

# SEATON VALLEY FUTURES

ISSUE 36

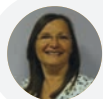
Council Agrees Budget

Christmas Lights Switch On Events

Photography Competition 2025



# Message from our Chair



**Sue Bowman**

**Chair, Seaton Valley**, Community Council

As we step into the new year, we bring you an interesting and informative magazine packed with updates and news from across the community.

It's lovely to look back and reflect on the magical Christmas lights switch-on events that brought festive cheer to our villages at the end of November. Once again, we had a great turn-out from our residents who came together to enjoy the fun and join in with the celebrations. These events are a true highlight of the season and are a wonderful way to welcome the festive season to Seaton Valley.

The council have agreed our budget for the next financial year. We have prioritised balancing the requirement to maintain the council's resources at manageable levels and continuing delivery of its core services, whilst at the same time reflecting inflation and keeping Council Tax increases to a minimum. This has proved difficult as the cost of labour, materials and services has continued to rise.

We have had to make several savings across many of our service areas. Regrettably, we have withdrawn our Community Grants scheme and financial support to some local organisations. We also decided to reduce the number of issues of our magazine from four a year to three due to rising printing costs.

On a positive, we continue to remain focused on maintaining the services that we already deliver. We have increased our playground operating budget to cover essential repairs and the replacement of several pieces of playpark equipment. We are also continuing our funding of the Valley Moves activities programme which includes free activity camps during the school holidays, weekly sessions for children and adults (see the article later in this issue) and our commitment to provide funding towards a youth club and youth outreach provision in Seaton Valley. There is more information about our budget decisions on the next page of this issue and on our website.

Looking ahead, we are proud to announce a special event to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day. To honour this historic occasion, we will be lighting the Seaton Valley Beacon in Seaton Sluice as part of the national celebrations. This event will be a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made and a celebration of peace and unity. We encourage everyone to join us for this memorable tribute.

Don't forget to submit your entries for our Seaton Valley Photography Competition, celebrating the beauty and spirit of where we live. Whether it's a stunning landscape, a hidden gem, or a moment that captures the essence of our community, we want to see it! There are five exciting categories to enter. The closing date is the 30 March.

I hope you enjoy this edition of our magazine. Please don't hesitate to contact the council with any comments that you may have about the articles.

**If you would like to contact Seaton Valley Council, please use the details below:**

**Telephone:**

**0191 237 9870**

**Email:**

**[contact@seatonvalleycommunitycouncil.gov.uk](mailto:contact@seatonvalleycommunitycouncil.gov.uk)**

**Address:**

**20-22 Astley Road  
Seaton Delaval  
Northumberland  
NE25 0DG1**

**Open:**

**Monday - Friday  
08:30am - 4:00pm**



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Seaton Valley Council  
Website



# Seaton Valley Council 2025-26 Annual Budget

At a meeting of the Full Council on Wednesday, 22 January 2025, and following a detailed discussion, councillors agreed on the council's 2025-26 annual budget. Headlines from the meeting were:

- Council agreed to an increase of 3% to the Council's element of the Council Tax, meaning that its Band D equivalent Council Tax will go up from £128.51 to £132.37 per annum. Council was mindful of the requirement to maintain the Council's resources at manageable levels and continue delivery of its core services, whilst at the same time reflecting inflation and keeping Council Tax increases to a minimum.
- Council also agreed to an increase for allotment rents to reflect value to residents and rising costs for managing and maintaining the sites. For most tenants (occupying a plot of between 51-300m<sup>2</sup>) this is an average increase of £0.75 (pence) per month.
- In terms of new expenditure, Council has considered the likely cost of forthcoming elections and required investment in new playpark equipment, alongside priorities identified in the area plan and the continued repair and maintenance of council assets.

In finalising its 2025/26 budget, Council also agreed to continue funding for the following key activities:

- Youth provision across Seaton Valley including a weekly Youth Club in Seaton Deleval and outreach sessions in the villages.
- A free school holiday activity programme – Valley Moves – in partnership with Northumberland County Council Sports Development Team.
- Funding support for Seaton Valley In Bloom groups and community events in each of its five villages.
- Christmas events and lighting in each of the villages, including a competition for school children.
- Partnership arrangements with Northumberland County Council which provide enhanced grass-cutting, floral planting and environmental services to the community.

