

58th Morpeth Northumbrian Gathering

10th-12th April 2026 Programme (details subject to change) Edition 2

Annual festival of Northumberland's traditional music, dance, dialect, crafts, stories, heritage, family events - + special themed *Vanbrugh Revisited* events for 300th anniversary of Town Hall architect Sir John Vanbrugh.

Before the Gathering: Friday 20th March

7.30 pm NORTHUMBRIAN CONCERT with Alistair Anderson, Graham Bell, Border Directors, Teddy Cuthbert, Sophie Fraser, Miggins Fiddle, James Tait, MC Ron Forster Town Hall £16/£8

Many free events. Prices: adult /school age. Under 5s free. Sorry no card/phone payments – please bring cash/ cheque. Festival office: Fri/Sat - Town Hall; Sun - Chantry front shop

Friday 10th April:

During today performers will visit local care homes
9.30 - 5.00 CRAFTS EXHIBITION + refreshments; craft competition entries (rec'd Thur. 9th April 5.30 pm-7 pm), craft displays, stalls, CDs, books, posters, archive photos Town Hall 50p at door/ accompanied under-12s free

10.00- 4.00 OUTDOOR ENTERTAINERS Punch & Judy, music, song, history Market Place, Arcade Free

10.00 – 4.30 DANCE WORKSHOPS 10.00 – 11 Historic dances from early 18th century; 11.30-12.30 Clog (bring flat shoes); 1-2 Maypole or Circle dance; 3-4 Longsword Town Hall Ballroom £3/£1 at door per session

11.00-1.00 HAVE-A-GO NORTHUMBRIAN PIPES drop-in (beginners; pipes provided) to be conf'd Bagp Mus £3/£1 1.30 – 2.30 SHANTIES IN THE CHANTRY Singalong with Ian McKone Bagpipe Museum £3/£1 at door

2.00 OFFICIAL OPENING of Gathering by the Mayor of Morpeth, Cllr Rachael Hogg Town Hall Exhibition

2.15-4.00 TOWN TREASURES Tours of Mayor's Parlour, Council Chamber, civic silver, portraits, etc, with Mayor & councillors as your guides Town Hall Free

3.00 – 4.00 GAELIC SONGS AND DULCIMERS

WORKSHOP with Linn Phipps and Sandie & Ken Hudson (bring any instrument and/or voice!) Bagp Mus £3/£1 door

4.30- 5.30 FAMILY STORIES Taffy Thomas Library Free

4.30 – 5.30 THE BAILIFFS' BALL dance event recreating a Morpeth grand assembly of 1726 Town Hall £3/£1 at door

7.30 – 9.45 SIR JOHN'S DELIGHT Ray Alexander as John Vanbrugh presents his lifestory "A Life of Irony" with Stewart Hardy (fiddle) Town Hall Ballroom £9/£5 ticket

8.00 SINGAROUND led by Ed Lawrence and Sam Dodds Venue to be confirmed Free (donations welcome)

8.00 MUSICIANS' SESSION Tap & Spile (donations)

Saturday 11th April: 9-4 FREE Park&Ride at County Hall

9.30 – 4.30 CRAFTS EXHIBITION as Friday Town Hall

9.45-10.30 FAMILY STORIES Taffy Thomas Library Free

10.00- 4.00 OUTDOOR ENTERTAINERS Punch & Judy, music, Ellington Colliery Band, local morris, clog and rapper teams Market Place, Park, Bakehouse Millen Green

10.00 – 4.00 MORPETH CASTLE OPEN DAY history, stories & music. Arranged with Landmark Trust Free

10.00 – 10.45 MEET THE NORTHUMBRIAN PIPERS

Drop-in to hear the small pipes Bagpipe Museum Free

10.00 – 10.50 POP-UP FOLK ENSEMBLE Prepare for tonight's concert (tunes: <http://phoenixfolk.co.uk/morpeth> to download, or just turn up St Robt's Hall (donations)

10.15 RING O' BELLIS; Clock Tower tours from 12 approx

11.00 PROCESSION Gadgy's Welcome at Market Place (road closed 10.30-11.45am from Chantry to Manchester St, traffic diverted Dark Lane/Stanley Terrace/Wellway).

12.00- 4.00 STORYTELLER'S GARDEN Taffy Thomas's stories , dancers, music Old Bakehouse Yd Millen Green

12.00-1.15 CATERWAULING SCRAPES OF THRASHING FIDDLERS Vic Gammon St Robert's Ch Hall £4/£1 door

12.00 MUSICIANS' SESSION Tap & Spile (donations)

12.00 - 3.00 SINGAROUND Joiners Arms (donations)

Competitions: All-venue passport ticket for Saturday comp'n entrants/audience including craft exhibition £3.00/£1.00. Doors open 30 mins before times below to allow entrants to register.

