

SPRING 2017

Northumberland news



Tour of Britain
to return

3 NEW LEISURE CENTRES
FOR THE COUNTY

What's on?
Events and Activities

NORTHUMBERLAND Live



24 JUNE 2017

BLYTH

[Blyth Beach NE24 3PL]

ON SITE PARKING

www.blythtowncouncil.org.uk

NorthumberlandLiveFestival

The Undertones

PLUS MANY MORE*

29 JULY 2017

BEDLINGTON

[Gallagher Park NE22 7LA]

NO ON SITE PARKING

NorthumberlandliveBedlington16

The Commitments

PLUS MANY MORE*

***** **FREE FAMILY FESTIVALS** *****

LIVE MUSIC / STREET THEATRE / FUN FAIRS

FOOD AT AFFORDABLE PRICES OR BRING A PICNIC

HAVE-A-GO ACTIVITIES FOR ALL THE FAMILY (MOSTLY FREE)

For more information about the event please email northumberlandlive@gmail.com or for more information regarding public transport please visit <http://jplanner.travelinenortheast.info/>

* Both headline acts are supported by a wide range of bands which are suitable for a family audience

NORTHUMBERLAND
Northumberland County Council



WEST BEDLINGTON
TOWN COUNCIL

ACTIVE
NORTHUMBERLAND

5 TOUR OF BRITAIN RETURNS



Available online, by email or in print.

Northumberland News is a magazine packed with features and news articles written specifically for county residents.

Published quarterly, it is distributed free of charge by Northumberland County Council. Every effort is made to ensure that all information is accurate at the time of publication.

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Events throughout Northumberland

Front cover:

The Tour of Britain Cycle Race passing through Alnwick in 2015



Tall Ships net a multi-million pound boost for the county

The North Sea Tall Ships Regatta held in Blyth last summer boosted Northumberland's economy by a staggering £13.5million.

The spectacular four day event saw nearly half a million people flock to the town - spending money in both Blyth and across the wider county.

The economic impact has been verified by independent research, which also shows that there was an extremely high satisfaction rate from visitors to the event.

A remarkable 99% of those attending the regatta described it as 'very good' or 'good' - while more than eight out of ten visitors from other parts of the UK said they would be more likely to return to the area, and spend, as a result.

Council Leader, Grant Davey said: "Benefits from holding the Tall Ships event in Northumberland have far exceeded our initial expectations.

"This world class event produced a huge economic impact for the county as a whole, and particularly so in Blyth and surrounding areas.

"These figures more than demonstrate the importance of bringing high profile events to Northumberland.

"Feedback at the event itself was marvellous, and this independent research confirms how much people really enjoyed it.

"The legacy is not just in finance and memories however - it also gave opportunities for volunteers and trainees to become involved in learning and in gaining life skills of huge benefit to them in the future."

Visitors spent money on eating out, accommodation and other tourism and leisure services which far exceeded initial targets and demonstrated the huge value to the county



8/10 VISITORS WOULD RETURN TO THE AREA



99% RATED THE EVENT AS 'GOOD' OR 'VERY GOOD'



HIGH SATISFACTION RATE



500,000 VISITORS



ECONOMY BOOST OF £13.5M

Tour of Britain returns

Monday
4th
September



The Tour of Britain, the UK's biggest and most prestigious cycle race is set to return to Northumberland this September.

The county is to host day two of the race on 4th September which will include a start in Kielder and a finish in Blyth passing through the Northumberland National Park and many rural and urban communities along the route.

The Tour is set to be broadcast in over 120 countries, including live coverage on ITV4, which will raise the profile of the county to an international audience.

Northumberland County Council has worked with Active Northumberland, sponsors Northumbrian Water and race organisers SweetSpot to bring the race to Northumberland.

In 2015, The Tour of Britain swept through the county creating a wave of excitement as some of the world's top cyclists, including UK favourite Sir Bradley Wiggins, cycled through our communities.

Residents and businesses dressed the route in the distinctive red and gold colours of the Northumberland flag and thousands of spectators lined the route to cheer on the cyclists and give them a fantastic welcome.

The eight-stage race runs from Sunday 3 to Sunday 10 of September.



Leader of Northumberland County Council, Grant Davey said:

“The race will showcase our county, heritage and iconic landmarks and bring major investment into the county, while providing a fantastic opportunity for us all to enjoy a wonderful international sporting spectacle.”