Councillor Sue Bowman, Chair of the Council, said, "Setting this year's budget has been challenging due to rising costs across the board, inflation, and competing priorities. Balancing core services and reserves with broader community support in Seaton Valley required difficult choices. However, I believe we have achieved the desired balance."

## Lighting the Beacon:

## Celebrating the 80th Anniversary of VE Day



**As the sun sets on the evening of 8 May 2025, we are inviting the community of Seaton Valley to gather to commemorate a momentous occasion—the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day.**

This significant event marks the end of World War II in Europe, a day when the Allied forces triumphed over the Axis powers, bringing peace to a war-torn continent.

The celebration will begin at 9:00 pm, with families and veterans, assembling at the headland at Seaton Sluice Harbour.

A choir will sing a selection of songs that were popular during the war that helped keep up the spirits of the allied forces and civilians. The atmosphere will be filled with a sense of celebration but mixed with reverence and gratitude, as the community reflects on the sacrifices made by those who fought for freedom.

At 9:30 pm, the highlight of the evening will take place—the lighting of the beacon. This symbolic act will be part of a nationwide chain of beacons, illuminating the night sky across the United Kingdom. The beacon will stand as a testament to the resilience and unity of the British people.

The lighting ceremony will be accompanied by the reading of a specially written tribute that will be followed by a stirring rendition of "We'll Meet Again," a song that holds deep emotional significance for many who lived through the war.

This celebration of the 80th anniversary of VE Day will not only honour the past but also inspire future generations to cherish the values of freedom, unity, and peace.

# Christmas Lights Switch on Events

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We officially welcomed the festive season to Seaton Valley with our annual switch on of the Christmas lights in our five villages.

The events took place over two weekends starting in Seghill on the 22 November and were followed by events in Seaton Delaval, Holywell and New Hartley.

Unfortunately, our Seaton Sluice event, planned to take place on the Saturday of the first weekend, had to be postponed due to a weather warning predicting the arrival of Storm Bert. Thankfully, it was successfully rescheduled to Sunday 1 December ensuring all the festive events went ahead.

Residents enjoyed complimentary mulled wine and mince pies, and we were joined by the main man himself, Santa Claus, for the switch-on events, delighting children with his presence and taking time to chat with the youngest members of the community.

Entertainment was led by our guest compare, Andrew, assisted by Martin, who kept the atmosphere lively and even asked Santa a few questions submitted by the audience.

At Holywell, New Hartley and Seaton Sluice we were treated to choirs from the village First Schools who sang some Christmas Carols much to the delight of the Christmas crowds.



After the Christmas tree lights were switched on our new Vicar, Revd. David Atkinson, who looks after our villages and churches, blessed the trees and entered into the festive spirit wearing his Christmas jumper and joining in with the singing of the Christmas Carols.

The events were well-attended, with residents from across the Valley gathering to support the events. Smiles, laughter, and a sense of community were evident throughout, making the occasions a fantastic way to mark the start of the festive season.

Thank you to all the people who helped us with these events and thank you to everyone who came along and made these events such a success!

# Small Businesses Sparkle in Festive Shop Window Competition

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This year's Christmas Shop Window Competition saw an incredible turnout, with dozens of local shops vying for the title of the most festive and imaginative display.

The response was excellent, with participants from a diverse range of businesses—from cafes to beauty shops—embracing the challenge with enthusiasm.

The displays this year were nothing short of spectacular. From twinkling fairy lights, tinsel and Christmas presents to handcrafted displays, each window showcased the unique style and spirit of its business.

## And the Winner Is...

The first prize went to ML Estates in Seaton Delaval, with their traditional nativity display featuring the baby Jesus in a crib surrounded by animals in a stable scene. Their display wonderfully captured the tradition of Christmas.

Runner-up honours went to OnetoOne Accountants in Seaton Delaval, whose Retro display gave us memories of Christmases past and Jack and the Bean Stark in New Hartley with their wonderful display of decorations adorning the outside of the café for all to see and enjoy.



Caroline and Allison from ML Estates receiving their prize and certificate from Cllr. Sue Bowman and Father Christmas.

# Christmas Lights Competition

Each year, our village comes alive with Christmas joy as we host our much-loved Annual Christmas Lights Competition, in partnership with the village First Schools. This magical event invites children to unleash their creativity and design a beautiful Christmas light.

