian Leech**

Just when you think the Morpeth Book Festival can't get any better another one comes along to prove you wrong!

The third festival last March was popularly acclaimed as the best yet in terms of leading visiting authors who agreed to take part in the event including Mari Hannah, Gervase Phinn, James Naughtie, Chris Mullin, B A Paris and Sara Cockerill to name but a few.

But, already with six months still to go before the 2026 Morpeth Book Festival, the line-up of authors booked to speak at the event, looks even better if that seems at all possible.

"At the end of this year's festival everyone on our organising team wondered how we could top that in 2026, but we are already very confident that we are going to do just that," Festival Director Frank Rescigno told me.

A quick check of some of the authors who

will be in Morpeth over Book Festival weekend of 21 and 22 March 2026 shows why. Already the line-up includes Festival Patron Mari Hannah who will be in conversation with former BBC Breakfast TV presenter Steph McGovern talking about her debut novel *Dead Line*. Steph who currently presents a podcast with ITV's political editor Robert Peston, has hosted her own Channel 4 BAFTA nominated daily lunchtime chat show and is also a regular panellist and chair of BBC's *Have I Got News For You*.

As Val McDermid says in a back-cover comment on *Dead Line*, it 'lifts the lid' on what goes on behind the scenes to present an early-morning daily news programme, and what can go wrong when a presenter's live-feed from the studio is hacked by a hijacker telling her they have kidnapped her family. The result – adds Ann Cleeves – is a 'pacy, witty, engaging thriller, entertaining and delightfully authentic.'

Former Minister in the Blair and Brown Labour Governments, Alan Johnson is the author of best-selling biographies and novels. At the Festival, he will be in conversation with one-time Cabinet colleague Chris Mullin talking about his acclaimed portrait of Harold Wilson, who was twice Prime Minister in the 1970s. Alan, who started work as a postman at the age of 18 before going on to become General Secretary of the Communication Workers' Union, was elected MP for Hull West in 1997.

He held the posts of Minister for Works & Pensions, Education, Health and Home Secretary before standing down at the 2017 General Election bringing-to-an-end his 25 years in Parliament. As well as his much-acclaimed biography of Harold Wilson, he has written four volumes of his memoirs and three best-selling novels.

After their chat Chris Mullin – journalist, politician, justice campaigner, diarist



Chris Mullin



Sally Magnusson

and novelist – who was prominent in the campaign to overturn the convictions of six men jailed after being wrongly accused of being the IRA men behind the Birmingham pub bombings of 1974 in which 21 people were killed and another 170 injured, will talk about his book ‘Error of Judgement: The Truth About the Birmingham Bombings.’

Chris who now lives in the heart of rural Northumberland after spending more than 20 years in the Commons as the Sunderland South MP, and who was a guest author at the third Morpeth Book Festival last March, told me: “One of the great discoveries of my retirement has been that the political meeting is not dead. It has just been transferred to the literary festival. I much enjoyed my appearance at Morpeth earlier this year. A lively interview. An excellent audience and a healthy number of books signed and sold. What’s not to like?”

Morpeth Book Festival is also delighted to announce that next spring it will welcome to the town, renowned Scottish journalist, broadcaster and author Sally Magnusson. Sally grew up in a Glasgow household that in one way or another was always filled with stories. Her father, of course, was Iclander Magnus, famed as the host for many years of the BBC show Mastermind, while her mother was Scottish newspaper journalist Mamie Baird. Not surprising perhaps then that Sally started her working life reporting for The Scotsman

newspaper in Edinburgh before enjoying a high-profile career as a presenter of many flagship BBC television and radio news programmes,

Sally turned to writing acclaimed factual works as well as a series of novels starting in 2018 with *The Sealwoman’s Gift* set in 17th Century Iceland. Her fourth novel about to be published shortly will be *The Shapeshifter’s Daughter* which explores the Norse influence on Orkney, by way of re-imagining the myth of Hel of the underworld.

Fellow Scottish journalist and television legend Alistair Moffat will make a welcome return to the Festival for the second time next spring. The former Edinburgh Fringe Festival Director, programme director and chairman of Scottish Television, is also a great storyteller and prolific author of many highly acclaimed books about his beloved homeland. Alistair also knows all there is to know about literary gatherings having been one of the founders of the Borders Book Festival in Melrose.

Thriller writer T M Logan whose books have sold more than three million copies, as well as being scripted for hit television dramas, will be a new name at the Festival. His books have sold more than three million copies in the UK as well as being translated into 22 other languages. Six of his novels have been Sunday Times best-sellers and two of them – *The Holiday*

Fellow Scottish media personalities, broadcasters and authors Sally Magnusson and Alistair Moffat will be welcome authors at Morpeth Book Festival 2026



Alistair Moffat





Mitford Church – re-built by the family in the 19th Century

and *The Catch* – have been adapted for television.

A former national newspaper journalist, Tim now writes novels full-time, and lives in Nottinghamshire with his family. His next book, *The Weekend*, will be published just before the Morpeth festival next February, and has been described as ‘Assured, compelling and hypnotically readable’ by none other than Lee Childs.

What will be a much-anticipated talk will feature Hugh Mitford Raymond, a direct descendent of the last seven squires of Mitford since 1042. From those earliest days the Mitfords – landowners and philanthropists, activists, fascists and peers of the realm – have been one of England’s most extraordinary families. They oversaw the building of Mitford Castle, Manor, Hall and church on an estate which was sold to Tyneside businessman and Newcastle United Chairman Freddie Shepherd and his family in 1993.

Born in Durban, South Africa, in 1953, Hugh has been a racehorse trainer and breeder, and more latterly a renowned writer and broadcaster. He is the author of *The Mitford Family* – Nearly A Thousand Years of History, as well as books about the development of the Middle East, in which his family played no small part.

A Festival coup will be the visit to Morpeth of the British Army’s former top medic retired Major General Tim Hodgetts who served for 41 years including tours of Northern Ireland, Kosovo, Iraq and



T M Logan

Afghanistan. He retired in 2024 as Surgeon General and also as the elected senior medical advisor in NATO.

He has written 37 books on topics that encompass serious injury, disaster response and public preparedness for terrorism.

His reflections on an extraordinary career dealing with the consequences of crisis, conflict and war are also captured in his book *Frontlines and Lifelines*, as original poems, written contemporaneously over three decades. A selection has been set to original music and will be performed by a local choir at Morpeth Book Festival.

If this does not whet the appetite for next year’s Festival, then I don’t know what will! It promises to be another wonderful ‘Weekend of Words’ in Morpeth as the Festival is marketed, with plenty of other writers including returning guests New York Times and Sunday Times best-selling



Hugh Mitford Raymond



Retired Major General Tim Hodgetts

author B A Paris with Guy Moppuss and Trevor Wood, Alan Wilkinson and Bridgett Gubbins.

Tickets for Morpeth Book Festival will go on sale locally from November 3rd when a full programme of events will also be available. In our winter edition of *Inside Morpeth*, we will also bring readers more information about the festival.





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**DESIGN - SUPPLY - INSTALL**



# Judges just LOVE-D the Cresswell walled garden!

The wonderfully restored Cresswell Walled Garden certainly caught the eye of the judges of this year's LOVE Northumberland awards writes Inside Morpeth Editor **Ian Leech**, because it was named as the Best Coastal or Countryside project entered into the annual competition.

Over the past four or five years the garden that was once attached to the now demolished stately Cresswell Hall, has been transformed from an abandoned overgrown wilderness into a magnificently tranquil space of peace and sheer joy which can be freely enjoyed by visitors of all ages.

There are flower borders that are a riot of colour throughout the growing seasons, sitting side-by-side to a wildflower meadow. A newly planted medieval orchard of old varieties such as cobnut, medar, greengage and cordon fruits, is flourishing alongside raised vegetable beds and a lean-to greenhouse sitting in its original Victorian footprint where tomatoes are grown, with surplus produce donated to local groups set up to address food poverty.

There are lawn areas and a stylishly attractive gazebo which can double-up as entertainment space and, of course, there is a wildlife pond in the heart of the garden. A group of beekeeping enthusiasts look after three hives which in time will produce their own Cresswell honey!

The half-acre triangular plot was once part of six acres of kitchen gardens that supplied the Cresswell family who built and lived in the manor house from the 1820s, with all their vegetables, fruit and flowers, including more exotic species such as peaches and pears that could be grown in sheltered heat generated by three high enclosed walls, protecting the garden from the cold north winds that blew inland from the sea less than half a mile away.