A new chapter for libraries across Northumberland



Book borrowers are seeing the benefits of a new chapter for library provision across the county.

Libraries are being integrated with leisure centres – bringing a host of benefits for book borrowers and other users, including better facilities, extended opening hours and access to more services under one roof.

Newbiggin Library moved into its new, permanent home on the ground floor of the Sports and Community Centre, at the end of January 2017, giving visitors a bigger, brighter, more modern and welcoming library space with better facilities.

A year after its move to the £21million purpose-built complex at Ashington Leisure Centre, membership levels have soared at **Ashington Library**. The library – which boasts a huge range of books, an IT hub with 18 computer terminals and a bespoke children’s library – has attracted over 2,000 new members and seen book borrowing levels increase by 25%.

Last July, **Cramlington Library** moved from its premises on Forum Way into a newly created space at the front of the Concordia Leisure Centre building as part of a £3.5 million transformation programme. Visitors now have access to customer services, gym, new soft play facilities, a Clip ‘n’ Climb experience, spa facility and a 10 lane bowling alley.

Ponteland Library moved from Thornhill Road into the leisure centre’s reception area and former creche in November 2016 where it will stay until its new shared site development, which includes new school buildings, leisure and information services, is completed in 2019.

Councillor Val Tyler, Cabinet Member for Arts, Leisure and Culture, said: “By integrating our libraries with leisure centre services, we can offer an improved service, longer opening hours and better accessibility and convenience for residents. Integrating services in this way has had proven results, with clear benefits for residents and cost effectiveness for the council.”

Library and leisure services are managed by Active Northumberland on behalf of Northumberland County Council.



Unlimited opportunities to get active

As an Active Northumberland member you have the freedom to work out when you want, where you want, the way you want, at 14 leisure centres across the county - including Ashington, Blyth, Cramlington, Morpeth, Newbiggin, Ponteland, Prudhoe, Rothbury, Berwick, Hexham and Alnwick.

Adult members have unlimited access to state of the art gym facilities, 450 weekly fitness classes and 10 swimming pools, with regular consultations and detailed programme development with a fitness consultant.



@ Visit www.mylibrary.co.uk or follow @NlandLibs on Twitter

Dancing to your own tune

With 450 weekly fitness classes on offer - including Body Combat, Kickboxing, Salsacise and Zumba - keeping fit doesn't have to be boring.



One class proving popular with members in Ashington, Blyth, Cramlington and Newbiggin is Clubbercise. Suitable for beginners and more experienced fitness fans, Clubbercise uses simple, energetic dance routines using glow sticks to club classic anthems from the 90s to the latest chart hits.

Instructor, Amy Fenwick, said: "I get such a buzz from teaching Clubbercise. It's great when I can see the smile on people's faces and can hear them singing along to the tunes. I also feel like I am making a difference to people's lives, which is fantastic."

Clubbercise is a fantastic way to get fit and, more importantly, it's fun. The classes take place in a darkened room so there's no need for people to feel self-conscious.

Loren Sayer, who attends Clubbercise at Ashington Leisure Centre, said: "Clubbercise is fab, the atmosphere is electric and is better than any night out. You are having that much fun you forget you are exercising. I can't think of a better way to de-stress after a day at work."



Make a splash

An hour spent swimming can burn more calories than the same time spent lifting weights in the gym and its low impact nature makes swimming an ideal way for people of all ages and abilities to stay active.

One member who is embracing the benefits of swimming is 83-year-old Pearl Hall, from Prudhoe, who regularly swims at Prudhoe Waterworld and takes part in Active Life Aquafit classes.

She said: "Swimming gives me a gentle workout without putting too much pressure on my body. I've been able to slowly build up my pace and I feel fitter and healthier as a result. The facilities are fantastic and I really enjoy the

social aspect of the aqua classes. The instructors and fellow swimmers are supportive and encouraging, which makes a huge difference."

Active Northumberland runs a series of Active Life sessions, tailored to help members build up their fitness at their own pace. Swimming pools cater for swimmers of all ages and abilities.



Banish the fear

As well as improving fitness levels, exercise is known to reduce anxiety, boost energy and self-confidence and make you feel happier. Heading to the gym doesn't have to be a daunting experience.

With experienced staff on hand to help you achieve anything from weight loss to toning, all Active Northumberland members can take advantage of an induction and a follow up session with a trainer.