The excitement reaches its peak when the winning designs from each school are transformed into dazzling garland lights! These young designers enjoy the honour of switching on their very own creation during their village's Christmas celebration. The joy doesn't stop there—runners-up join in the fun by illuminating the village Christmas tree alongside the winners.

Since 2011, this tradition has lit up our lampposts and we now have 14 unique Christmas garlands in each village, each a testament to the creativity and spirit of our community's children. In fact, some of those early winners may now have children of their own at the village First Schools.

**Pictured below are the winners and runners-up, switching on the lights with their respective ward councillors:**

## Seghill

Pictured with Cllr. Sue Bowman, Cllr. Eve Chicken and Father Christmas is the winner Owen Raine and runner up Bailey Jose.

Unfortunately, the other runner up, Katie Ann Wilson, was unable to make it to the Christmas Lights event.



## New Hartley

Pictured with Cllr. Susan Dungworth, Cllr. Jill Henderson and Father Christmas is the winner Aila Ancrum and the runners up Jacob Barron and Lola Wannop.



## Seaton Delaval

Pictured with Cllr. Sue Bowman, Cllr. Eve Chicken, Cllr. Rob Forsyth and Father Christmas is the winner Robyn Stanners and runners up Satvika Vipin and Leo Johnston.



## Seaton Sluice

Pictured with Cllr. Susan Dungworth, Cllr. David Ferguson, Cllr. Jill Henderson and Father Christmas is the winner Phoebe Easdon and the runners up Grace Wendt, Theo Sejl and Phoebe Burton.

## Holywell

Pictured with Cllr. Eva Coulson and Cllr. Les Bowman is the winner Dominic Butler and the runners up Ivy Said and Freddie Clough.



community  
directory

Find out about clubs, groups and organisations in Seaton Valley with the Seaton Valley Council Community Directory.

It's a simple process if you would like to include your group in the directory. Just complete the registration form.





# Capture the Heart of Our Community and enter the 2025 Seaton Valley Photography Competition!



Are you ready to showcase the beauty, charm, and unique character of Seaton Valley?

Whether you're a seasoned photographer or someone who simply loves snapping pictures with your smartphone, this is your chance to shine! The Seaton Valley Photography Competition is open for submissions that capture the essence of where you live.

There are five exciting categories, there's a place for everyone, from budding young photographers to nature enthusiasts and those who cherish the simple joys of village life.

## The Categories are:

### LANDSCAPE

Highlight the views and hidden corners of the Valley. From coastal scenes to green fields and woodland, show us what makes you stop and stare.

### WILDLIFE

Focus your lens on the incredible creatures that share our home, whether it's a fox in the field, a bird on the wing, or a bee buzzing in your garden. And don't forget, we love a red squirrel.

### VILLAGE LIFE

Celebrate the moments that define our community—people, buildings, events or anything that shows off one of the Seaton Valley villages.

### UNDER 18S

Are you under 18 with a talent for photography? We want to see your take on what makes this place special to you.

### UNDER 10S

For our youngest photographers, we can't wait to see how you see the world around you!

## Prizes

The winners of each category will receive a £50 Gift Card, and their photos included in a special spread in our magazine.

## How to Enter

It's simple to take part:

All entries must be taken in the Seaton Valley area, and you must be a resident of Seaton Valley to enter the competition.

Each entrant may submit up to ten photos and in multiple categories.

Photos must be in JPEG or PNG format.

Photographs cannot be accepted that have the name of the photographer on the image.

Photographs taken with the use of a drone will not be accepted.

No professional photographers are allowed to enter the competition.

Photos should be submitted by email to:  
[engagement@seatonvalleycommunitycouncil.gov.uk](mailto:engagement@seatonvalleycommunitycouncil.gov.uk)

For full details and Submission Requirements, please visit our website:  
[www.seatonvalleycommunitycouncil.gov.uk](http://www.seatonvalleycommunitycouncil.gov.uk)

**Submit your photos by 30 March 2025.**

## Enter Today!

Whether you're capturing the tranquillity of a sunset, the buzz of local life, or magnificent coastal views, your photos could inspire and delight others while showing why this place is so special.

We can't wait to see your world through your lens!

