



# **SLALEY NEWS MAY 2026**



May sees the second Beer Festival on Saturday the 9th, and a week later the launch of schedules for the Slaley Show. Members can come along on the 16th to pick up their badges.

The Slaley Show committee are looking for a new Horticultural Secretary; if you haven't tried something like this, there will be plenty of help on hand. If you are interested, please get in touch with Gemma Common at [secretary.slaleyshow@hotmail.com](mailto:secretary.slaleyshow@hotmail.com) or 07837 674854.

The Shop are also looking for a new volunteer. in this case a Finance Director.

The First School now have a "Living Room" for before and after school care, and our vicar, Diana Johnston, publishes a nice follow-up to her comments in April.

The WI have been trying yoga, while a group of members are walking to support their chosen charity: the MND (Motor Neurone Disease) Association.

And one resident raises her concerns about RATS in the village . . .

If you would like to see this edition in full colour, then you can read it online by going to the front page of the Slaley website at [www.slaley.org.uk](http://www.slaley.org.uk).

**We welcome contributions from anyone who has news they would like to share!**

**Contributions for the June edition by Sunday, May 24th or earlier, please!**

*Send by email to [slaleynews@icloud.com](mailto:slaleynews@icloud.com), or  
to [michael@elphicks.myzen.co.uk](mailto:michael@elphicks.myzen.co.uk)*

## Slaley Beer Festival – Saturday 9th May

Slaley Beer Festival is back on Saturday 9th May, and everyone is warmly invited to come along for a fantastic day of community spirit, great entertainment and support our worthwhile causes.

Whether you're a real ale enthusiast or simply looking for a fun day out with family and friends, there's something for everyone. Alongside a wide selection of beers there is cider, wine and prosecco.



**SLALEY BEER FESTIVAL**  
SLALEY COMMEMORATION HALL



**SATURDAY MAY 9<sup>TH</sup> 2026**  
**NOON - 11PM**

TICKETS £8 IN ADVANCE or £10 ON THE DOOR (INCLUDES 1 FREE TOKEN)

**EVENT SPONSORS WELCOME PLEASE**  
**CONTACT LUCY BRAIN OR ANDREW CONEY**  
FOR TICKETS EMAIL; [LUCYKBRAIN@GMAIL.COM](mailto:LUCYKBRAIN@GMAIL.COM)



BEERS. ZERO BEER. CIDER. WINE. SOFT DRINKS. CAKE.

**LIVE MUSIC FROM**  
**BOYS OF BRASS**

**FOOD BY**  
**SMASHED & LOADED**  
AUTHENTIC STREETFOOD

There will be live music throughout the day, creating a lively and welcoming atmosphere.

Food lovers will also be well catered for, with a range of delicious options available to suit all tastes. There are a wider selection of games too and remember under 18 are free!

For those who prefer not to drink alcohol, a variety of non-alcoholic options will be available, ensuring everyone can join in and enjoy the day.

Most importantly, the festival is all about supporting good causes, so by attending you'll not only have a great time but also help make a positive difference in the community.

*So mark your calendars for 9th May and come along to Slaley Beer Festival – I look forward to seeing you there! Lucy*

**Slaley Show Schedule Launch**  
**Saturday 16th May, 2 - 4 pm in the**  
**Commemoration Hall**



***Come along to get your schedule for Slaley Show!***

Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> August is Slaley Show day - a few months away – and our schedule will be launched on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May, from 2 to 4pm in the Hall, along with tea, scones and a raffle. Members will be able to collect their schedule and badges.

To everyone else - we hope you'll come along – and if you've not entered anything before, be tempted to have a go. Some of the section secretaries will be on hand to answer any questions you might have.

Some handy tips for the show...

- Winning tip no. 1 – you have to be in it to win it! There *will* be something that you can enter, it might be a photograph, or a jar of marmalade, or the family pet – so why not just have a go?
- Casually thumb through the classes, look at your garden and decide that possibly you might have grown a misshapen vegetable or fruit by August.
- As you move on through the cookery classes, try and not get hungry just reading about lemon drizzle and carrot cakes. Take a trip down memory lane, recalling your very first attempts at a vegetable creature – why did it always involve a potato?
- We are always delighted to have new members - the price of membership (£20) will get you into the show with a lovely shiny

members badge, a members only parking area, and tea and biscuits (probably coffee and cake also!) – plus it contributes to the long-term financial security of the Show. For a membership form, please text or call Gemma Common on 07837 674854.