Dawn Barrett, health and fitness manager at Ponteland Leisure Centre, said: "It's important for our members to feel relaxed and comfortable



when they come to one of our gyms and that's why we're here to offer advice and support when needed."

Jennifer Liddell, 59, from Ponteland, said: "I wasn't very confident when I first came to the gym but the staff have been brilliant and really put me at ease. There's a great atmosphere in the gym and I've made some good friends."

Active Northumberland members can use any of its 14 leisure centres, with no time restrictions or extra cost – all for £32 a month (£26 concessions and 14–21-year-olds) and no joining fee. Young adult members (aged 14 & 15) can attend the gym during specified dedicated sessions.

@ Visit www.activenorthumberland.org.uk or follow @ActiveNland on Twitter

ACTIVE
NORTHUMBERLAND

Bypass to speed up county's economy

The county's economy could be on track for a near £50million windfall over the coming decades when Morpeth's Northern Bypass opens this Spring.

Many key sections of work on Morpeth's £30m bypass are now complete, with engineers working on final parts of the scheme before it opens to traffic.

Forecasts suggest that over the coming years the scheme has the potential to trigger the creation of over 8,000 jobs locally, with an estimated £47million economic benefit to the county.

One of the largest current road projects in the region, the ambitious scheme will also cut congestion in Morpeth and reduce travel time and costs between the A1 and South East Northumberland.

The two-year construction period has involved some state-of-the-art computer modelling techniques along with some top-spec engineering along its 2.4 mile length!

- 2.4 miles of brand new road
- £50m boost to local economy
- 310,000 m³ of soil moved
- 34,000 tonnes of tarmac
- 9,300 metres of hedgerow planted
- 19,325 shrubs planted
- 16,675 trees planted



Councillors Ian Swithenbank, Grant Davey and Liz Simpson inspect the finishing touches being made to the Northgate Roundabout which forms part of the Morpeth Northern Bypass

Councillor Ian Swithenbank, Cabinet member for Local Services, said:

“It's exciting to see this major scheme almost complete - it's going to provide so many benefits.

“Once open the bypass will cut travel time, ease congestion in Morpeth and open up the south east of the county for further economic growth, bringing benefits for all. ”

The 2.4 mile bypass is scheduled for completion in Spring 2017



The Morpeth Northern Bypass will link the A1 to the Pegswood Bypass providing easy access to Ashington, Blyth and beyond

A different budget for different times

Northumberland County Council's budget for the next year aims to continue protecting frontline services and promoting growth – despite further cuts of £36m over the next three years.

While still facing continued reduction in funding from central government, the savings needed to be made by the council have reduced by £10m up to 2020 - due to a combination of increased income from council tax receipts linked to economic growth and housing development and increased income from third party loans.

However the challenging cuts mean the council is continuing to undergo a major transformation in the way it operates and delivers services.

In some instances this has resulted in some changes to our services to ensure they can continue rather than being stopped completely; such as the relocation of some libraries into leisure centres and the development of one-stop shops of council services.

The council has also continued its commitment to investing in the county through its £381m capital programme over the next year.

The programme includes proposed investment in new schools and leisure centres, infrastructure improvements, increased parking provision and development of the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne Line.

Work is now also underway on the council's new headquarters site in Ashington. By investing in a smaller, more cost-efficient building, the

The council has continued its commitment to investing in the county through its £381m capital programme over the next year

council will save money on essential refurbishments and operating costs, as well as generating significant income from the land sale in Morpeth – saving taxpayers around £16million over 25 years.

In terms of savings, councillors agreed to cuts of £6m in 2017-18 and a total of £36m up to 2020.

Council Leader Grant Davey said: "Each year the setting of our budget becomes more challenging as our funding settlement from central government cuts ever deeper.

"However we are living in different times now and need to think differently - we are doing all we can to maintain vital frontline services; investing in town centres, generating jobs in the county, improving education and providing affordable housing.

"There are a number of exciting developments planned across Northumberland as we continue to find innovative ways of doing business, generating sound returns for all residents as well as the council and making a great county even better."

Facts + Figures



£5m

support of Ashington-Blyth-Tyne rail line.



£30m

Morpeth Bypass.



£57m

landmark project of combined schools and leisure in Ponteland.



£2.5m

ploughed into improving public parks and facilities in towns across Northumberland.