# Valley Moves – Get Active and Have Fun



The council, in partnership with the Northumberland County Council Sports Development Team, has launched an exciting programme designed to support, promote and facilitate sport and physical activity in Seaton Valley.

‘Valley Moves’ will shine a light on existing local activities and bring new initiatives to shake up your fitness routine, entertain the kids, or give your little ones some creative fun. With new activities planned to run throughout the year and special free activity camps during the school holidays, now is the perfect time to get involved!

## Exercise to Music

Staying active is key to feeling your best, no matter your age. That’s why Valley Moves is offering Exercise to Music classes specifically tailored to older residents.

These low-impact, energetic sessions combine gentle aerobic exercises with upbeat music to keep you moving and smiling. Whether you’re looking to maintain your fitness, improve flexibility, or just meet new friends, these classes provide a supportive and fun environment. No prior experience is needed—just bring your enthusiasm!

## Fun for Kids Aged 6 and Up

This programme offers a range of activities for children aged 6 years and above looking for something a little bit different, expect lots of fun and games you might not find in your traditional sports clubs. These engaging and supervised sessions aim to build confidence, teamwork, and friendship in a safe, welcoming space.

## Tots, It’s Your Turn to Play! (Ages 2-5 Years)

The programme includes plenty of opportunities for little ones to explore, play, and learn in a fun and structured environment.

Activities for tots aged 2 to 5 years include play, games and movement. These activities encourage social interaction, creativity, and a love for movement at an early age.

Parents are encouraged to join in, making it a great bonding opportunity. Plus, all sessions are led by experienced instructors who know how to keep the fun rolling.

## School Holiday Activity Camps

The highlight of the Valley Moves programme is the council’s FREE Activity Camps, running during school holidays (except for Christmas). Designed for children aged 6 years and older, these camps provide exciting activities to keep kids active and engaged while school is out. We are also providing FREE healthy snacks to everyone taking part in these activities. Parents can rest easy knowing their children are enjoying fun, safe, and stimulating environments under the supervision of trained coaches & leaders.

The camps are designed to promote healthy lifestyles, teamwork and confidence in an inclusive, energetic environment.

## Valley Moves Family Fun Day

On each Monday during the school holidays (except for Christmas and Bank Holidays), we will be holding a Family Fun Day in partnership with the Sports Development Team and the Family Hubs.

The Fun Day will be held in Astley Park Pavilion in Seaton Delaval and is FREE to attend.

Bring the whole family for an exciting afternoon filled with games, crafts and activities for all ages. This event is your perfect chance to connect, play and create lasting memories.

## JOIN THE FUN

The Valley Moves programme is funded by the council and reflects a commitment to improving the well-being of our residents, from toddlers to seniors. Whether you’re a retiree looking to groove to your favourite tunes, a parent with little ones, or a family planning school holiday activity, there’s an opportunity for everyone to get involved and stay active.

**For more information**, including timetables and locations, visit the council’s website under the Community dropdown menu or scan the QR code:



# Seaton Delaval Hall



© National Trust Images/ James Dobson.

When you receive this magazine through your door the snowdrops will hopefully be peeking out and with any luck, as the weeks progress we'll be seeing more and more of the sun too.

## Helios

Whatever the weather, one thing is for certain that the sun will definitely be rising at Seaton Delaval Hall this spring! You may have read recently that internationally renowned artist Luke Jerram has chosen Seaton Delaval Hall to host his newest artwork, *Helios*, and the hall will be its North East premier from Wednesday 19 March until Sunday 6 April. *Helios* follows Luke's successful astronomical artworks 'Museum of the Moon', 'Gaia' and 'Mars'. The 7-metre in diameter sculpture combines audio and visual artistry including the sound of the sun captured by NASA. At an approximate scale of 1:200 million, each centimetre of the internally lit spherical sculpture represents 2000km of the sun's surface. Alongside Luke's work will be a programme of events and activities at the hall, including opportunities to see the work at sunset through extended opening hours. We're pleased to be able to share that Seaton Valley residents can see *Helios* free of charge during its stay at the hall. Simply tear off the slip at the bottom of this page and bring it with you to enjoy a visit to the hall.