Entry to the show is £15, with £12 pre-entry tickets, reduced prices for children. Hope to see you on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> !

### **Slaley First School**

This half term started with our ‘World Book Day’ celebration. The theme this year was Peter Rabbit, which resulted in staff and children entering the lunch hall through Mr McGregor’s garden. It was great fun. Once the children were in the hall they were amazed at the wonderful picnic lunch which had been created by Mrs Seymour, who, with help from other staff had decorated the hall beautifully with Beatrix Potter themed accessories. We all enjoyed listening to a visiting author, David Mark, who used the children’s ideas to create a new story.

Slaley First School has been encouraging new young Scientists this half term. The children have been lucky enough to take part in a number of Science Workshops as part of the ‘National Science Week’, which was based on ‘curious questions’. The children really enjoyed the week which rounded off with a wonderful Comic Relief fundraiser. The theme for Comic Relief this year was to dress as an adult and the adults to dress as children.

We have also been lucky enough to have had some new families join the school. We are delighted to welcome them to Slaley First School and look forward to working with them all. The children continue to love coming to Breakfast Club and enjoy their breakfast served on a china tea set under the expert care of Mrs English. Our after-school club is also very popular. If you know a family looking to select a school, please do let them know about our facilities at Slaley. We know that for working parents this service is invaluable and the children enjoy accessing the before and after school care in our newly renovated ‘home from home’ space which the children have named the ‘Living Room’ (photo right).



Our website <https://www.slaley.northumberland.sch.uk/web/> is an excellent way of keeping informed about what is happening in school. Please feel free to have a browse and give our Facebook entries a 'like'. We are always looking at ways to promote our school and keep our pupil numbers healthy, so feel free to share our posts and help us promote our wonderful school.



### **Slaley Shop - Spring into Summer!**

With the longer days and warmer sunshine, there's a buzz of activity at Slaley Village Shop - both inside and out!

#### ***Spring Blooms & Garden Chats*** 🌻

Our amazing Shop Gardeners have been busy planting beautiful spring flowers and giving the garden furniture a seasonal spruce-up. Why not treat yourself to coffee and a biscuit, it's the perfect spot to take a breather and catch up with friends.

#### ***Slaley Seedling Swap Returns for 2026*** 🌱

We're kick starting summer with our annual Slaley Seedling Swap. From the beginning of May bring along your spare seedlings or cuttings, place them on our cart outside the Re-Cycle Shed, and swap them with fellow gardeners in the village. A lovely way to share, grow, and connect.

#### ***BBQ@TheShop*** 🔥

As BBQ season begins, we've got everything you need for those sunny evenings:

- Charcoal
- Firelighters
- Locally sourced BBQ meats & Hexham brewed Beer
- Ice cream (because every BBQ needs a treat!)

Shop local, save on fuel, and enjoy everything you need right here in the village.

## **Spring at Bake@TheShop** 🍰

Every Thursday and Saturday our Bake@TheShop table is full of delicious homemade treats including our new recipe Coffee and Walnut Cake as well as Banana and Chocolate Bread - perfect for enjoying in the garden or taking home to share (or not!).

Thank you, as always, to our brilliant community bakers. If you'd like to volunteer or learn to bake, why not drop by at 2pm every Wednesday.

### ***Ways You Can Support Your Shop***

Slaley Shop continues to support our community in lots of small but meaningful ways. Here are a few simple things you can do to get involved:

- We've launched a **School Uniform Swap** in the Re-Cycle Shed, donations always welcome.
- Alongside our popular **Book Swap** we've also introduced a **Puzzle Swap** and **Children's Book** section.
- Looking for some **Work Experience**, we can help!
- If you know anyone new to the village we have a **Welcome Pack** to deliver filled with useful local information and contacts.
- And don't forget some of our profits are held in a **Community Fund**. The Board welcomes applications to help fund local projects that benefit our community.