£59m

set to be spent on building three new leisure centres in Berwick, Blyth and Morpeth.



1,000

new affordable homes.

Why not vote by post?

Residents in Northumberland are being encouraged to make voting in this year's county and parish elections easier by voting by post.



Why not try voting from the comfort of your own home and save yourself a trip to the polling station this year? Postal voters will get their ballot papers delivered to them a couple of weeks before election day. All they need to do is complete this ballot pack and post it back in the freepost envelope provided.

If you are registered to vote in the elections you will shortly be receiving a polling card through the door. This will tell you whether you already have a postal vote in place, or which polling station you must visit to cast your vote.

If you are not already a postal voter and would like to give it a try, you will need to contact the council's electoral service team to request an application.

If contacting them by email, please make sure you give the full names and address of anyone wanting an application. Completed applications must be returned by Tuesday 18 April at 5pm.

If you have not received your polling card by 31 March this may mean you are not on the electoral register. To check if you are registered to vote, please contact Northumberland County Council's elections service. **The deadline to register is Thursday April 13.**

If you have only very recently registered to vote and received a confirmation letter from Northumberland County Council, you will receive a polling card at a later date. There is no need to re-register.

Your community - Your say

Councillors are there to represent your views and opinions and are a voice for your community. They make decisions which will affect your every-day life and they decide how large sums of money are spent. It is therefore important that local residents use their vote to choose the candidate that they think will best represent their interests and those of their community.

@ For queries regarding electoral registration, please ring the council's elections office dedicated helpline 01670 624811 or email elections@northumberland.gov.uk

Morpeth Station redevelopment plans are on track

Northumberland County Council has pledged support and financial backing for an ambitious scheme to give Morpeth Railway Station a major face-lift.



Doug Phillips, Chairman of the Greater Morpeth Development Trust with Natasha Wilding, Northern Rail, Head of Trains and Stations (North East) and Leader of Northumberland County Council, Cllr Grant Davey at Morpeth Railway Station

The council has agreed to provide a substantial six figure sum to bridge the funding gap and ensure the go-ahead of the scheme which will see the station buildings redeveloped to provide modern-day facilities for rail passengers.

The £1.7m project is being led and managed by the Greater Morpeth Development Trust. The plan is to restore the historic features of the station's Grade II listed building while incorporating modern facilities into it including

a bistro café, toilet facilities and improved ticket office services. Empty space will be converted into offices for up to seven small businesses.

Work to the 167 year old station which sits on the London to Edinburgh east coast mainline is expected to start in spring. Funding has also been secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Railway Heritage Trust, train operators Northern and Network Rail.

Extra parking for Morpeth

Morpeth is one of four Northumberland towns earmarked for a new multi-storey car park to make shopping and business even easier for the growing numbers of locals and visitors.

While the exact location and costs of the parking facilities are being explored, the projects form part of the council's 2017/18 budget.

Council Leader Grant Davey said: "Our investment in our market towns is about regeneration, making sure all of them thrive both now and into the future.

"The administration's work means more people

will live, work and visit all our towns so car journeys will continue to rise.

"It's important we look now at our future needs and address them and we know parking has been an issue for the people of Morpeth.

"We are committed to reinvigorating all the market towns across Northumberland, via sound investments and creative use of restricted finances."

Ringling in the changes at Morpeth's Clock Tower



Morpeth Clock Tower, one of the town's most iconic landmarks, has had a modern piece of technology installed in it to keep the ancient tradition of the evening curfew bells alive.

For hundreds of years the bells within the tower have chimed at 8pm each evening to mark the end of the day and to tell residents to 'deaden their fires and retire for the evening' in readiness for work the next morning.

Now, thanks to £25,000 funding from Northumberland County Council, a new piece of equipment has been fitted to electrify the existing bells and enable them to peal each night, if, on the rare occasion, a bell ringer is unavailable.

Significantly, there is an override function so the bells can still be rung in the traditional way including at special events such as The Northumbrian Gathering, Fair Day, New Year and on Remembrance and Armistice Days.

The upgrade work has also involved the automation of the tower clock to provide highly accurate timekeeping and save it being wound up manually each week.

The Tower is a Grade II Listed Building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument so the sympathetic modifications have had the required Scheduled Monument Consent from Historic England.