What clearly impressed the LOVE judges above and beyond the astonishing transformation, was the fact that what has been achieved has been very largely down to the efforts of a dedicated band of volunteers who it is estimated have given up a remarkable estimated – and back-breaking – 20,000 hours of their own time to create the stunning garden. Yes, indeed they have had some outside help from bodies such as the Heritage Lottery Fund and other funders including Parkdean Resorts who run the neighbouring



Steve Lowe and Alex Pearson are joined by volunteers Rexi and Bruce Fraser, Susan Baxter and Brenda Laing to celebrate the LOVE award

Cresswell Towers Holiday Park as well as owning the land on which the walled garden and the 14th Century Pele Tower both sit.

They have agreed a 25-year-lease covering both sites at a peppercorn rent, as well as contributing £63,000 towards the repair and restoration of the tower and the walled garden.

As Alex Pearson, general manager of the holiday park, told me, the company is committed to supporting such community projects in the area and was as delighted as anyone to learn that the garden is a LOVE award winner this year. "It is a nod to all the hard work that has gone into looking after these local landmarks, and the team of volunteers deserves a huge round of applause for making this happen," he said.

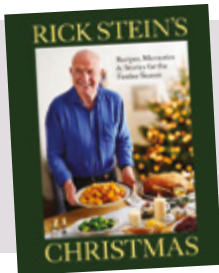
Steve Lowe, who co-ordinates the work of volunteers at both the Pele Tower and the walled garden, said they were

overjoyed to win the 2025 LOVE award, something the twin projects overseen by the Cresswell Pele Tower Charitable Incorporated Organisation, has now done twice. The charity that was jointly established by Cresswell Parish Council and Greater Morpeth Development Trust, first won a LOVE award three years ago for its restoration of the Pele Tower which had been deemed as a building 'at risk' by English Heritage.

Without their volunteers, said Steve, nothing could have been achieved at Cresswell. What is rewarding to all of them, he added, is that almost without exception people who visit the walled garden declare that it had been a stunning experience to spend time there. Cresswell walled garden is open daily from 10am to 6pm during the summer months and it is freely accessible to visitors including wheelchair users. Further information is available by logging on to <https://cresswellpeletower.org.uk/>



# Chef Rick Stein comes to Morpeth!



**Celebrated TV chef and author Rick Stein** is coming to Morpeth Waterstones on Thursday November 13th at 12pm, to sign copies of his new book, *Rick Stein's Christmas*. Ahead of his visit, **Caroline Dominey** talked to him about his book, and about what Christmas means to him.

**Rick Stein's Christmas is a really beautiful book, and a lovely tribute to a very special time of year, how did it come about?**

It came about simply because my wife (Sarah) has said for years 'I think you should do a Christmas book'. She's Australian and one of the things she really loves about living in the UK is Christmas. I think with Christmas you forget it until it comes around again, but as soon as I started thinking about recipes and memories of Christmas it became a no-brainer. I think we all love Christmas in our heart, it's something that matters to us in this slightly rainy island, and it was a joy to do.

**You mention in your book that you want to share all the things you love about Christmas. What makes Christmas special for you?**

Well first and foremost is the Christmas fare, Christmas turkey, glazed ham, and all the things you can do especially around Christmas - chutneys, jams and mulled wines. But I also actually really love Christmas songs. There is a whole piece in the book about Christmas No 1's! And I've always loved carols and carol services. There are so many things that interest me, and, I suspect, other people, about Christmas.

**The introduction to this book is very moving in that you talk about how in dark times, Christmas can be seen as a time of solace. Tell me a little bit more about that.**

I wrote that piece in November on a particularly miserable day in London. November can be a really gloomy time, and there is a point at the end of November where you get a glimmer of Christmas and you think 'it's going to be alright after all'. And I think that's what Christmas is all about really. We all need Christmas.

**You often talk about the importance that a story behind a recipe has, and are inspired by friends' and family**

**recipes. Are there any particular stories behind the recipes in this book?**

A lot of the recipes in the book are accompanied by my memories of times gone by, and a lot of it is to do with my mother. She was a very good cook and I have always tried to cook the food she cooked for me as a child because they were the best things I had ever eaten.

I like other peoples' cooking and I enjoy sharing my friends' and family recipes with other people, particularly because Christmas is all about doing things communally. I think the point of a good recipe is you should always have some memory of the recipe to go with it, not necessarily where you first had it but what inspired you.

**In your dishes you often use what seem to be easily accessible, straightforward ingredients to produce really delicious recipes. Is it possible to keep that simplicity when you are cooking at Christmas?**

Yes. The recipes in the book are themselves very simple, so it's not the complexity of the dishes, it's the quantity that is the problem. Most people are not used to cooking for 10-15 people so it is a big deal for anybody really. The other thing, of course, is making sure everything comes together at the right time!

**Preparing and serving Christmas dinners can be a major feat, and many may face this day in the kitchen with some trepidation. Do you have any tips for a stress free Christmas meal?**

The secret, as I'm sure you know, is plan ahead! What I've done in the book is made a detailed plan, right down to starting things off in September. I also challenge ideas of what people do over Christmas. For example one of them is the cooking of the Christmas turkey. I tried all kinds of different ways of cooking it and came to the conclusion that you should just think of it as a big chicken and don't panic!

Don't miss celebrity chef Rick Stein at Waterstones this November



**Much of the book is focused on the great day itself, but you've also included some recipes for New Year's Eve. What kinds of things would you recommend for a perfect New Year's Eve?**

On New Year's Eve, if you like cooking then it is one of those occasions when you can really push the boat out. If I am cooking for a lot of people then normally I like to keep it as informal as possible, but New Year's Eve is one of those events when you can do a proper first course and something quite celebratory. When I was young the idea of cooking on New Year's Eve would have been ridiculous; I'd have gone out to Trafalgar Square! But as I've got older I enjoy having dinner with friends. It's nice to have a very lovely meal and finish off the night.

**You've had an incredible career, spanning several decades, in restaurants, on television, and with many bestselling books. What achievements are you most proud of?**

I suppose to be here and still doing it to be honest! Our main restaurant (The Seafood Restaurant in Padstow, Cornwall) is 50 years old this year and I'm really proud of that. But I am grateful to have had an enjoyable working life and to still be doing it.

Rick Stein will be signing copies of his new book, *Rick Stein's Christmas*, in Waterstones in Morpeth on Thursday November 13th at 12pm. This is an unticketed event. Please arrive early to avoid disappointment.





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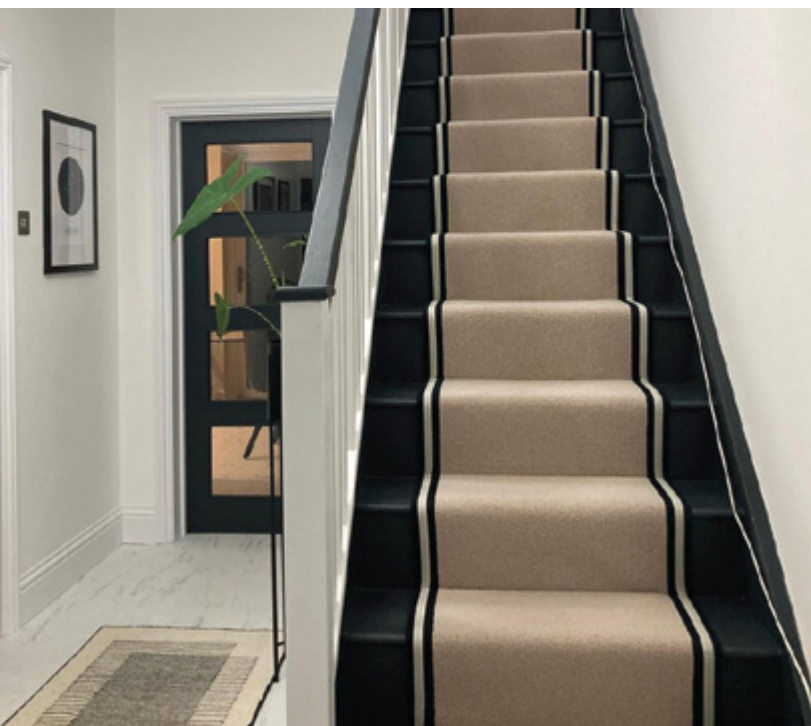
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# IS YOUR INTEREST ONLY MORTGAGE COMING TO AN END AND YOU ARE UNSURE HOW YOU WILL REPAY IT?

By Joanne Manghan, North East Equity Release

**F**or many people who took out an Interest Only mortgage years ago, the finish line is now in sight. But sadly, for thousands of homeowners across the UK, that “end date” isn’t bringing peace of mind, but panic.

What if you don’t have a suitable repayment plan in place?

What if the plan you have no longer works or simply isn’t enough?

What if no one told you what happens when the mortgage term ends?