By shopping locally, you're not only supporting your village, you're also saving fuel and reducing those extra trips out of Slaley.

### **Finance Director – join Us!**

We're looking for a Finance Director to join our Board and support our much-loved community shop.

Experience with accounting systems (e.g. Sage) is helpful but not essential as we're happy to support someone keen to learn. With a strong bookkeeper already in place, the role is not overly time-consuming.

If you're interested, we'd love to hear from you and please feel free to share with anyone who might be a good fit.

## **Stay Connected**

*Open: 8:30am - 12noon, every day  
Don't miss out on the latest shop updates,  
special offers, and community news:*

 *Facebook: @slaleyshop*

 *Instagram: @slaleycommunityshop*

*We look forward to seeing you in the shop  
soon.*

## **Parish Council Report**

We hope everyone enjoyed their Easter break and are enjoying the wonderful display of daffodils and blossom trees around the Parish! It's great to see all the lambs, but please make sure your dogs are kept under control when anywhere near livestock.

Your Parish Council met in the third week of April. There were no members of the public in attendance, although several Councillors had been contacted over various issues in the run up to the meeting and these issues were discussed. They included such issues as road conditions and crime.

Other issues discussed included Cuppa with a Coppa, adoption of Wooley Grange, fly tipping and banking arrangements.

The finances were reviewed and the budget set for the coming year as we have finally received our Precept. With our finances now back on an even keel, we can start to support our Parish, in particular the Community Playground, and other community activities at the School, Shop, Hall and groups in our Parish.

We discussed our verges around the Parish and the possibility of some no-mow areas and some native wildflower planting.

As usual, please do contact us if you need our support, you don't need to wait until our next meeting, although anyone is very welcome to attend our meetings in the Hall at 7pm, the third Monday in the month. There will not be a meeting in August or December.

Our next meeting is at 7pm, 20th May 2026, in the Commemoration Hall.

*Get in touch in the usual way if you need us to help or support you.*  
*Anne Livesey 07803 610077*

## **The Rose & Crown**

Spring has been a fantastic time at the Rose & Crown, and we'd like to say a sincere thank you to everyone who supported our Easter Raffle. Together, we raised an incredible £200 for the North East Air Ambulance. We're especially grateful to all those who generously donated prizes—it really made a difference. Congratulations as well to Alaria, who guessed the exact number in our Easter Competition and took home the prize!

Looking ahead, we're excited to share that plans are already underway for a special event over the August Bank Holiday Weekend. We're keeping details under wraps for now, but it's shaping up to be something the whole village can enjoy—so keep an eye out for more information soon.

We'll also be showing all England and Scotland World Cup matches live at the pub. Tables can be booked in advance to make sure you don't miss out on the atmosphere. England's first three group games are:

- \* England vs Croatia – 9pm, Wednesday 17 June
- \* England vs Ghana – 9pm, Tuesday 23 June
- \* England vs Panama – 10pm, Saturday 27 June 2026

We'd love to see you there to cheer the teams on.

## **RATS!**

A village resident (Jackie Green) has posted this:

“Can I draw everyone's attention to the growing RAT population. I know we live in beautiful countryside and rats come with the territory, but they are getting out of hand now and very bold. We can all help by no longer feeding the birds. The rats have been seen all over our gardens, paths and window sills near the Parks Side Bungalows downwards. We have a hedgehog house, it's been vacated by our hedgehog and now has a rat squatter! We can't open our bedroom windows either because one has attempted to

get in, I had the blinds down and curtains closed so no entry this time, as I managed to scare it away.”

Addressing this issue is not within the remit of the Parish Council, but they would recommend signposting residents to the environmental health department or a private contractor. It may be helpful to provide guidance for those who enjoy feeding birds but wish to avoid attracting rats, as this can be a difficult balance for bird lovers. Some suggestions include fitting catchers to the bottom of feeders to collect spillage, only putting out enough food for the day and not leaving it out overnight, and storing feed in a metal bin rather than loose in sheds to prevent rats from gaining access.

