



SLALEY NEWS OCTOBER 2026



This month we have news from our Parish Council, a report on the September Leek Show, and their usual interesting contributions from Karen Melvin and the Women's Institute. The School also report on their activities, including a Harvest Festival.

Several regular activities are starting up again: Snack & Chat, History talks, Badminton and Bowls are some.

The Shop will be having a Pumpkin Carving Competition, and a wine tasting evening. The Rose & Crown announce new opening hours, and are offering a Gin Night or a Friday night special Fish & Chips!

We also have a recommendation for a local cleaner, Demi Braddish, and an amusing report from Denis Lumley about Aberdeen Angus and the King!

A notice for those who drive down to Corbridge: the County Council has announced the planned temporary closure of the B6307 from Dilston to Hexham. The road is set to shut from its junction with the A695 Hexham to Dilston, heading southwest for 2,850 metres.

This closure is scheduled to take place from October 5 to October 9, and will be in effect between 8am and 5.30pm.

For those interested in broadband services, one interesting approach has been cancelled. B4RN (Broadband For the Rural North) is a community-owned fibre-optic broadband network that has been operating across the North. It could have offered gigabit broadband to Slaley, but didn't get sufficient support in time.

As always we welcome contributions from anyone who has news they would like to share!

Contributions for the November edition by Saturday 24th of October or earlier, please!

Send by email to slaleynews@icloud.com, or to michael@elphicks.myzen.co.uk

Parish Council Report

Your Parish Council met in mid September to catch up on summer in the village and its outlying areas.

The usual topics were discussed including road adoption at Wooley Grange, the poor state of the village road, the Commemoration Hall renovations, finances and policies. We also discussed all recent planning applications.

Our local crime report featured antisocial behaviour of motorbikes and 4wd vehicles, particularly in the forest.

There are certain routes that vehicles can use through the forest but it appears owners are crashing through forestry gates and destroying tracks to which they are not allowed access. Discussion is ongoing with the Forestry Commission and Police.

On another crime issue, organised crime groups have been stealing cars from owners' drives during the night in Ponteland, Heddon, Matfen and Stamfordham during September.

Although our Parish has nothing to report it would be wise to make sure all windows and doors are locked at night time. Also keep car keys hidden from view, or buy a special signal jamming box so would-be thieves can't clone your keys.

If you see anything suspicious or catch anything on your door camera, please let the police know - don't approach any intruders and stay safe.

On a brighter note, your councillors discussed the possibility of a book exchange box in the village to supplement the books at the shop, so parishioners wouldn't be limited to shop opening hours.

We also discussed community activities over Christmas and into next spring. If you have any ideas, we'd be happy to hear them!



The Council meet again at the Hall at 7pm on Monday 19th October, all welcome.

Slaley Community Shop

Autumn at @ the shop

As summer recedes and the leaves begin to turn there's lots on at @ your Village Shop.

Announcing the 3rd Annual Slaley Shop Pumpkin Carving Competition 2026

Why not show us your carving skills with “the most Spooky” or “in the News” Halloween Pumpkin for 2026.

Entries welcome from all ages with prizes for best carving as assessed by our team of three judges.

Deadline for submission will be Wed 28th with winners announced on Halloween Sat 31st.

Wine Tasting for Christmas

Friday 23rd October 7:30pm at The Commemoration Hall

With the festive period fast approaching, Slaley Community Shop will be hosting an evening tasting to showcase a range of new wines we think will be perfect for cosy winter evenings and to give you ideas for great Christmas lunch wines.

Join Louise who will take you through a selection of wines, alongside some delicious snacks. Special Christmas wine boxes will be available to order – more details soon!

Please book in advance.

RSVP louise.bartholdi@gmail.com.

Tickets are £20 per person and include all tasting wines, plenty of nibbles.

You can pay on the evening - just let us know you're coming so we can plan catering.

During the Autumn we'll also be refreshing our wine and beer offer in store and there's a 10% discount on any case of 6 wines or 6 bottles self selected at one time, from the Shop throughout December.

Bake@TheShop 🍰

Every Thursday and Saturday our Bake@TheShop table is full of delicious homemade treats including our new recipe Almond and Raspberry traybake as well as Sausage Rolls and delicious Carrot Cake– perfect as a secret treat or taking home to share.