If that’s where you are now, I want to reassure you, you are not alone. This is a far more common situation than many realise, and there **are** options available, even if it feels like the clock is running out.

## YOU’RE NOT THE ONLY ONE

Back when Interest Only mortgages were popular, borrowers were often told they would need a way to repay the loan in full at the end of the term, usually through savings, investments, or selling the property. But life doesn’t always go to plan.

Sometimes those investments didn’t grow. Sometimes circumstances changed. And in some cases, no clear repayment plan was ever discussed or put in place at all.

Fast forward to now, and I regularly speak to people in their late 50s, 60s, and 70s who suddenly find themselves facing a huge lump sum to repay, with no idea how they’re expected to pay it.

Many worry they’ll be forced to sell their homes or even lose them.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR OPTIONS

Depending on your age, property, income, and goals, there are different routes to explore. These might include:

- **Extending your existing mortgage term** with a new mortgage (Yes, even in retirement).
- **Switching to a Retirement Interest Only Mortgage (RIO).**
- **If suitable, switching to a Lifetime Mortgage** which allows you to stay in your home while unlocking funds.
- **Downsizing on your terms**, rather than under pressure.

Everyone’s circumstances are different, so it’s important to talk things through with someone who understands both the financial options and the emotional side of things too.

## DON’T WORRY...

It’s completely understandable to feel worried when your mortgage term is coming to an end and things aren’t as clear or as secure as you expected.

Many people find themselves in this position, often because of how things were originally set up or explained. It’s rarely down to anything you’ve done or not done and you’re certainly not alone...

What matters now is looking at where you are today and exploring the options that can help you move forward with clarity and confidence.

## LET’S TALK

If your Interest Only mortgage is coming to an end, or already has, and you’re unsure what happens next, you’re very welcome to get in touch.

We’ll go through your situation together, look at what’s available, and talk through the most suitable next steps for you, clearly and simply.

You may have more options than you think...

## CASE STUDY

Bob and Margaret, both in their early 70s recently faced a shortfall when their endowment policy didn’t cover the repayment of their Interest Only mortgage. They were naturally concerned about what might happen, but they knew one thing for sure, they wanted to stay in the home they love and where they have lived for many years.

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# Is your Interest Only mortgage coming to an end?



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# The fascinating story of William Turner

Following our last edition story about a new information board being sited in Carlisle Park about Morpeth-born William Turner, **Dr Marie Addyman** who has been researching, writing and lecturing about his life for some 20 years, has written this Inside Morpeth story about the life of a man universally known as 'The Father of English Botany'.

William Turner was born round about 1508 in Morpeth, most likely the son of a local tanner. It is believed that he attended the Chantry School by Telford Bridge, where a commemorative plaque can be found. The Chantry School was a grammar school, which means it taught Latin, and his education there enabled him to go to university, aided by the patronage of Thomas, Lord Wentworth.

He went to Pembroke College, Cambridge in 1526, and took his general B.A., followed by his M.A, before beginning to specialize in 'physic' the contemporary term for medicine. While there, he became converted to Protestantism and took a year out to be ordained as a deacon and spend time preaching round Oxford. He married in 1540, thereby breaking Henry VIII's law against ecclesiastical marriage.

As a result he went to Northern Italy, studying at Bologna and obtaining his medical doctorate at Ferrara. He then travelled up through Switzerland and Germany before become court physician at Emden, East Friesland in 1544.

On Henry's death he returned and became physician to Protector Somerset. At this point he wrote *The Names of Herbs* (1549) followed by Part 1 of his *Herball* (1551). This was not the first herbal to be written in English but it was the first to name and describe plants as accurately as possible and to analyse their medical properties according to the best authorities of his time and his own experience. Two further Parts followed in 1562 and 1568, when the complete work was published. It is this seminal work which has earned him the title of 'The Father of English Botany'.

Turner was involved in the reforming movement in the English church under Edward VI, and was required to change from being a physician to taking up the post of Dean of Wells in 1551. His position there, like that of other reformist English clerics, became unsafe with the

ascendancy of the strongly pro-Catholic Mary I in 1553, and either later that year or early in 1554 he again went into exile. He may have moved around a while in Germany but ended up practising as a physician in the town of Wissembourg. All the time he was writing religious pamphlets, continuing to botanise, and researching the baths and spas of Germany, as he had done in his first exile when in Northern Italy and Switzerland, and comparing them to the baths at Bath.

With the ascension of Elizabeth I to the throne in 1558, Turner returned home and regained with some difficulty his position at Wells. He became increasingly ill and got permission to live in London, dying in his house at Crutched Friars in 1568. A plaque recording his life and achievements was put up in his local church, St Olave's, and later one was erected in memory of his son, who was instrumental in getting the complete tripart *Herball* published in the year of his father's death.



Dr Marie Addyman



The Turner garden in Carlisle Park



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# 20 years of TMP Wealth Management

## Celebrating our business, our clients and staff

**TMP Wealth Management is a firm of Financial Advisers based in Morpeth and they have worked with individuals and businesses around Morpeth, the North East and beyond for almost 20 years.**

The Practice is approaching its 20th year helping clients and has come a long way since it was founded by James Richfield and Peter Grieves, who are still very active in the business.

Reflecting on their journey, James recalls founding the Practice in 2005, with Peter, which was then called The Morpeth Practice, now TMP Wealth Management.

'We had been working closely for some time and decided to set up in business together because we both shared the same values of making sure we always do the right things for our clients and, personally, we both wanted to build a Practice for our community and beyond', recalls James.

He continues, 'Working with our communities is very important to us and we are delighted we have been able to support our local Morpeth Rugby Club and Morpeth Golf Club for many years. The long standing sponsorship of these Clubs means that we are able to help them provide much needed sports activities locally and also support initiatives that help develop youth in sport, which is always rewarding'.

'Our vision when we started 20 years ago was to make sure we help people make a difference to their lives by providing bespoke financial planning, together with a friendly, positive and memorable experience. Peter and I are both very pleased that with the hard work and the support of our dedicated team, we have built a great reputation for delivering on these expectations'.

'20 years on, and we are not done yet, there is still so much we want to achieve and develop the business for our clients and our staff. Evolving organically and enabling some changes for the better is always at the forefront of our minds. We challenge ourselves and each other, always seeking improvements on how we look after our relationships and the processes that support that.'

'We continue to develop and grow our business and are very proud that we now work with over 2200 clients in Morpeth, the North East and beyond. In 2020 we were pleased to appoint two new Directors, Glenn Bolton and Dan Smith and today we have twenty-seven dedicated staff. Attracting, developing and retaining the best talent is key for us

and we continue to support and develop our wider Financial Advisory team. Many of our team members have been with us through the years and have developed their own path and career as our business has grown. Supporting this growth and development for our staff is really special and rewarding for Peter and I.'

'Looking back over the years, we are humbled that clients continue to value our advice and recommend us to their friends and family. We are proud to have created an environment that means much of our team have been with us over much of our business journey and continue to be part of the fabric of TMP Wealth Management.

We would like to thank all our staff and clients for their continued support and we will keep delivering on our promise we set out 20 years ago, which is to be there for you, as life and the world we live in changes. Let's see what the next 20 years will hold....'



**Members of TMP Wealth Management Team reflect on their time with the business and what makes working there so special.**

**'Not long after I successfully completed the SJP Financial Adviser Academy in 2012, I joined the Practice which was then called The Morpeth Practice. I was mentored by Peter and James and I was able to learn a lot from them and put my learning and theory from the Academy into practice.'**

Back then, there was a reluctance from other firms to employ someone as a financial adviser but Peter and James were willing to take me on, and I have never looked back.

With their support over the years, and always improving myself, I am now a Chartered Financial Adviser and also achieved a qualification as a specialist in Later Life Care Planning. TMP Wealth Management is good place to work. I like going to the office as it's a nice place to work all round. I would find it hard to believe for someone to say it's better elsewhere'.

#### **Glenn Bolton**

Director and Chartered Financial Adviser, TMP Wealth Management

## **TMP** | WEALTH MANAGEMENT

**'I was nineteen when I started here and I adapted and grew with the business. I've worked with James from the very beginning, and back then, I was the only member of staff wearing multiple hats. I progressed to client services and paraplanning.'**

James, Peter and the team have been very supportive, helping me grow my knowledge. I've been encouraged to develop and attend various courses to further my career.

In the last few years, the business has revised its structure, and I've been able to focus on my current role as Practice Manager. It's a wonderful place to work'.

#### **Stefanie Corbett**

Practice Manager, TMP Wealth Management

**Visit our website [tmpwealthmanagement.co.uk](https://tmpwealthmanagement.co.uk) or call us on 01670 505333**

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An autumn stroll at the grounds of Wallington Hall



The majesty of Cragside

# Autumn comes alive across Northumberland

This autumn, Northumberland's landscapes and landmarks come alive with creativity and colour. From immersive photography in Wallington's woods to bold new art at Seaton Delaval Hall and golden trails at Cragside, each National Trust site offers a unique celebration of the season.