## **St Mary's Slaley**

### **About our churches**

I thought that this ‘letter to the editor’ should be shared most widely. You may recall that last month, I said,

*“ I should be interested to hear your thoughts on that [poet ee cummings’] description of a rural church. More tangibly, I would love to hear suggestions of what objects best sum up our churches to you: some have said it’s the lychgate at Slaley; another said the bust of John Wesley; one suggested the pilgrim shell of St James in Riding Mill; I wondered about the stained glass windows in Healey. What do you think?”*

#### ***Now read on...***

On the last page of the April edition of the Slaley News, Diana Johnson left a question 'in the air' - what are your thoughts about our rural church?

This made me ponder how, almost daily, I pass this lovely building set among trees and fields with its familiar path to an open door, and know it is more than just a centre of worship. It is a place where my sense of belonging quietly took root. It brings a comforting rhythm of traditions, a balance to an ever changing, unsettled world. In our rural setting, it becomes a kind of anchor, tying together our community, our identity and our continuity. It carries a weight and a meaning that goes beyond its physical architecture.

The greetings as you enter, the conversations after services over a drink of coffee, shared moments over difficult times

offering necessary support. Even the physical space-worn pews, sound of footsteps on stone, the way light filters through the windows - can feel deeply personal, as if it knows you. It is a place where life slows down, where you have time to think, to question, to hope, or to just sit quietly and let your mind absorb the peace around you. Whether you are experiencing times of joy or times of uncertainty, it offers a kind of stillness that is hard to find elsewhere.

St Mary's is a symbol of continuity, a link between past, present and the future. Over the years many generations have stood or sat in the same place and no doubt others will after us. It offers a mix of belonging, of memories, of peace and connection that makes our rural church so important to the whole community of Slaley and the surrounding villages.

Geoff Brewis Levie, Slaley Grange

## **Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Slaley – Services in May 2026.**

The latest news on our services can be seen online at [A Church Near You](#).

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 3rd  | Fifth Sunday of Easter<br>11.15 am Parish Worship – Holy Communion   |
| 10th | Sixth Sunday of Easter<br>11.15 am Parish Worship – Service of the Word<br>(7.30 pm Riding Mill <a href="#">Taizé</a> worship – in their Church Cottage)                           |
| 17th | Seventh Sunday of Easter<br>Sunday after Ascension Day: with an Ascension theme<br>11.15 am Parish Worship: Service of the Word<br>5 pm Evening Prayer at St John's Church, Healey |
| 24th | Pentecost<br>Whit Sunday<br>11.15 am Parish Worship – Service of the Word  |
| 31st | Trinity Sunday<br>11.15 am Parish Worship – Holy Communion   |

## ***A Date for your Diary***

**21st June      Holy Communion celebrated by the Bishop of Newcastle at 10.30 am (Joint service with Methodists; for all of Slaley, Riding Mill and Healey) at Riding Mill Church**

*Your Church is a part of all that Slaley is and should be.  
Rev. Diana Johnson*

## **WI notes for May**

The Commemoration Hall had something of an atmospheric change at April's meeting. We were uncharacteristically very quiet and fully entranced by concentrating on our breathing. Hans Bartholdi had us under a Hatha style yoga spell.

Yoga teacher Hans, who we all know as a volunteer at our Community Shop as well as his regular 8 am Friday morning yoga sessions in the Hall, taught us stretches and breathing techniques in a 'chair yoga' session and changed to floor mats for those who could manage it for the second part of the evening with hypnotic gentle instructions, explanations, encouragement (Do what you can) and reminders (to breathe).



Having never experienced or seen the Ragdoll, Reverse Warrior or Downward Dog, these poses were fascinating. This was not only a gentle series of stretches but an experience in concentration which many of us found useful with so many random thoughts from the day swirling around. Hans calls it 'Monkey minds' (will steal your thoughts). Sitting on the very edge of a chair with spine straight, breathing through the nose (smooth inhale- soft exhale) became the key to fully empty the mind, unlock stretching capabilities and how important ceremonial hand positions become. We left the meeting fully relaxed and completely stress free with thoughts of joining up properly to Hans' regular classes.

