

PRESS RELEASE

NEW FEATURE DOCUMENTARY TO CAPTURE A YEAR OF NORTHUMBERLAND'S LIVING HERITAGE

Public Crowdfunder launches Wednesday 28 October to help bring *Gatherings Northumberland* to the big screen

A new feature-length documentary capturing a year of Northumberland's extraordinary customs, rituals and seasonal events will launch a public Crowdfunder on **Wednesday 28 October 2026** with filmmaker Dave Brewis bringing the project to the big screen.

Gatherings Northumberland is being filmed over an entire calendar year, and features those annual customs and seasonal events that continue to bring communities together in remarkable ways.

The concept for the new film is 'once around the sun via the north of England' and the film will offer an immersive, observational portrait of the county and its people.

Produced by North East independent production company **TEN80 Productions**, the film is the latest project from Dave Brewis, who specialises in customs, folklore and seasonal events. In 2025 he made *Gatherings*, a six-part TV documentary series exploring Britain's most enduring folk traditions, now available on **Amazon Prime and Apple TV**.

In 2026, Brewis's lens has shifted entirely to Northumberland – which is where the filmmaker is originally from and where he is currently based.

AN OBSERVATIONAL APPROACH

Gatherings Northumberland is observational in style, allowing the communities themselves to tell the story.

There is no presenter and no voiceover. Instead the film features the custodians of the events, allowing their experiences, knowledge and perspectives to shape the narrative.

The approach is deliberately immersive, placing the audience within the events rather than being explained from the outside. Unseen archive material will be used to show how these traditions have been handed down through time, while the film also considers what these practices mean today.

In doing so *Gatherings Northumberland* does not simply treat these customs as remnants of the past, but explores the ways in which they continue to create a sense of community, place and belonging in contemporary Northumberland.

A YEAR IN NORTHUMBERLAND – WHAT’S INCLUDED >

This is a journey once around the sun via the North of England. The documentary begins on New Year's Eve at The Tar-Bar'l in Allendale, where we meet some very Northumbrian characters (and one or two vikings) within the context of fire, renewal and community spirit.

We travel north in February to the River Tweed for Blessing the Salmon Fishing at Norham. The village, on the border with Scotland, was once the resting place for the sacred remains of Cuthbert – Northumberland's Patron Saint. This introduces notions of Northumbria's Golden Age, which remains a thread within the film.

Northumberland is the only county in England with its own musical instrument to boast an unbroken playing tradition. The Northumbrian Pipes provides a score for landscape and belonging, and a returning motif for the film. Naturally we shift to the town of Alnwick for Shrovetide Football, a ritualised, communal conflict contained by custom.

As Spring arrives we follow Northern Cross on their annual pilgrimage to Holy Island, crossing Northumberland's national park via Hadrian's Wall. The film traces the group's epic journey, which ends as they cross barefoot at low tide to the island of Lindisfarne on Good Friday in time for Easter celebrations.

Early summer brings Ovingham Goose Fair – an important feature of the national folklore calendar as unusually it has roots in commerce. At one time this custom died out but was revived by locals in the 1970s. With the use of unseen archives we tell the story, while soaking up the heady atmosphere of this year's fair in this historic Northumbrian village on the banks of the River Tyne.

In Britain, it was fairly common to dance around a communal fire on Old Midsummer Eve, which – since the calendar change in 1752 – has occurred on 4th July. By the end of the 19th century, most of these events had died out across the country and today only one remains – at Whalton village in Northumberland. We follow the custodians and villagers as they celebrate around their annual Baal fire.

Agriculture is synonymous with Northumberland life, and the film follows Glendale Show – a much-loved celebration of rural life, farming and community in the heart of the Cheviots. The film then follows North East Folklore Society as they master the craft of corn dolly making before mounting their inaugural 'Harvest Gathering', a new seasonal event that celebrates nature and honours folk rituals of the past. And so on around the sun...

A FILM ABOUT PEOPLE AND PLACE

While *Gatherings Northumberland* explores traditions with deep historical roots, the film is firmly rooted in the present.