## Seaton Delaval Hall

### Creative talent at Seaton Delaval Hall and half term spooky fun...

From 6 September to 19 October, Seaton Delaval Hall proudly presents the North East Emerging Artist Award exhibition with site-specific works by Jordan Edge, Phoebe Scott and Lucy Waters. Expect a sonic sculpture, an installation partly woven using nettles from the garden, and ceramics inspired by the hall's heritage.

On 27 September, the Hall welcomes *Se Gæst | The Guest*, a powerful new performance by acclaimed choreographer and theatre-maker Anthony Lo-Giudice. Through dance, live music and puppetry, and shaped by real voices from across England, the production examines who we are, where we come from, and where we are going.

Daily potted history talks and weekly archaeology sessions throughout the season offer fascinating insights into the hall's past and present, whilst interactive experiences like the Game of Seaton Delaval Hall and the Upside Down Room add a playful twist to your visit.

This October half term, the Basement transforms into a Halloween haven, the Lost Wing Lawn hosts a playful graveyard and children can follow a Halloween or seasonal trail packed with surprises. Join the annual family fun Halloween day on Friday 31st October, with best costume and carved pumpkin competitions to enjoy plus the musician-led pumpkin parade.



Spooky goings-on this Halloween at Delaval Hall

- Open daily during Northumberland School Holidays
- Wednesday-Sunday term time
- North East Emerging Artist Award: Free to enjoy (normal admission applies)
- *Se Gæst | The Guest*: Ticket charges apply
- [nationaltrust.org.uk/seatondelavalhall](https://nationaltrust.org.uk/seatondelavalhall)
- 25 minutes from Morpeth





## Wallington

**Wallington welcomes the return of the Earth Photo Exhibition 2025, from 13 September to 2 November.**

Created by Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) and Parker Harris, the main objective is to reveal the narratives behind the pictures, encouraging conversations about our world, its peoples, environments, and the changing climate through visual storytelling.

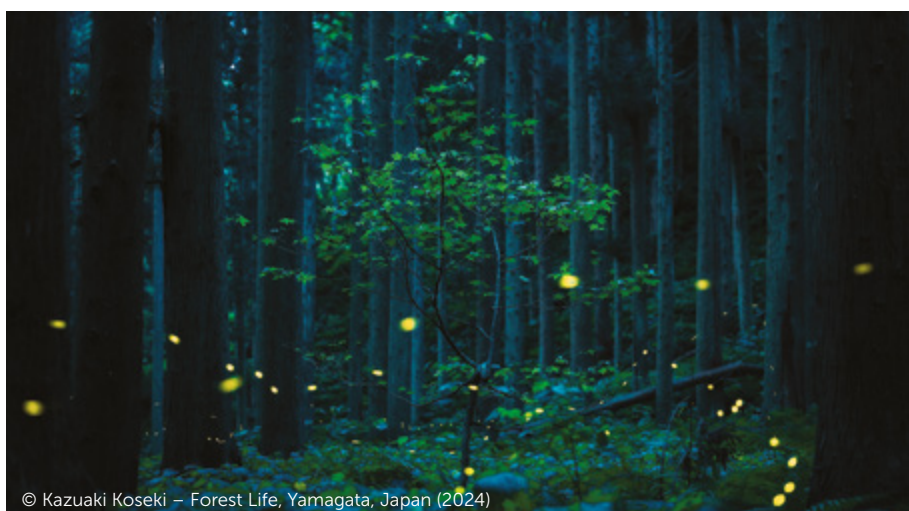
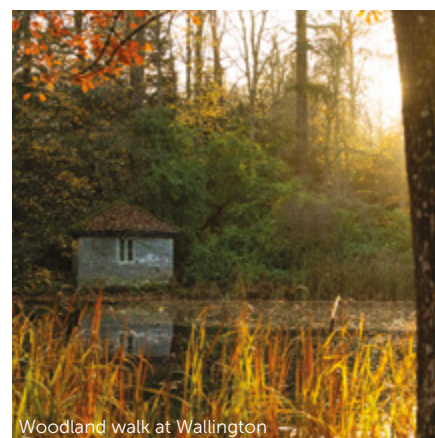
This year's display features a selection of shortlisted and award-winning photographs, thoughtfully placed throughout Wallington's woodlands. By setting these images in nature itself, the exhibition offers a deeper, more immersive experience for visitors.

A visit to Wallington this autumn is a feast for the senses; a woodland walk will dazzle with wonderfully rich reds, golds and yellows, leaves crunch underfoot and the smell of the fabulous Katsura tree in the Walled Garden (reminiscent of toffee apples!) is enough to make your mouth water. Let the beauty of Wallington spark your imagination and provide inspiration for your own photography and their brand-new photography competition celebrating the season.

Whether it's the intricate detail of a fallen

leaf, the rich colours of changing trees, or a chance encounter with local wildlife, budding and experienced photographers alike are invited to showcase autumn and nature through their lens. Full details will be announced on the website and social media soon.

- Open 10am-5pm
- Earth Photo 2025: Free to enjoy (normal admission applies)
- [nationaltrust.org.uk/wallington](https://nationaltrust.org.uk/wallington)
- 25 minutes from Morpeth



## Cragside

**Experience nature's canvas at Cragside.**

One of the best ways to immerse yourself in this most transformative season is on foot. As autumn arrives, the grounds become a tapestry of gold, amber, and red. Paths are blanketed with colourful fallen leaves and bronze pine needles, while Cragside's extensive network of paths wind through the woodland, beneath towering trees, and alongside babbling burns.

If you're looking for a gentle stroll around a sparkling lake, Nelly's Moss walk might be just the thing. Follow the blue waymarkers from Crozier to circle the twin lakes. For a more adventurous hike, try the Hydro-power Trail. This 5.5-mile route introduces you to Cragside's pioneering past while showcasing the beauty of the estate. It begins near the House and could take most of the day to complete.

You can also indulge your passion for autumn indoors. Nature and wildlife inspired the interiors of Cragside House, where warm autumnal colours bring a cosy glow to each room. Look out for the forest animal carvings on the wooden panels, stained glass depicting the changing seasons and wallpapers featuring harvests for fruit.

And don't forget your camera. Low sunlight casts dancing shadows across the woodland floor, and as the sun dips behind the valley hills, it bathes the House in a fiery glow creating a spectacular golden hour.

- Open 10am-5pm (last entry 4pm)
- [nationaltrust.org.uk/cragside](https://nationaltrust.org.uk/cragside)
- 35 minutes from Morpeth



Immerse yourself in autumn at Cragside







Morpeth players ready for the new rugby season

# Rugby season previewed By Simon Cox

Last season Morpeth 1st XV performed well throughout to finish 3rd (P22 W16 L6) in our highly competitive Regional 2 North league (RFU Level 6). Only winners Middlesbrough were promoted to Regional 1, by marginally better points difference over runners up Northern, and we expect new season 2025-26 will be strongly contested also. New teams into our league are Percy Park, Sunderland, Wigton; and we welcomed newly promoted Sunderland to Mitford Road for our opening League fixture.

Our youthful Reivers 2nd XV won 12 of their 16 games and finished 2nd in their local CANDY 1 league, which bodes well for the future. Meanwhile our Edwardians 3rd XV went one better to win their CANDY 2 league.

Our Ranters Vets XV came runners up in their Northumberland Vets County Cup, narrowly losing the Final 7-10 against Alnwick. Our Colts were also runners up in their Northumberland Colts County Cup, losing out to Tynedale. We are always keen to attract new players into the Club and offer a broad spectrum of playing opportunities, with quality coaching at all Age Grade levels from u6 through to u16, u17/u18 Colts playing in Scottish Borders League, then 3 Senior teams plus 'Ranters' Veterans XV (age 35+).

In addition, we have 3 Girls Teams at u12-14 / u16 / u18 age groups, and have recently established adult Women's touch rugby sessions – ideal starting point for those new to rugby, or returning to the game after an extended gap. England are hosting the Women's Rugby World Cup this Autumn, and the 'Red Roses' v USA kicking off the tournament at Sunderland.

Local girls are encouraged to enjoy a range of different rugby experiences, not all involving contact, with enthusiastic qualified coaches at Morpeth RFC. A number of our former players have gone on to achieve International honours. Please watch out for further details of activities at the Club in September, in



The recently redeveloped and lounge bar are a popular venue choice



addition to the regular Thursday evening and Sunday afternoon girls training sessions and games.