Our forthcoming yearly Annual Meeting on

Wednesday May 13th is where we report on the previous year to Dee Ward WI advisor and member of Shotley Bridge WI. We raise any outstanding issues, vote and re-configure our committee structure and look back at our yearly programme, the financial and general 'health' of our group and our achievements like the community poppy project for Remembrance Sunday.

This year's challenges will include making full use of the newly launched VIA online learning platform with WI membership allowing free access to most courses which vary in depth and subject matter from Digital Art, Creating a Sensory Garden, Managing Money Online, Learning Chinese and Black History.

.. And there's a particularly special challenge that we intend to do as a group. Four of our fittest members Catherine Myers, Heather Sewell, Nicky Jeffrey and Sandy Hatton will be undertaking a 22 mile charity walk from Bamburgh to Alnmouth on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June; other members will join in to take on sections of the route and everyone else will provide transport and essential refreshments to make it into a grand team effort.



“Training is in progress“ says President Catherine Myers “our chosen charity is the MND Association who campaign for better care for sufferers and to fund groundbreaking research; as they say Every Day Matters” she says. “We chose this charity” continues Catherine “because it is close to the heart of some of our members”. “Helen, our treasurer sadly lost her mum to MND; and myself and mum, former president Margaret, have a friend, an amazing, loving and warm lady that I have the privilege of calling my godmother, who received the devastating diagnosis last year. We also know that this awful disease has devastated other families in the Slaley Community.”

“Posters with QR codes and details of a Just Giving page will appear on usual notice boards and sites during May and we hope that the Slaley community will help us achieve an amount that will help make a real difference to sufferers” she says.

Going back to the Poppy mention, it’s an ongoing thing; we’ve recently taken delivery of over 40 new poppies already. Wool and suggested patterns are still available in the Community Shop – hint hint!

*Tickets are still available for the Moorland Group Fashion Show on the 15<sup>th</sup> May at Hexham Mart . Please see poster in village noticeboard for details. Open to all or call President Catherine Myers. Phone details on back page of this publication.*

## **The Commemoration Hall**

The Annual General Meeting of Slaley Commemoration Hall Management Committee will be held in the Hall on Wednesday 6th May 2026 at 7.15 p.m.

A warm welcome awaits you.

The Hall, a registered charity, is provided for the benefit of the community. Please come along to hear what the management committee has been doing in the last year including its future as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

## **Carpet Bowls**

The season of matches ended with a resounding defeat by the admirable Newbrough, they were just so good and we were well stuffed!



However the season was overall very satisfactory and ended with us winning 7 matches and losing 6. We were able to field 16 players in every match. The matches were all good fun and very closely competed with 5 of the 6 matches having a points difference of less than 5 points, which is an amazing fact when you consider how many bowls are thrown in a match.

Whilst the weekly winter and spring bowls have now ended, there will be bowls in the village hall every fortnight on a Tuesday at 7:30pm from 19th May all the way until August 25th.

### May Gardening Column- Karen Melvin

A garden exists through time so is impossible to experience as a whole except by tending it over time, and then the experience is still moment by moment. I've planted this garden to be strong in spring and winter, when winter has lots of structure and evergreen shapes, tree bark texture and always some lingering flowers. Spring is my favourite time, when growth emerges and there is the drama of bulbs carpeting the wild garden and dotted like jewels in the borders. I can't quite believe how *Thomasina* crocuses have spread in their thousands from the gift of a mere handful and the daffodils in the woods have made a similar impact. We got a bucketful free from Woolworths' closing sale, (when we bought a bucket.) In the garden outside our bedroom I have at least four flowering spring shrubs: *Cornus mas aurea*, a witch hazel, a small cherry and two interesting, for their giant seeds, *Sorbus megalocarpa*. The *Sorbus* keep their bunches of



Butterfly Cherry

large textured seeds all winter, followed by white flower heads in early spring, and then the bright red foliage - all quite stunning. The butterfly cherry hangs its beautiful pinky white flowers and in winter the twigs are interestingly twisted.