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. We're sharing the results of our Annual Customer Survey during our September AGM. If you'd like to get involved by helping in the shop, doing a bit of gardening, collecting our wholesale order, perhaps you're a baker, please get in touch, you'll find us on Facebook and Instagram.

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](#)

SNACK and CHAT is BACK!

A regular warm, friendly, lunchtime get-together in Slaley Commemoration Hall.

- Runs alternate Tuesdays between October and March, 12.30 - 2.30 pm.
- Serving soup with rolls, cakes, cheese and biscuits, fruit, plus tea and coffee.
- A small donation is requested to include a free raffle.
- Dates published on the Village Notice Board and in the Slaley News.
- No booking necessary and open to all. Let us know if you need assistance getting to the hall.

Please come and join us.

Supported by Slaley Community Shop and the Ballinger Trust.

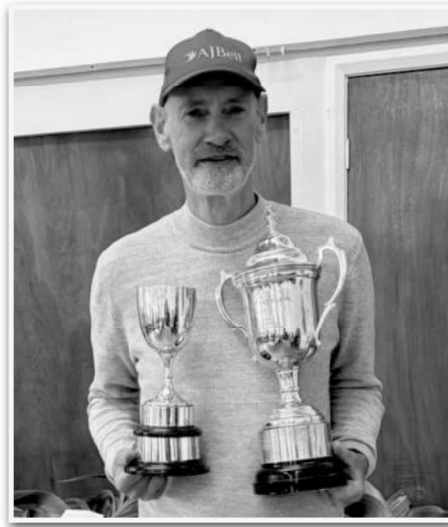
Many thanks from the Leek Club!

Slaley's Leek Show on Saturday 12th September went very well, despite the difficulties leek club members had, with only a third able to put the required 2 leeks in, due to them going to seed or splitting.

The judge was extremely impressed by the quality of the junior leeks. The winner was Matthew Hill, and the judge said that Matthew's leek and a couple of the others would have got placed in an adult

competition. They all looked splendid, and he particularly commented on how well they were presented. As ever, the vegetable creatures were very popular with attendees at the Show. And the judge particularly enjoys judging them!

The winner of the C. W. Reed Challenge Trophy for Best Leek in Show, and the Stoddart Memorial Cup for Best Stand of Leeks was Jed Woodhouse.



Jed!

Second was Lesley Woodhouse and third was Robb Allanson. Billy Mitchinson won the Malcolm Goodwin Memorial Trophy for fourth place.

Thanks to everyone who came!



Catherine & Lesley



Billy

Demi Braddish - local cleaner

I live in Hexhamshire and I am taking on new clients in and around Slaley.

I offer reasonable rates, my Facebook page is "Clean Space NE" and my mobile number is 0785 228 1905.

The editors can personally vouch for her excellent service, and the intriguing little touches to our kitchen rolls!



A Chat with King Charles!

Denis and Jill Lumley travelled up to Ballindalloch Castle near Inverness on the 14th of August, to attend a Royal Garden Party to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Aberdeen Angus Cattle Society Herdbook, where we met King Charles, who is Patron of the Society.

This was a special and memorable day, set in beautiful surroundings and attended by 200 fellow guests. The King came over, shook our hands and chatted - what was said we couldn't possibly say, but it caused the King to laugh!

Badminton

Badminton has started again on Wednesday mornings at 9.30am in the Commemoration Hall. New players are welcome to join us for exercise and fun.

Contact Fran Pugh on 01434 673429 or
fmpugh@btinternet.com

Bowls

The bowls matches season is underway!! We played our first match against the mighty Shire at Whitley Chapel. Hopes of a repeat of our outstanding one point victory last year were high, however the Shire were up for the match. A very competitive closely fought game ended with the Shire winning 49 points to our 40 points.

On Tuesday 29/9/26 we welcomed Riding Mill to Slaley for a match. Club nights are usually on every Tuesday so if you fancy a fun night of bowls, banter and a cup of tea do please join us at the usual time of 7:30.

Yoga

Hans Bartholdi runs yoga sessions 3 times a week, for 1 hour & 15 mins. Beginners are most welcome - no need to book & mats provided. Sessions are £7 (cash only).