Rugby news, events & contacts:  
**[morpethrfc.rfu.club](http://morpethrfc.rfu.club)**

Away from our 3 pitches, a major Clubhouse Redevelopment was completed in October 2022. Upstairs we have our very welcoming **Laidlaws Sports Bar** including TNT Sports & Premier Sports match coverage, plus Front Row Balcony with panoramic views across our main grass pitches. Downstairs is our large **Elsie Davis Function Suite**, offering highly flexible layouts, fitted with high

quality acoustics, full glass bi-fold doors frontage and optional privacy blinds. Our Clubhouse is fully digital broadband wi-fi enabled throughout.

## Environment:

Last year we set up a new partnership agreement with Green Acres Northumberland – a local project helping businesses to offset and reduce their carbon footprint, <https://greenacresfuture.co.uk>. Subsequently 10 trees have been planted offsite towards MRFC carbon offset, 6 new bare root trees were planted in our existing tree belt next to Mitford Road, plus some hawthorn / blackthorn hedge planting commenced this Spring along fence by side of Training Area 1 with more planned Autumn 2025.

## Facilities:

Set in a wooded 'bowl' and adjacent to the River Wansbeck, with plentiful car parking, we believe our Clubhouse and grounds occupy probably the finest site in Morpeth. Our recently redeveloped facilities are in high demand, and proving to be a popular choice for a wide spectrum of clients. The flexibility of our 3 function rooms allows us to host many different events, from small business meetings to fully planned and serviced weddings. Depending on the layout required, we can comfortably cater for up to 250 people, and more by the addition of a marquee connected directly to the Clubhouse. Our commercial grade kitchen and highly regarded catering service is available to meet all requirements.

If you wish to arrange an event, please get in touch with our friendly team at **[enquiries@morpethrfc.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@morpethrfc.co.uk)**, call **07939 348234** or visit **[www.morpethrfc.co.uk](http://www.morpethrfc.co.uk)**

# Music society's 80th concert season

By Louise Freeman

Since 1944, MMS has promoted an annual series of six concerts in the town. As a member-run society, we're proud to celebrate our 80th season this year. Past decades have seen such musical superstars as singer Kathleen Ferrier, cellist Julian Lloyd Webber, and oboist Léon Goossens perform for MMS and we hope to continue to entertain our enthusiastic audiences with a lively mix of instruments, repertoire and musical styles.

The new season will start on 9th October 2025 in Morpeth Methodist Church with a concert by the Heath Quartet. Local music lovers will be familiar with this highly regarded string quartet as the cellist Christopher Murray is the son of pianist David Murray.

Italian pianist Sofia Sacco brings her 'Portraits and Dances' programme to Morpeth on 13th November. We can look forward to enjoying works by Bach, Schumann, Couperin and Rameau as well as contemporary Turkish composer Fazil Say's astonishing 'Black Earth'. Pocket Sinfonia will join us on 11th December to delight our audience with their reinterpretations of orchestral masterpieces for chamber music. Their programme will include Salieri, Mozart, Grieg and Prokofiev. On 15th January 2026, we are delighted to welcome brass and woodwind players from Royal Northern Sinfonia with a programme centred on Beethoven's celebrated Octet Op. 103. The famous cellist Raphael Wallfisch will play in Morpeth on 19th March with his Trio Shaham Erez Wallfisch. The piano trio will perform a programme of classic works to include Mozart, Smetana, Grieg and Mendelssohn. Rounding off our season, Brass Tracks quintet will entertain us with a characteristically eclectic programme ranging from music by Henry VIII to



Heath Quartet

Carmen and 'A Chorus Line'!

Amazing value! A season ticket for all six concerts costs only £80 – costing less than £13.50 per concert and saving £34 compared to buying separate adult tickets. Apply now via the JOIN page on the website.

Buying your season ticket helps MMS to support our local young musicians-free tickets for under 18s; an annual scholarship for an outstanding music student; and free workshops for local schools. Last year, more than sixty pupils from Chantry and KEVI schools enjoyed a brilliant workshop by the Tim Kliphuis Trio.

Our venue, the spacious and accessible, church has a great acoustic as well as a hearing loop. David Whetstone of the Journal wrote approvingly: "Morpeth Methodist Church is a nice venue – more intimate, naturally, than the Sage and with a surprisingly clear acoustic."

Individual (adult) concert tickets are also on sale at £19. Students aged 18 years and under are warmly invited to attend for FREE as are tickets for essential carers enabling another person to attend. Buy your single adult tickets via the society secretary - telephone 01670 512075 or from Morpeth Tourist Information Centre as well as online from the MMS website.



Sofia Sacco

Facebook @MusicMorpeth

Instagram @MusicMorpeth

Threads @morpethmusoc





Maximize Education CEO Christine Jamieson with some of her tutors

# Morpeth education centre celebrating exam success

Maximize Education is changing lives inside and outside the classroom.

The education facility in Loansdean, Morpeth, is celebrating another successful academic year which has seen its students secure university, college and sixth form places, thanks to impressive exam results.

But the impact of Maximize Education stretches way beyond the classroom, thanks to CEO Christine Jamieson's passion for giving back to worthy causes and supporting individuals, including rising sports stars, community projects and international charity projects.

Maximize Education provides alternative education provision five days a week for students from all over Northumberland, working in collaboration with local governments, schools and the voluntary sector. It also provides private tuition for students in the evening.

It has enjoyed a successful year, with 100% of its A-Level students securing places at their first-choice university with grades on or above their required offer grades.

There was also success at GCSE level, with 85% of students securing Grade 4 or above. All 100% of their GCSE students improved their mock results with 95% gaining sufficient additional marks to secure a grade uplift.

The results mark another successful year for Maximize Education, a private education facility offering alternative and supplementary education provision to students covering Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3, GCSE, A Level, undergraduate, post-graduate and adult learners.

Whether students need exam preparation or subject support, the service adapts to the individual needs of students and helps them to achieve their academic goals.

Christine said: "We're proud of our students who have achieved excellent results and are now moving on to university, college and sixth form, and we are delighted that the facility is going from strength to strength as an educational and tuition service. Our tutors invest in our students as individuals, building their confidence and transferable skills to maximise not just their immediate results but their future potential."

Maximize Education, which has been providing educational support to students from pre-school to undergraduate and adult learners for nearly 40 years, is also committed to giving back to communities, both locally and overseas.

Some 2,000 recipe cards and 150 VE80 candles made by students were donated to Stannington First School, Morpeth First School, Tritlington First School, Longhorsley First School and Rothbury First School, and libraries across Northumberland.

It sponsors Morpeth girls' rugby team and up-and-coming sports stars, including talented show jumper Danny Nicholson, who is based in Throckley, who has secured his place at the Horse of the Year Show and MMA fighter Mike "Jaguar" Tchamou, who competes in Cage Warriors, as well as Bertrand Batamag, who coaches mixed martial arts from Newcastle Fight Centre.

Maximize Education has also sponsored community events, including providing lunch and afternoon tea at the VE80 celebrations at Stobhill Link Centre in Morpeth. It was also among the sponsors of Morpeth Book Festival.

Its charitable activities have extended to supporting Concern Worldwide, a charity committed to ending extreme poverty around the world. A donation from Maximize Education enabled the purchase of livestock to be gifted to women raising families alone as a result of war, famine and disease.

# Register and book now for 2025-2026 academic year

**Morpeth-based Maximize Education provides educational support through one-to-one individualised teaching programmes delivered by its skilled team of educators.**

Visit our website for further information.

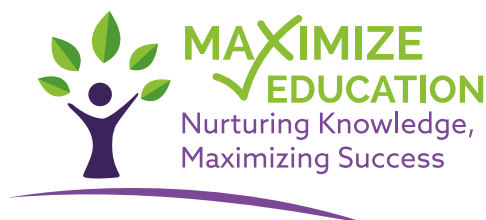
We provide tuition for students attending schools, colleges and universities across the region through in-centre or on-line 1:1 tuition.



**ONLY 20 AFTER-SCHOOL TUITION PLACES REMAINING**

**BOOK NOW FOR NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR**

**Call us now to find out how we can help achieve the best results possible**



9 Telford Court, Loansdean, Morpeth NE61 2DB  
Register now for September 2024 by calling:

**(01670) 641212 or 079834 25115**  
**[www.maximizeeducation.com](http://www.maximizeeducation.com)**



# The destination of choice for fashionable gentlemen

As the leaves begin to paint the landscape with fiery hues and the air takes on a crisper edge, the autumn winter season has arrived. RUTHERFORD & Co has once again proven itself as the destination of choice for discerning gentlemen, with its autumn winter 2025 menswear collection.