Sorbus

The leaves of birch and mountain ash have opened so early this year we didn't even feel we had to wait for spring. On our front lawn we have two early tall maples, one opening pale lemon, the other deep orange red. I wonder never having noticed the bright red catkins of the dwarf hornbeams before, *Carpinus turozaouri*, bright and tiny, easy to miss. All this and it is still early April. A reliable flowering spreader that comes with spring is wild bleeding heart, *Dicentra formosa*; dainty and easy and doesn't mind some shade. I have two forms, one with darker foliage and flower, *Dicentra oregana*, and one rarity, *Dicentra cucullaria*, much slower.

I have started to collect *Epimediums*, (Bishops hats) for their delicate dangling early flowers and textured foliage. They like shade so will all go in the lower garden amongst ferns and azaleas.



Epimedium Spine Tinger

Crown imperial bulbs seem to flower in quick time. If you don't look every day they are up and taller than the other bulbs and as dramatic as daffodils, which are quite preposterous with their huge perianths so early in the season. Daffodils spread so easily and are so cheering. I still remember the first time I saw Wordsworth's daffodils along the shores of Lake Ullswater. Mid April sees all our garden trees in leaf or blossom; a writer describes spring as exciting as having ones finger in an electrical socket.



Crown Imperials



Carpinus catkins

## USEFUL CONTACTS

<b>Badminton Group</b>	<b>Fran Pugh</b>	<b>673429</b>
<b>Carpet Bowls</b>	<b>Karl Beckett</b>	<b>07914 693199</b>
<b>St Mary's Parish Church</b>	<b>Rev. Diana Johnson</b>	<b>682768</b>
<b>St Elizabeth's Catholic Church</b>	<b>Father Emmanuel Kabinga</b>	<b>673248</b>
<b>Commemoration Hall</b>	<b>Chairman: Andrew Coney</b>	<b>07990 041324</b>
	<b>Bookings: <a href="mailto:slaleych@gmail.com">slaleych@gmail.com</a></b>	
<b>County Councillor</b>	<b>Colin Horncastle</b>	<b>618259</b>
<b>Dial-A-Ride</b>	<b>A.D.A.P.T.</b>	<b>600599</b>
<b>Electricity</b>	<b>Power cut?</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Film Club</b>	<b>Michael Elphick</b>	<b>673443</b>
<b>Friends of Slaley School</b>	<b>Andrea Foster</b>	<b>634865</b>
<b>Hexham Hospital</b>		<b>0344 811 8111</b>
<b>Ladycross Nature Reserve</b>	<b>Joan Jewitt</b>	<b>673245</b>
<b>Leek Club</b>	<b>Catherine Lincoln</b>	<b>07918 120125</b>
<b>Local History Group</b>	<b>Pat Wilson</b>	<b>673388</b>
<b>Mobile Hairdresser</b>	<b>Linda Johnston</b>	<b>673196</b>
<b>Northumberland CC</b>	<b>Report faulty Streetlights/ Potholes</b>	<b>0345 6006400</b>
<b>Parish Council</b>	<b><a href="mailto:clerk@slaleyparishcouncil.gov.uk">clerk@slaleyparishcouncil.gov.uk</a></b>	
<b>Post Office Van</b>	<b>Martin Nichol, Stocksfield Post Office</b>	<b>01661 842110</b>
<b>Police</b>	<b>For non-emergency calls</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Rose &amp; Crown Pub</b>	<b>David &amp; Sam</b>	<b>673996</b>
<b>Slaley Community Shop</b>	<b>Shop enquiries</b>	<b>673201</b>
	<b>Sandra Innes (Chair)</b>	<b>673845</b>
<b>Slaley First School</b>	<b>Head: Mrs. Hayward</b>	<b>673220</b>
<b>Slaley Parish Website</b>	<b><a href="http://www.slaley.org.uk">www.slaley.org.uk</a></b>	
<b>Slaley Show</b>	<b>Vice Chair: Gemma Common</b>	
	<b>Secretary: <a href="mailto:secretary.slaleyshow@hotmail.com">secretary.slaleyshow@hotmail.com</a></b>	
<b>The Travellers Rest</b>	<b>Lucy &amp; Jed</b>	<b>673231</b>
<b>Women's Institute</b>	<b>President: Catherine Myers</b>	<b>673023</b>
	<b>Secretary: Vicky Pepys</b>	<b>07802 572326</b>