These are at:

Hunstanworth Village Hall Wednesday 7.30pm, Saturday 11am

Slaley Commemoration Hall Friday 8.30 am

For more information contact Hans: 07834 336 106 or email
1hpbartholdi@gmail.com

Slaley First School October 2026

It has been a busy half term at Slaley First School. The children have settled back into school well and have been working hard. They are a credit to us and have brightened up our days with their energy and smiles.

We have been using our new outdoor 'Cosy Cabin' during Outdoor Education and to accommodate our younger children, 'The Slaley Stompers'. Mrs English has some wonderful activities for Mums and toddlers in the garden on a Tuesday afternoon. Everyone is welcome, so spread the word!

We are preparing for our Harvest Festival. The children have been finding out about the important job our farmers do and have prepared a lovely performance of songs, rhymes and bible reading to give thanks for all we have at harvest time. The performance will take place in school on the 19th October. The children have already been thinking about decorating their harvest boxes ready to fill with all sorts of goodies.

We will be celebrating Halloween at Slaley First School with a special Halloween Party organised by Mrs English.

The children enjoyed making vegetable creatures to exhibit at the Leek Show. They also had some impressive leeks to show. Our Sunflower Garden was amazing over the summer, the children have now started a Pumpkin Project. They have added to our daffodil patch ready for the Spring. So as you can see we have lots of budding gardeners who help to keep our garden area well maintained.

We continue to work hard and enjoy all aspects of school. We aim to Nurture Ambitious Individuals and are very proud of the children and their achievements. We are keen to open our doors to new children and welcome anyone who would like to come and see what we have to offer. If you know any families looking for a super village school, please give

us a mention. We now have a Facebook page and a newly developed website, which gives a super overview of our school.

Autumn at the Rose & Crown, Slaley

What a fantastic summer it's been at the Rose & Crown! We've thoroughly enjoyed welcoming you all through our doors and would like to thank the local community and visitors for your continued support. It's been wonderful to see the pub buzzing with activity, and we look forward to an exciting autumn and winter ahead.

New Autumn/Winter Opening Hours & Special Offers

From **Monday 28th September**, we'll be introducing our new autumn/winter opening hours, along with **two exciting early bird menus**, available from 4pm to 5pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

We're also launching a fabulous Friday night special! Every Friday evening, enjoy **2 Fish, Chips & Mushy Peas OR 2 Double Cheeseburgers for just £18!** Bring a friend, bring the family, and make Friday night a treat.

Don't forget you can get any item on our menus to take-away too!

Our New Opening Hours

Day	Opening Times	Food Times
Monday	4pm – 11pm	4pm – 8pm
Tuesday	CLOSED	CLOSED
Wednesday	4pm – 11pm	4pm – 8pm
Thursday	4pm – 11pm	4pm – 8pm
Friday	12 noon – 11pm	12 – 2.30pm / 4pm – 8pm
Saturday	12 noon – 11pm	12 – 2.30pm / 4pm – 8pm
Sunday	12 noon – 10.30pm	12 – 6pm

Pop in and see us, or check out our new early bird menus on our Facebook page or website: www.roseandcrownsleley.co.uk

Gin Night – Saturday 10th October

Our next event on the calendar is our much-anticipated **Gin Night on Saturday 10th October**, starting at 8pm!

Tickets are **£30 per person**, and we'll have **10 different gins** on offer. Find a new favourite or work your way through all ten – the choice is yours! Every gin (including mixer) is included in the ticket price, so you can enjoy trying them all.

We'll also be serving some tasty nibbles to accompany your drinks, making it the perfect evening to enjoy with friends.

Book your tickets now and join us for a fantastic night of gin, good company and great fun!

We look forward to welcoming you all.

David & Sam

The Rose & Crown's Quoits Team Season Report

The Allen Valley Quoits League Finals Day Presentation 2026 took place at Kirkstile on Sunday 6th September. After the morning rain, the sun shone as the 2026 season came to a close. For the 3rd year in succession the Rose & Crown team were League Champions - well done to all the team members!

The singles competition was won by Adam Ridley of the Rose & Crown after a fiercely fought final against Alan Walton, from the Boatside.

In the doubles competition, Adam and Craig Ridley were runners up, beaten by Alan Walton and John Bainbridge, again from the Boatside. Both Adam Ridley and Paul Pickworth were runners up in the competition for Most Singles Wins throughout the season.

All this was achieved without Ken Ridley, our longstanding captain, who was unable to play for most of the season due to injury. Thanks go to Paul and Craig Barber for playing when Ken was off.