Featuring renowned brands such as Fynch Hatton, Farah, Original Penguin and Joules, this collection seamlessly blends sophistication with comfort to create an effortlessly stylish look for the modern man.

Fynch Hatton has always been synonymous with refined elegance, and this season is no exception. Their impeccably tailored shirts and knitwear, rendered in earthy tones and luxurious fabrics, are a testament to their commitment to quality. Fynch Hatton embraces the charm of classic menswear while infusing it with modern sensibility, making it the perfect choice for the urban sophisticate.

Farah have been dressing men for decades, their clothing is tried, tested and trusted. From cozy knitwear to versatile outerwear, Farah effortlessly combines style with functionality. Their collection showcases a range of muted colours and understated patterns, perfect for those who appreciate minimalist aesthetics without sacrificing warmth and comfort.

Original Penguin takes a playful approach to menswear

this season by embracing a retro revival. With bold prints, vibrant colours, and a nod to the '60s and '70s, Original Penguin injects a sense of fun into the collection. From retro-inspired sweaters to statement outerwear, this brand encourages men to embrace their inner style icon.

Joules strikes a balance between fashion and function, catering to the modern man who enjoys outdoor adventures. Their collection boasts rugged yet stylish pieces that are perfect for embracing the chill of winter. Expect warm, weather-resistant outerwear, cozy knits, and versatile layering options designed to keep you comfortable no matter the terrain.

Whether you're seeking classic elegance, functional style, retro inspiration, or outdoor-ready pieces, Rutherfords has you covered. This collection encapsulates the essence of timeless style, ensuring that you'll look and feel your best throughout the autumn and winter months. So, embrace the changing seasons with confidence, courtesy of Rutherfords' latest menswear offerings.





# MENS AW25



RUTHERFORD & Co  
MORPETH

10-16 Bridge Street, Morpeth, NE61 1NJ | Monday - Saturday 09:30 - 17:30



# How to find out how much you need to leave your family – and when

By David Lamb CFP™ MCSI



## Many people, when asked how much they want to leave after their death, will say 'nothing'.

One client told me that the last cheque he wanted to write would be to the undertaker and, if we did our job well, that cheque would bounce!

Most people will leave something because they don't know when they are going to die, which is not too helpful for financial planning but probably good news. But even those who want to leave nothing will end up leaving far too much because they fear spending too much and running out.

How much you need to leave changes throughout your life. Those with financially dependent families probably need to leave quite a lot to make up for lost income in the event of the early death of the breadwinner.

Once the children are financially

independent, so long as your partner is financially secure, you probably do not need to leave a lot.

How much you are going to leave is an essential question that needs to be answered to protect financial dependents. Using cashflow modelling these questions can be easily answered and can result in families being financially secure, no matter what happens.

Many people want their loved ones to benefit from their wealth once they no longer need it but you do not necessarily need to die before you no longer need it. Your cashflow projections will indicate how much you can afford to give away without compromising your financial security. Why wait for your death before your family benefits?

If you are 30 when your child is born, and you live to 100, they will not inherit

until they are 70. They may have paid for their children to go through university and help them get on the housing ladder years before.

When they receive their inheritance, they probably do not need the money! If you are never going to spend the money, give it away when it is actually needed. And you will be there to see the smile on their faces.

Hoarding your money without gifting or spending it is a waste of opportunities!

Build your own cashflow model, for free, at [lambfinancial.co.uk](http://lambfinancial.co.uk)



Scan the QR code to visit our website or give us a call on **01661 860438**.



## AUTUMN / WINTER EVENTS AT BARNABAS SAFE & SOUND

### Open Mic



Come along to one of our open mic nights, they're **FREE ENTRY**, lots of fun and a great way to encourage young people to perform.

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October 6-9pm  
Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December 6-9pm  
Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February 6-9pm  
Refreshments available

### Christmas Market



Join us on **Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November** between 5-8pm

for our Christmas Night Market  
Stalls from local artisans  
Drinks from Enjoy  
Music and delicious foodie treats  
**FREE ENTRY**

Find us at: The Garage, to the rear of Wellwood House, Dark Lane, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 1SU





# A Charity for Young People in the heart of Morpeth

By Gill Monaghan

## Summer Days

What a Summer we've had! We've offered a range of activities for young people aged 9-16 years, including paddlesports, creative workshops, themed youth clubs, and climbing at Newburn Centre which was a sell-out. We even hosted our own Morpeth Olympics, and built our very own Escape Room: The ISS Morpethian!



Across 26 sessions, we had 264 interactions with young people. A lot of fun was had but most importantly, the young people were active, outdoors, and engaging in positive activities which had the added benefit of focusing on team work, confidence, communication, and social skills.

## What's Next?

To usher in the new school year, we're kicking things off with our weekly youth group sessions:

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September 3.30-5.30pm Youth Club 11-13yrs**

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 3.30-5.30pm Creative Group 11-16yrs**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> September 3.30-5.30pm Youth Club 13-15yrs**

If you would like more information about our youth work contact [ashley.brown@barnabasne.org.uk](mailto:ashley.brown@barnabasne.org.uk)

## Coming Soon!

We're always looking for ways to engage with more young people, and have some great projects in the pipeline, including:

**Youth Justice project** - community work with young people, working in partnership with Morpeth Leisure Centre

**LGBTQ+ Youth Group** - supporting local young people

**Senior Youth Group** - new session for older local youth

**Open Mic Nights** - see our advert for more information

**Half Term Activities** - watch this space!

We will be at the KEVI Inspires event on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> October - if you're going, pop by and say hello!



L-R: Art in the Park, Cardboard Creations, Chemical Reactions, Eco Warriors, Escape Room, Graffiti Art, Olympics, Climbing, Paddlesports. We give thanks to Morpeth Town Council who funded our Paddlesports and Creative sessions. Their support is so valued.

## Our Supported Housing Project

Did you know Barnabas Safe & Sound also provide a Supported Housing Project for young people experiencing housing crisis? Since 2001, we have accommodated more than 330 young people.

We do this so young people have a safe space to stay, addressing their immediate need for shelter, warmth and security. Once a young person is settled in, our Housing Support Worker works with the young person, to create a tailored support plan - with both short term and long term goals. This might include help with benefits, cooking, cleaning, finding work or engaging in education or training. Ultimately, we help to prepare young people for living independently within the community. When they are ready, we help them move on - subject to finding affordable accommodation for them at a time when the country is facing its worse ever housing crisis.



## Can you help steer our charity?

We are looking for local people, who are passionate about youth support, to join our existing Board of Trustees. Our Board lead the charity strategically, and ensure good governance is in place. They are ambassadors for local young people, and are dedicated to ensuring we deliver services in line with our vision, mission and values.

If you are interested in our work, and would like to learn more please contact [hayley.brown@barnabasne.org.uk](mailto:hayley.brown@barnabasne.org.uk). In particular, if you have skills in housing, finance or PR these are areas where we need additional strategic support.



**01670 517721**



For general enquiries  
[admin@barnabasne.org.uk](mailto:admin@barnabasne.org.uk)



Check out our social media



Wellwood House, Dark Lane, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 1SU. Charity Registration Number 1094570



# TOWN CRYER!

The latest News from Morpeth Town Council

## An eventful start to my Mayoral year

**It's been an eventful time since becoming Mayor in May. I have been invited to lots of interesting events and met lots of new people and organisations who have given me a very warm welcome.**

Morpeth has been thriving with tourism this summer, and we've been lucky enough to have great weather for events such as the Morpeth Fair and Picnic in the Park which both had record attendance this year. I've been made an honorary member of Morpeth Rotarians for my Mayoral term and I have a meeting planned soon with Morpeth Lions to see how we can all work together and support the community. I was very happy to be invited to KEVI to talk to the students about democracy and the changes they've effected as school councillors. We have a lot of bright and talented young people in our schools and

I thoroughly enjoyed hearing their thoughts and ideas for Morpeth. They kindly donated their KEVI's Got Talent fundraising to the Mayor's charity which was so welcomed and generous. I am continuing to raise money for my chosen charity, Macmillan Cancer support and have organised a Mayor's golf tournament at Morpeth Golf club on 21st September and I am in the process of organising the Mayor's Ball which will take place in December. I have been overjoyed by the various organisations who have supported me, including the concert held at St James' church and various coffee mornings and bake sales. We have raised over £3000 already. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at the Town Hall open day later in the year and please say hello if you see me out and about.

**Rachael Hogg**  
Mayor of Morpeth



Morpeth's Mayor Councillor Rachael Hogg



## Norham Drive play area

**This Summer saw the refurbishment of Norham Drive play area. This play area was transferred to Morpeth Town Council from Hepscott Parish Council as part of the boundary review and we thought it was ready for a refresh.**

We've kept the swings, replaced the climbing frame and removed the spring rockers and replaced with a mini car and EV charging point play panel, Councillors wanted to promote the greener approach to driving.