## Easter fun

Join us for a family friendly trail this Easter. Trails will run from 12 - 27 April with a host of outdoor activities and Easter adventures, from egg & spoon races, to sunflower planting or making music in our junk orchestra. Standard admission applies. Easter trails £3.50 each, includes trail sheet and either a chocolate egg or a vegan and free-from chocolate egg. Both eggs are made using Rainforest Alliance certified cocoa.

## North East Emerging Artist Award

Come along and vote for your favourite proposal as part of this year's display from the shortlisted artists of the North East Emerging Artist Award. Running from Wednesday 14 May to Sunday 22 June, each of the eight artists will display their prototype proposal in the Stables. The hall's residents were known for their support of the arts, and the award offers early career artists the opportunity to showcase site-specific contemporary art in a historic context.

The hall is open Wednesday to Sunday, 10am to 5pm, with the gardens, Stables and Brewhouse Café open at 10am and buildings at 11am. Last admission is 4:15pm and the site closes at 5pm. During the Easter holidays we're open daily from Saturday 12 - Sunday 27 April.

Full details of *Helios's* stay, including extended opening times and full programme details, can be found on our website at: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/seatondelavalhall](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/seatondelavalhall)

You can also stay in touch via social media:

**Facebook** - National Trust Seaton Delaval Hall

**Instagram** - SeatonDelavalHallNT

Cut here >>



National  
Trust

This voucher provides free admission to Seaton Delaval Hall for up to five people to see Luke Jerram's *Helios* between Wednesday 19 March - Sunday 6 April inclusive.

### Terms & Conditions:

- Group must include at least one adult.
- Under fives are admitted free of charge and are not counted as part of this admission voucher.
- Voucher must be surrendered at Visitor Welcome on arrival.
- Photocopies not accepted.
- Not valid in conjunction with any other offer.
- Valid at Seaton Delaval Hall on specified dates only.



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## Happi Hatha

YOGA

**Class Times and Location**

Beginner Hatha : Monday 9:30-10:30am : Dave Stephen's Centre, Blyth Beach  
Chair Yoga : Wednesday 10:00-10:45am : Seghill Community Centre  
Happi Hatha : Friday 9:30-10:30am : Seghill Community Centre  
Chair Yoga : Monthly : Craighealth Care, Longbenton  
Flex n Flow : Monday 6:30-7:30pm : Dave Stephen's Centre, Blyth Beach  
Happi Hatha : Tuesday 7:20-8:20pm : New Hartley Memorial Hall  
Happi Hatha : Wednesday 6:30-7:30pm : Seaton Delaval Arts Centre  
Serenity : Wednesday 7:40-8:20pm : Seaton Delaval Arts Centre  
Flex n Flow : Thursday 7:20-8:20pm : New Hartley Memorial Hall  
New for January  
Chair Yoga: 10:30-11:15am : New Hartley Memorial Hall (x3 a month)

**Book Now:**  
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Tyne & Wear, NE25 0DT









# Seaton Valley Partnership Performance Report

1 October 2024 – 31 December 2024

## Grounds Maintenance

### GRASS CUTTING

Grass cutting operations ceased for the season during October and the winter works programme commenced.

### FLORAL BEAUTIFICATION

Winter bedding prep and planting completed.

### WINTER WORKS PROGRAMME

The winter works programme is in progress. Shrub bed maintenance has been completed at various locations in Seaton Delaval, Holywell, Seghill, New Hartley and Seaton Sluice.

Footpath edging completed at West of Avenue Road in Seaton Delaval, New Hartley, Astley Park and North of Bridge in Seaton Sluice.

Works are ongoing to complete the full programme.

### OTHER

Football pitch and bowling green maintenance completed.



## Street Cleaning

### LITTER PICKING / CLEANSING

100% of Litter picks and bin emptying has been completed to schedule.

Mechanical Sweeping completed to schedule.

Leaf clearance completed.

### ENVIRONMENTAL

**18,140 kg** of litter was collected and **62** fly tips were removed during this period. **6** fly tips were also investigated by the Enforcement Team.

**6** abandoned vehicles, **1** duty of care and **5** accumulations were actioned by Enforcement during this period.

**1** Fixed Penalty Notice for littering and **3** Community Protection Notices were issued by Enforcement during this period.



## Public Realm

Bus Shelter cleaning completed to schedule.

War Memorial cleansing completed to schedule, with additional cleansing in preparation for Remembrance Day.