Also thanks to David and Sam at the Rose & Crown for making all players very welcome and looking after us.



Centre - Adam Ridley &
Paul Pickworth

Slaley, Healey & Minsteracres Local History Group

The Roman NHS by Gordon Henderson

Calls for a “*unified medical service*” in the UK date back to 1909.

When Clement Attlee's Labour party won the 1945 election he appointed Aneurin Bevan as Health Minister. Bevan's National Health Service began on July 5th 1948. Today our NHS is the second largest

single-payer healthcare system in the world after the Brazilian Unified Health System.

So, what you might wonder is Gordon going to talk about during the Roman occupation of the United Kingdom? Gordon's talk is at times enlightening, occasionally gruesome, sometimes humorous, always entertaining, but guaranteed to make you feel grateful that you live in the 21st century with all its modern scientific advances in medicine.

I am certain that you will be discussing this talk with friends and family long after October 26th

Monday 26th October 2026

7.30 p.m. Slaley Commemoration Hall.

£4 adults 50p anyone in full time education.

October 2026 gardening column Karen Melvin

As I've been photographing trees for over 40 years, I like to think that I can recognise a tree in the blink of an eye; ash branches rise up at their tips, birch sparkles in leaves and trunk, beech reaches, oak gesticulates in a zig zag way and it seems there is a name for this zig zag form. In a book I am reading from Tony Macklon, "How to read a Tree", this is called sympodial. Oaks have a terminal flower, which after opening stops growing any further, causing the side buds to develop. Other trees, like cherry, birch and ash continue growing from their tips forming long straight branches. Oak branches thicken and give a very particular strong branching pattern when mature.



Oak branches



Pontburn wood

An interesting insight from this book is that trees demonstrate forces of compression and tension. This is similar to bridges where cables are in tension and supporting columns are in compression. Trees have roots that pull and hold as well as trunks that swell and support against forces of wind, gravity and the lean towards light. Branches thicken at connecting points and strengthen by compression. In a tree trunk compression cracks are vertical and tension cracks are horizontal. It is still hard to sort all this out in a real tree in a real wood.

At Blicking Estate in Norfolk in a part of the garden called The Acre, a few trees were 'stopped' (or coppiced) when young and their branches pegged down to force them to spread out. This happened about 150-200 years ago so the trees are now voluminous. The Spanish oak is magnificent with wide ancient horizontal branches forced on to the ground when 'stopped'. They have rooted and almost look to be individual trees in a forest of their own. All very dramatic.



Spanish oak, Blicking

I have been helping my grandson prune a mistreated magnolia that my dad planted in Corbridge many years ago. Recently it has been pruned yearly by cutting off all the side shoots until it formed a dense lollipop shape. It hasn't been allowed to express its natural form, and show off its beautiful flowers. There is a worse example further down the road, also a tight lollipop that should be a wide spreading maple. I have the same tree, the Half Moon Maple, in my garden and in 50 years its natural growth hasn't spread more than 4 metres, easily the width of that front garden. It has beautiful leaves and flowers in spring and a lovely branching pattern.

The pruning of any of a maple or magnolia should take off full branches that might obstruct a path or window. They should be pruned just above a natural branching point. For this magnolia, I will take out some

medium sized branches in the centre to open it up and let more light in - also more light into the window behind.

This is the time of year to visit Halls of Heddon to view their magnificent dahlia collection. Our dahlia selection planted last year have survived the drought and are now the main flowering feature in the garden after this dry summer when many plants have suffered and gone dormant early.



Half moon maple

October '26 Slaley WI report

It is with great sadness to know that much valued former WI member and friend Connie Johnston has passed recently. She will be greatly missed by many of us in the close and wider community.

It's been a busy September and at the time of writing we will have washed and dried the cups and plates after the annual Macmillan Coffee morning having hopefully raised a healthy donation and given our visitors a nice time eating cake and catching up with pals. Thank you to Christine Milligan aka The Kitchen Dresser and to everyone who donated books, raffle prizes, baking and pre-loved fashion. We'll be able to announce a final sum in a few days time.