There are also two new seats and two picnic benches, here's hoping for an Indian Summer so residents get the chance to enjoy them before the darker nights set in.

Morpeth Town Council

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# Morpeth free family fun

**Well, what a summer that's been, plenty sunshine and little rain!**

Another summer packed with free activities for 9-14 year olds. These activities are part-funded by Morpeth Town Council, working in partnership with Barnabas Safe & Sound and LASP Outdoors. There has been a range of activities including the ever-popular paddle sports on the river and a climbing wall, archery and team building games, including Morpeth Olympics! There was also the opportunity to try out an Escape Room. We are sure there have been some very happy children this Summer!!

As it proved such a hit in 2024, the Town Council hosted the second Free Family Fun Day on Storey Park field on 29th August. Plenty was on offer with an extension to the inflatable assault course, bouncy castles, axe throwing, archery, face painting and fun fair rides. There was also the chance to treat the little ones to a burger and ice-cream. We'd like to extend the offering next year and maybe even run the event over two days, watch this space...

We were pleased to welcome the Pavilion Tipi to Carlisle Park during August. This was well received and enjoyed by many. There were themed weekends with something for everyone both young and old(er). Many a sunny evening was enjoyed with something cold in hand, lets hope they return next year, but before that IT'S CHRISTMAS!

The Christmas Lights Switch On event on will take place on Saturday 15th November. This will be a fun filled family day out with lots of free activities to keep all the family entertained!

The day will include a jam-packed programme of entertainment on the main stage, face painting, photo opportunities in a snow



globe, kiddies fairground attractions, a visit from a very special man in red and a host of food and drink vendors on the Market Place. We are also hoping there will be a Christmas Market in the park, more info to follow. The Pavilion Tipi will also be opening in the park, running right through to the New Year.

For more information on what can be expected on the big day, keep an eye on the Town Council and More in Morpeth websites and social media feeds.

We hope the Christmas Lights Switch-On event will be the start of a magical run up to Christmas in Morpeth!

## Remembrance services

**On Sunday 9th November the Town Council's Remembrance Sunday Service and Parade will take place.**

The Parade, led by Morpeth Pipe Band, will be leaving New Market at approximately 10.35 am to march to the Cenotaph where the traditional Remembrance Service will be held.

Any organisation who wishes to lay a wreath, please contact the Town Council office.

The Mayor, Councillor Rachael Hogg and Morpeth Town Council, will be supporting the Royal British Legion's Two Minute Silence at 11.00 am on Tuesday 11th November. A short service of remembrance will take place outside of Morpeth Town Hall commencing at 10.55 am.

## COUNCIL MEETING TIMETABLE

### SEE NOTICEBOARDS AND WEBSITE

Meeting Timetable for June, July and September 2025. All meetings will be held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall, unless otherwise stated on the agenda. All Committee meetings commence at 6:30 pm, unless otherwise stated on the posters or website.

#### Planning and Transport Committee

8th October 2025  
12th November 2025

#### Finance and General Purposes Committee

1st October 2025  
5th November 2025

#### Full Council

24th September 2025

## Morpeth Town Council unveils new heritage trails to celebrate rich history and culture

**The Town Council and the Friends of Morpeth Museum (FoMM) are proud to announce the launch of four Morpeth Heritage Trails; these captivating walking routes are designed to highlight the town's most treasured historical sites and stories.**

These trails give residents and visitors to Morpeth the chance to find out all about the town's rich history in a thoroughly modern way - through downloading a mobile app which is available on <https://trailtale.co.uk/>

To help you uncover the past we've created four distinct trails each offering a unique perspective on Morpeth's heritage. Visitors will learn about the people, events, and cultural milestones that have shaped the community over generations, as well as discovering places that no longer exist but still hold incredible stories.

The walks are between one and two miles and should take no more than two hours to complete at a comfortable walking pace.

Nic Best - Former Chair of FoMM - said: "These excellent Trails are not only a guide to our beautiful town, but they also serve as a basic introduction to the history of Morpeth, as it can be traced through its buildings."

Whether you're a lifelong resident or a first-time visitor, Morpeth Heritage Trails offer a unique journey into the past - right in the present. Note - FoMM have disbanded as a group.



# Bewick Orchestra charity concert



**The next concert by the Bewick Orchestra continues its tradition of supporting local charities and will be held on Sunday 19th October. Members of the orchestra from throughout the region play without any fees in order to raise the largest possible amount for each chosen charity.**

The programme, to be conducted by Robin Forbes, includes popular pieces by Schumann, Haydn and Bach. Continuing the inclusion of a double concerto in their programme the concert will feature one that is well known in direct contrast to the last one by Max Bruch which is almost unknown. This time it is to be the famous double violin concerto by Bach. Our soloists will be Iona Brown, well known throughout the region not only for

her membership of the Royal Northern Sinfonia but also for the many recitals she gives, and accompanying her will be Dawn Allen, currently leader of the New Tyneside Orchestra which has given concerts in the region since its foundation in 1970. The concert in support of Henry Dancer Days, will include a relatively unknown work by Robert Schumann, a rarely heard work by Raff for wind instruments and one of Haydn's popular symphonies, his 99th out of at least 104 which he wrote.

The Bewick Orchestra was formed in 1994 by Michael and Sarah Doswell and conducted by Michael for 20 years and Sarah played in the cello section for many years.

The concert will be held in St James' Church, Morpeth on Sunday 19th October at 7.30. Tickets (£10, children free) are available from Morpeth Chantry tel: 01670 623455, and at the door.



Fans of Robert Harris and Philip Kerr will love the latest novel by acclaimed thriller writer Rory Clements, who is coming to Morpeth Waterstones on Thursday September 25th at 6pm to talk about *Evil in High Places*, a taut thriller set during the Munich Winter Olympics of 1936.

When Detective Seb Wolff is assigned to a case involving a missing actress romantically linked to Goebbels, he knows that all eyes will be on him as he desperately tries to solve the case. Tickets £5, ask a bookseller instore on Tel 01670 510491 or go to Waterstones.com.

Waterstones Morpeth have a special Halloween treat for ghost hunters everywhere! Paranormal investigator Rob Kirkup will be visiting the store on Wednesday October 29th at 6pm to talk about his latest book, *Ghosts of the North East*, a guide to ghostly goings on in our area, and a fascinating history of our celebrated local buildings. Tickets £5, ask a bookseller instore on 01670 510491 or go to Waterstones.com



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# Treasured relics of the 'Golden Age' of steam

Inside Morpeth exclusive by Deputy Editor **Jack Brodie**

**In the heyday of the steam train it was undeniably an adventure to travel by rail especially on long journeys the length and breadth of the country in carriages hauled by engines that became household names in their own right.**

Steam trains like the most famous of them all, the Flying Scotsman built in 1923 and retired from service 40 years later, along with Sir Nigel Gresley and its 'sister' engine Mallard, travelled the East Coast main line for the London North Eastern Railway, passing through Morpeth on their way north and south.

Unlike their diesel and electric successors, steam trains had almost a soul and a character of their own and some of those great names from the past have been restored as a reminder of the 'Golden Age' to be seen in museums or even on the track.

What might be termed the stars of the industry as well as dozens of others daily taking people to and from work, had in common was that they could all be individually spotted by their name plates on either side of the engine.

The nameplates, which are decorative brass signs denoting the name of the engine, were often the only part of the engines preserved due to their ceremonial and cultural significance with respect for their namesakes.

Now these reminders of a bygone age are preserved for the next generation by collectors like David Anderson. From his time as a cartographic apprentice in Edinburgh, David has in his words "loved everything that moved". As explained by David: "Every journey was an event, you'd excitedly walk to the front of the train to see which engine had delivered you to your destination, you'd travel specifically to see which engines were at other stations – a far cry from the mass produced trains of today."

David bought his first nameplate for the sum of princely sum of seven pounds and ten, along with a ten shilling handling fee. His first plate was from a London North

Western Railway Jubilee Class named Collingwood, named after Morpeth's own Admiral Lord Collingwood who took over command of the English fleet after Horatio Nelson was killed at the Battle of Trafalgar. While on shore leave Admiral Collingwood lived in a home on Oldgate in Morpeth home which remains standing to this day.

In discussing his collection, David drew particular attention to his two nameplates from the Royal Scots Class, explaining that: "On each engine there are two nameplates, one on each side, when removing the plates one typically went to the regiment for their museum and then the other went into the hands of private collectors like myself." After a piece enters the collection, he restores them to pristine condition similar to how they would have been seen while still travelling up and down our country's lines.