Installation of Christmas trees and additional cleansing for Christmas events completed.



## Customer Feedback

### COMPLIMENTS

**3** compliments received regarding Neighbourhood Services during this period.

### COMPLAINTS

**1** formal stage one complaint was received and actioned during this period.



Quote Of  
The Quarter

“Thank you all for help at The Church of Our Lady this week – cleaning the drive, repairing edges and filling in a large hole in the churchyard. What a pleasing surprise and perfect timing”

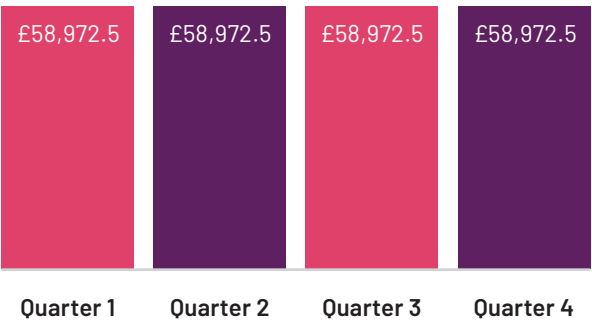
### SEATON VALLEY PARTNERSHIP EXPENDITURE ALLOCATION 2024/25

- 70% Grounds Maintenance
- 10% Public Realm
- 20% Street Cleansing



Budget £235,890

### BUDGET 2024/25



# Councillor Information

## Seaton Valley Council has three council wards:

Hartley, Holywell, and Seghill with Seaton Delaval.  
Each ward has three elected ward councillors.

## Next Council Meeting Dates

### Full Council

Wed 12 March, 7.00pm

Seaton Delaval & Holywell Community  
Centre - Seaton Delaval

### Full Council

Wed 23 April, 7.00pm

Seaton Valley Council Offices - Seaton Delaval

### Annual Meeting & Annual Parish Meeting

Wed 14 May, 6.30pm

New Hartley Memorial Hall

 Planning Sub-Committees will be scheduled as and when required.

Please use the contact details if you wish to contact your Ward Councillor to discuss any issues.

## Useful telephone numbers:

|                                |                      |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Northumberland County Council: | 0345 6006400         |
| Onecall:                       | 01670 361668         |
| Citizens Advice:               | 808 2787944          |
| Report a non-emergency Crime:  | 101                  |
| NHS Direct:                    | 111                  |
| Northern Powergrid:            | 0800 668877          |
| Report a power cut:            | 0800 6783 105 or 105 |
| Report a gas leak:             | 0800 111999          |
| Northumbrian Water:            | 0345 7171100         |



### Susan Dungworth (Vice Chair)

Hartley Ward  
0191 2375531

[susan.dungworth@seatonvalleycouncillor.org.uk](mailto:susan.dungworth@seatonvalleycouncillor.org.uk)



### David Ferguson

Hartley Ward  
07890 046696

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### Jill Henderson

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### Les Bowman

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[les.bowman@seatonvalleycouncillor.org.uk](mailto:les.bowman@seatonvalleycouncillor.org.uk)



### Vacant

Holywell Ward



### Ann Stanners

Holywell Ward  
07576 431152

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### Sue Bowman (Chair)

Seghill with Seaton Delaval Ward  
07961 940065

[sue.bowman@seatonvalleycouncillor.org.uk](mailto:sue.bowman@seatonvalleycouncillor.org.uk)



### Eve Chicken

Seghill with Seaton Delaval Ward  
07922 673987

[eve.chicken@seatonvalleycouncillor.org.uk](mailto:eve.chicken@seatonvalleycouncillor.org.uk)



### Rob Forsyth

Seghill with Seaton Delaval Ward  
07791 124781

[rob.forsyth@seatonvalleycouncillor.org.uk](mailto:rob.forsyth@seatonvalleycouncillor.org.uk)





# SEATON VALLEY PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

2025

PICTURES OF WHERE I LIVE



## CATEGORIES

Landscape | Wildlife | Village Life |  
Under 18s | Under 10s

## PRIZES

£50 Gift Card for each category winner.

**CLOSING DATE: 30 March 2025**

Submission requirements and how to enter  
are on our website under the Community  
menu or scan the QR code.



[www.seatonvalleycommunitycouncil.gov.uk](http://www.seatonvalleycommunitycouncil.gov.uk)