We'll be doing a 'mock-up' of the poppy wall at St Mary's this month in preparation for its re-appearance in time for Remembrance Day. There's been a few additions and new lengths to add which means that we might get the whole wall covered this year...if not...we'll manage it next year. We're in for the long haul with this project...and with more additions from pupils at Slaley School we'll be going beyond the church boundaries! The wool box is still available in the shop.

We were in the company of a true artistic genius with speaker Mark Rowney from Allendale for our September meeting, who, after a career in illustration, found his niche specialising in leather art; he quite rightly describes leatherwork as the 'oldest craft in the world' of course pre-dating cave painting!

His talk included images which charted his progression from an early childhood criss crossing between Southwest America and Weardale with a cowboy enthusiast father and family. Always drawing, he managed to avoid becoming too involved in the ranch themed family run restaurant to pursue his artistic talent at St Martins School of Art in

London. Immediately successful on graduation with commissions from national newspapers, magazines and book publishers, at just 25 yrs he moved to New York where Time Magazine and the New York Times quickly became regular clients.

One of the first serendipitous moments, of which there have been many throughout his life, he found a discarded box of leather and tools whilst putting out the trash. Already au fait with the technique through his father's interest in tooled leather on cowboy saddles, he began to make clothes and lifestyle pieces which attracted the attention of designer Paul Smith who stocked them in his shop on 5th Avenue for several years.



Mark was also taken on by a soft furnishings company with production facilities in New Delhi and Jaipur where he designed embroideries and

carpets. Back to England and concentrating on leather Mark fits into a 'Contemporary Rural Art' niche with his fascination on nature and particularly trees, but...his creativity has also taken him also into quilt making, painting on birchwood; always sketching new ideas for leather use on doors, walls, furniture, journal and book covers and fashion; long quiet days working on the pieces his mind is afforded the pleasure of having time to think of the next application.

We were treated to a mini workshop ...we watched as he created images using a variety of tools which changed their effect dependant on the force of a wooden hammer blow; the gentlest touch described as 'bruising' created depth and shading so the image came alive. Having a go ourselves we made initialled key fobs. There's a plan (currently under consideration) to bring an exhibition to Hexham... we will be first in the queue.

The trip to Northumberland Zoo was cancelled to make way for extra Macmillan preparations but we'll be transferring it to a later date. We've got next year's calendar all sorted and will be putting a calendar of events in the village notice board soon so anyone who is interested in joining us can see what the year holds. As always contact details are on the back page.

This month's committee meeting is on Wednesday 7th October and our regular WI members meeting on Weds 14th October is 'musical' with Hexham based Northumbrian Pipe player Rob Say. We will also discuss an extra trip, perhaps a repeat Christmas Shopping trip to Mainsgill Farm nr Scotch Corner.

An update on the B4RN project!

Those people who are interested in improving their internet access may have heard about B4RN ("Broadband For the Rural North"), and some became involved in efforts to bring it to Slaley. However, this is no longer going to happen, as this article explains:

"Dear neighbour,

Thank you for registering your interest in B4RN's full-fibre broadband service. We're grateful that you wanted to support the project in your area.

We're writing with an important update. Unfortunately, the planned B4RN project in your area will not be going ahead.

This has been a difficult decision. B4RN relies on the Project Gigabit Voucher Scheme to help fund new projects, and the scheme closes in March 2028. Although that may still seem some way off, there is no

longer enough time to plan and build the network in your area before the deadline.

After careful consideration, we've had to close several of the areas we had hoped to reach. Sadly, your area is one of them.

We understand this will be disappointing news, and we're genuinely sorry that we can't bring the service to your area as we had hoped.

At the moment, we do not have any further information about when full-fibre broadband may become available in your area. We understand that Building Digital UK is considering options for communities in a similar position, and we'll share any relevant updates if and when we receive them.

Thanks again for your interest and understanding."

Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Slaley **Services in October**

4th Harvest Festival

11.15am Holy Communion

11th Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

11.15am Parish Worship – Service of the Word

18th Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

11.15am Holy Communion Rev'd Marie Beard (Methodist)

5pm Evening Prayer at St John's Church, Healey

25th Last Sunday after Trinity

11.15am Parish Worship – Service of the Word

From the Church Registers

The Funeral of Connie Johnston was on 28th September:

The Rev'd Marie Beard officiated.

Dates for your Diary

8th November: Remembrance Sunday.

At War Memorial gate for 11am, then in church 11.15am

USEFUL CONTACTS

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