After a lifetime of collecting, over thirty nameplates have passed through his hands. His love of steam trains also inspired his meticulously researched book 'Scottish Steam in the 1950s & '60s' which focused on the history of the Scottish rail system during the last full decade of steam

As we are starkly reminded this year with the 200th anniversary of George

Stephenson's first passenger railway between Stockton and Darlington, collectors and enthusiasts like David keep a link to Britain's railway heritage alive well preserved for future generations to experience.



Steam engine nameplates



The Collingwood steam engine



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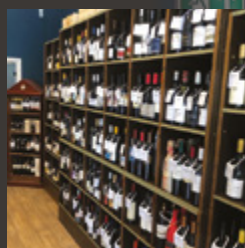
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# ABC. You're not if you like Chablis!

By **Mark Stephenson**, Inside Morpeth's wine correspondent

**Okay...we need to talk about Chardonnay. No, don't turn over...not just yet...please hear me out.**

So you may recall my last piece I defended another wine style with my spirited proclamation of all things Rose. Just to reassure you, this isn't going to be a recurring theme in my articles. I'll put my soapbox away to gather dust after this one, I promise. The world is full of people looking to impose their opinion on others and we don't need any more of that!

However, I feel inspired to defend this wonderful (yes, I said wonderful) grape variety.

So let's get this straight, it is all Australia's fault. Regular readers will know I adore Australia and its wines. It's the place that inspired me to go into the wine industry. I love the place so much that I own several stubbie holders (and use them), watch Bluey all the time (my 3-year-old ensures that), and I get a lump in my throat whenever I hear Angry Anderson's 'Suddenly'- the song played at Scott and Charlene's wedding in Neighbours. Okay, I really shouldn't have let the latter out in the public domain. Go on. Judge me, I don't care! It's true!

However, sadly it is the Aussies' fault for there being so many ABCers in the world. ABCers you say? Well, simply they would drink Anything But Chardonnay. Most recoil at the mere mention of the grape. There are many who won't even have it poured in their glass during a tasting, they dislike the stuff that much.

In the 1980s and 1990s, a great influx of Aussie buttery, creamy, and rich Chardonnay's engulfed the pub and restaurant lists of these shores. Normally, to get that oaky buttery taste, a wine would have to age for quite a long time in a barrel. However, to speed up the process, some winemakers Down Under would essentially create a giant tea bag full of oak chips and dip it into the wine to impart its woody flavour. The result was there for all to see. The wine tended to be so oaky and rich you would actually have been better off asking for a slice of it rather than a glass!

And that's it. People were scarred and vowed never to touch the stuff again.

However, I am delighted to say that things have changed very much since then. Chardonnay as a grape is a blank canvas and so versatile. It is loved by winemakers because it can grow pretty much anywhere. It can create zesty, mineral crisp styles like Chablis, or if you're like the richer stuff American is the place to go for that buttery hit. The style is determined by what the winemaker wants to do with it. Nowadays, good Chardonnay's are a beautiful balance of fruit, acidity, and a touch of oak.

So, if you're looking to leave the ABC club, where do you look for the best examples at a fair price? Sadly, not France. Although Chablis and Burgundy are incredibly beautiful things, the prices have skyrocketed over the past few years and are becoming wines for a special occasion. Therefore, if you ask me, to pinch a rugby term the Tri-Nations countries of South Africa and NZ are the places to look. And yes, Australia too!

The Aussies are producing some beautifully balanced complex Chardonnays. The Xanadu Circa 77 Chardonnay from Margaret River would be my pick at £17.00.

A touch of oak with tropical fruit and a nice bit of acidity. For pure fruit-driven Chardonnay, the Grower's Touch Chardonnay (£12.50) from Riverina would be the one if you want to experience it at its natural best. For a bit more opulence, Creation Chardonnay (£26.00) from Walker Bay, South Africa is so elegant and soft. And lastly, if you want that toasty-style famously associated with Burgundy but without having to re-mortgage the house, the Lake Chalice The Raptor Chardonnay (£22.00) from Marlborough is the complete package. I will put my hand on my heart and say I haven't had a bad Chardonnay yet from NZ. However, with NZ Sauv Blanc being so popular, their Chards very much take a back seat. Hopefully you will give them a go.

If this article hasn't change your mind about Chardonnay, then I encourage you to come to one of our tasting events. We do a little trick, you see. When we pour you a Chardonnay we actually don't tell you what it is! It is amazing how many ABCers say they actually enjoyed it and would have never tried it if we told them what it was beforehand. That is a "mike drop" moment for me. My work is done for the day.

If that doesn't change your mind, then yes, you are indeed a fully paid up member of the ABC club with a free membership for life! Don't worry though, we'll still have something for you at G&G! Cheers



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# Keeping things ticking over in the garden

By **Ross Pearson** – Inside Morpeth's gardening expert

September and October in the garden are a bit...in-between. The frantic energy of spring and high summer is long gone, but autumn hasn't quite taken charge yet. It's like the garden's got one sock on and isn't sure what it came into the room for.

There's still plenty happening, of course, flowers doing their best to keep going, fruit pretending they're not about to drop off the branch, and lawns looking a bit hungover from summer. It's not peak performance season, but that doesn't mean you get to sit back and let it all go to pot.

Gardening in late summer is about keeping things ticking over without letting the whole place unravel. You're not chasing perfection now, just aiming for "under control" with the occasional flash of brilliance. It's about trimming what needs trimming, moving what needs moving, and not letting the compost bin become a biohazard. It's satisfying work, if not exactly glamorous. But then again, if you wanted glamour, you probably wouldn't be inspecting slug damage in your pyjamas at 7am.

## Deal with the jungle

By now, your greenhouse may resemble a botanical experiment gone rogue. It's time to bring order. Remove any spent or mildewed plants, sweep the floor, and pretend you were always in control. If there are trays of things you were "hardening off" back in June, remove them. They're either dead or unionising.

## Tie in brambles or face the consequences

Blackberries are the rebellious teenagers of the garden world. Left unchecked, they'll sprawl, tangle and invade your compost bin. Use strong string, a calm voice, and leather gloves to wrestle them back onto wires or supports. Your future self (with scratched arms) will thank you.

## Revive the strawberries

Your strawberry patch has had a wild summer and probably looks like a festival field. Trim away the old leaves, dig up and replant the runners if you fancy expanding, and give them a mulch-y treat. Think of it as a relaxing pa treatment after an especially enthusiastic fruiting season.

## Cut back the chaos

Herbs like oregano, marjoram and mint



Still lots to do in the garden now that autumn is here says Ross Pearson

may now resemble hairy dogs in a wind tunnel. Chop them back hard. They'll bounce back with fresher, more fragrant growth, plus, you get to feel impressively decisive with your snips.

## Inspect the brassicas

Your cabbages, sprouts and kales are being eyed up by caterpillars and pigeons alike. Get in there and check for invaders. Be discreet: brassicas are proud plants and don't like being prodded in public.

## Pot up the huffy plants

Some of your perennial flowers may

have sulked all summer in a border that doesn't suit them. Don't take it personally. Lift them, pot them, and move them somewhere they might actually do something next year. Like teenagers, they just need the right environment.

## Sort out the compost heap

Remember that ambitious compost heap you started in spring with dreams of friable, earthy glory? Now's the time to give it a good turn, chuck out anything suspiciously non-compostable (how did that fork get in there?), and maybe even start a second pile for the autumn deluge.

For more gardening tips, follow Ross Pearson on Instagram at **@rosspearsongardening**

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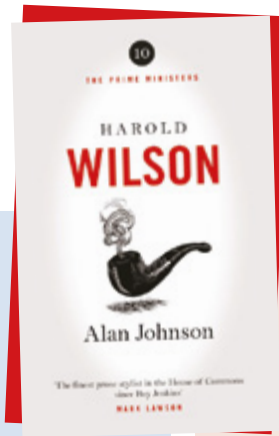
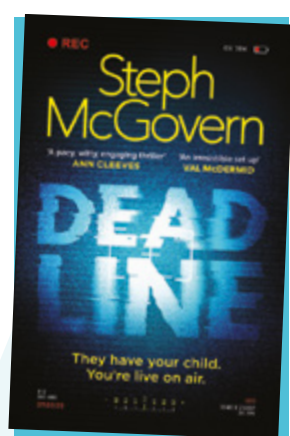
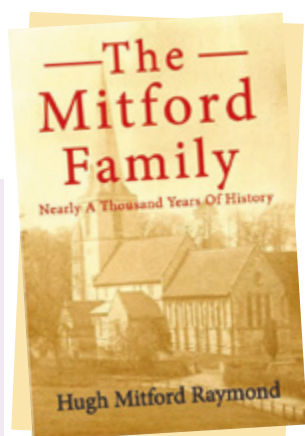
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