12.00 CLOG DANCE solos & groups competitions relaunch with demo by Two Step Town Hall Ballroom

1.45 SPEAKING & WRITING: dialect, stories, results of pre-judged written items-deadline 7 Mar. featuring launch of Alex Swailes Memorial young performer award St Robt's Ch.Hall

1.45 NORTHUMBRIAN PIPES & LOWLAND/ BORDER /HALF-LONG PIPES Chantry Bagpipe Museum

2.00 BANDS, ACCORDIONS, FIDDLIES, OTHER INSTRUMENTS, DUETS St. George's UR Church

3.30 SINGING: solos and groups Town Hall Ballroom

1.30 – 2.30 FAMILY SHOW Storytellers' Street Band and friends with silly song spots St James Centre £3/£1 at door

4.00 - 5.00 WOR HOOSE Heather Laurence introduces her dialect play on NE life St Robt's Ch Hall £3/£1 at door

4.00 - 6.00 SLOW & STEADY session led by BITS NE for beginners+intermediates The Wansbeck, Kirkhill (donations)

4.00 – 5.15 MORPETH'S MERRIE MUSICLES Early 18th century music from countryside and theatre (Vanbrugh's vintage) with Bennett Hogg, Matt Seattle and friends on strings and Border pipes Bagpipe Museum £6/£2 ticket

6.30– 8.30 WINNERS' CONCERT 2025 winners, Pop-up Band, guests Ape House Town Hall £9/£5 ticket (time tbc)

8.00 MUSICIANS' SESSION Tap & Spile (donations)

8.00 NORTHUMBRIAN & BORDER PIPING SESSION

Venue to be confirmed Free (donations welcome)

8.30 – 11.00 BARN DANCE Blue Hat Ceilidh Band, guest spots. Bring own drinks Town Hall Corn Exch £9/£5 ticket

Sunday 12th April: Sorry, no Sunday Crafts Exhibition this year

10.00-4.00 MORPETH CASTLE OPEN DAY as Saturday

10.30 – 2.30 OUTDOOR ENTERTAINERS Punch & Judy, Duke's Dandy Clog, musicians, maypole Market Place

10.30 – 12.00 MORPETH HERITAGE WALK from Market Place (must book in advance 01670 513308) Donations

10.30 – 11.30 CHURCH SERVICE with dialect hymns & items from Gathering performers St George's UR Church

11.00 –12.00 GAELIC PIPING SONGS WORKSHOP with Linn Phipps Bagpipe Museum £3/£1 at door

12.00 - 3.00 MUSICIANS' SESSION Tap & Spile Free

12.30 – 1.30 TAFFY THOMAS & MOSSY CHRISTIAN - new show of music & stories St James Cent £5/£1 at door

12.30 – 1.30 MUSIC EVENT to be fixed Bagpipe Museum

2.00 – 3.00 DROP-IN DULCIMER WORKSHOP Nonsuch Dulcimer Club 'Come and Try' session on hammered and mountain dulcimers Bagpipe Museum £3/£1 at door

2.15 – 3.30 FAMILY CEILIDH Little Big Blue Ceilidh Band plus storytelling St James Centre £4/£1 requested at door

M.N.G.Committee, part of Morpeth Antiquarian Society, Reg. Charity no. 507640, reserves the right to alter event details.

DETAILS/UPDATES: www.northumbriana.org.uk QUERIES: 01670 513308 TICKETS: Morpeth TIC 01670 623455



- 1 TOWN HALL
- 2 MARKET PLACE
- 3 CHANTRY TIC AND BAGPIPE MUSEUM
- 4 ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH
- 5 BLACK AND GREY COACH HOUSE
- 6 ST. ROBERT'S CHURCH HALL (Rear of Collingwood House)

- 7 CLOCK TOWER
- 8 ST. JAMES' CENTRE
- 9 TAP & SPILE
- 10 SANDERSON ARCADE
- 11 ST.JAMES'S CHURCH
- 12 RUGBY FIELD
- 13 NEW LEISURE CENTRE & LIBRARY
- 14 CARLISLE PARK (Bandstand)
- 15 MORPETH CASTLE

- 16 THE WANSBECK PUB
Abbey Meadows
 - 17 COUNTY HALL
 - 18 OLD BAKEHOUSE
MILLENNIUM GREEN
 - 19 CONSERVATIVE CLUB
 - 20 JOINERS ARMS
 - 21 WILLIAM TURNER HERB GARDEN
- * Staff Aided Access