Director Dave Brewis believes Northumberland is frequently overlooked on the national and international stage despite the depth of history and unique living heritage embedded in the region.

“*Gatherings Northumberland* is ultimately a film about people and place. Northumberland rarely receives the focus it deserves nationally or internationally, yet it is an extraordinary part of the world with unparalleled history and remarkable depth.”

“I felt it was time to make a film which properly represents what goes on in Northumberland. It’s not simply a region of historic relics strewn across stunning landscape – it’s a place of extraordinary customs and folklore, still practiced by communities and still evolving.”

“The idea of **living heritage** is at the heart of the film. I wanted to explore the annual customs, seasonal rituals and ancient games that continue to bring communities together.”

“By filming over one entire year and allowing the communities themselves a voice, I hope to capture what these events mean to people today – and explore the sense of community, place and belonging so present in the North East of England.”

“Ultimately, my intention is to make an observational documentary that shines a light on the region, acts as an authentic mirror, and gives Northumberland the attention it deserves.”

- **Dave Brewis, Director, *Gatherings Northumberland***

FROM THE GATHERINGS TV SERIES TO A FEATURE FILM

Gatherings Northumberland is the latest project from TEN80 Productions and forms part of the wider *Gatherings* documentary project.

The original *Gatherings* series was made for TV and is currently available on Amazon Prime and Apple TV (UK, US, Australia, Canada). The series explores the most enduring customs and rituals from across Britain, including Haxey Hood, Rushbearing, the Burry Man, Abbots Bromley Horn Dance, Jedburgh Ba and Rye Bonfire.

With *Gatherings Northumberland*, the project moves to feature-film length and focusses exclusively on one county, allowing the filmmaker to spend an entire year following a calendar of rituals and customs – providing for even deeper observational storytelling.

THE CROWDFUNDER

The public Crowdfunder launches on **Wednesday 28 October 2026**. The Crowdfunder provides an opportunity for individuals, organisations and businesses with a connection to the North East to support a project which documents Northumberland’s living heritage while shining the warmest of light on the region.

The Crowdfunder will help TEN80 Productions complete *Gatherings Northumberland* and bring the finished film to national and international audiences. The full costs of filming and production have - to date - been covered by TEN80 Productions. In this Crowdfunder we are trying to raise the £25k necessary for Post Production (editing, grading, archive work). Crucially, any sum we receive above this target will go towards distribution, with planned screenings happening across the North East first, before national and then international distribution.

Obviously the greater the fund, the larger the distribution, which will be both via theatrical release and via TVOD/AVOD/SVOD platforms. We are looking to maximise reach.

We are putting in place a number of REWARDS for those who donate & support the Crowdfunder. Individuals can choose to be a SUPPORTER or CUSTODIAN with rewards ranging from early access to material, exclusive screenings, live Q&As with the filmmaker, access to behind-the-scenes and bonus content, and filmmaker Dave Brewis' video blog.

The film is scheduled for release in **Spring 2027** with the film touring the North East first, including the Tyne Valley Film Festival, the Morpeth Gathering and North East Folklore week. New dates and screenings will be added regionally and nationally, in due course.

SUPPORT THE FILM

The public Crowdfunder for *Gatherings Northumberland* launches on **Wednesday 28th October 2026**.

Crowdfunder Link: (only publish this live link from Wednesday 28th October please)
www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/gatherings-northumberland

Project website and Sizzle Reel: (publish any time) www.gatherings.tv/northumberland

ABOUT TEN80 PRODUCTIONS

TEN80 Productions Ltd is an independent UK production company founded by Dave Brewis in 2004. The company specialises in video production, observational documentary and factual storytelling.

FILM DETAILS

Title: *Gatherings Northumberland*

Format: Feature-length documentary

Production company: TEN80 Productions Ltd

Director: Dave Brewis

Release: Spring 2027

Crowdfunder launch: Wednesday 28 October 2026

PRESS CONTACT

Dave Brewis

TEN80 Productions Ltd

davebrewis@ten80.com

07772 781386

www.davebrewis.com

www.gatherings.tv

- ENDS -