Prudhoe Town Centre *Development*

Arch is working with Northumberland Estates on a new scheme that will vastly improve the retail offer in Prudhoe while creating up to 200 new jobs for the local area.

The town centre retail development will be located on the former allotment site off Prudhoe Front Street. The development will provide approximately 15,000 sq ft of retail space, linking through to the existing town centre shops.

This scheme followed a public consultation in 2016, where local residents were invited to give their views on the new proposed plans.

A second retail development is also proposed on land off Princess Way. The plans include up to 30,000 sq ft of food-store space and 40,000 sq ft of non-food retail units, alongside a petrol filling station, drive thru' restaurant, hotel and family pub/restaurant.

Artist impression: hotel view



Could you be a young firefighter cadet?

Northumberland Young Firefighters Association (YFA) is recruiting new cadets across the county.

Artist impression: retail unit view



The uniformed youth organisation is designed to provide young people between the ages of 13-17 with training and personal development opportunities related to the Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service.

Cadets will get an insight into the service and the opportunity to practise key skills such as hose running, pump operation and ladder drills. They will also be able to get involved in projects to support their local communities and go head to head with other station cadets in drill competitions.

Groups get together once a week on Mondays between 6-8pm at Pegswood Fire Station. Sessions cost just £2 which includes uniform and protective equipment.



Arch is wholly owned by Northumberland County Council, established to drive regeneration, jobs and business growth



To find out more information contact Bethany Cross on 01670 621158 or email

bethany.cross@northumberland.gov.uk

or visit our facebook page

 [NorthumberlandYFA](https://www.facebook.com/NorthumberlandYFA)

Ponteland Schools and leisure update

The new schools and leisure buildings will be operational by September 2019



Final bids from contractors are currently being evaluated by Northumberland County Council, which plans to award the contract in the Spring.

The successful contractor will start work on the site in July 2017 where new buildings will be constructed for Ponteland Secondary School and Ponteland Primary School on a shared site, with leisure facilities.

Darras Hall

Galliford Try has been successful in its bid to build the new Darras Hall Primary School building.

Work is set to start on site this summer with the school becoming operational by September 2018



Heddon on the Wall

Work has started at Heddon on the Wall C of E St Andrew's First School and is being carried out by Keepmoat. The building work is underway as the school will soon extend its age range to 11 years, becoming a primary school from 1 September 2017.



There's only One You!

Public Health England has launched a campaign encouraging adults to review their lifestyle choices and make positive improvements for the benefit of their health.

One You asks people over 18 to take part in an online quiz to assess their current lifestyle habits, offering advice to make improvements and encourage people to put themselves and their health first. Small changes to habits, such as, moving more, reducing stress, eating more fruit, stopping smoking and reducing alcohol can have a significant impact on health and can double chances of being healthy at the age of 70 and beyond.

Our lifestyles can be more unhealthy than we realise and the One You quiz asks participants

to honestly answer a series of questions to assess lifestyle choices and offers tips and advice to help individuals achieve a healthier lifestyle.

There are also apps available to help you achieve your health related goals. Whether you want to take up jogging and download 'One You From Couch to 5K', you need some inspiration for healthy recipes using the 'One You Easy Meals' app, or you can also track your alcohol

intake with the 'One You Drinks Tracker' app, everything you need to help achieve a healthier you is available at your fingertips.

**TAKE THE
HOW ARE YOU
HEALTH QUIZ TODAY**

@ For more information, visit www.nhs.uk/oneyou

Change4Life launches new Be Food Smart campaign

A new campaign that highlights the surprising amount of sugar, saturated fat and salt found in everyday food and drink has been launched to encourage parents to 'Be Food Smart' and take control of their children's diet.



Without realising it, we are all eating too much sugar, saturated fat and salt. Over time this can lead to harmful changes on the inside and increases the risk of serious diseases in the future. Childhood obesity is a growing issue with figures showing that in England, more than 1 in 4 children aged 4 to 5 years-old and more than 1 in 3 children aged 10 and 11 years-old are overweight or obese.

The Be Food Smart campaign empowers families to take control of their diet by making healthier food and drink choices. The free app works by scanning the barcode of products, revealing the total sugar, saturated fat and salt inside and providing hints and tips for adults and fun food detective activities for kids.

The campaign also includes distribution of 4.6 million free Be Food Smart packs to primary aged children and their families at local events across England.

What's in your food?

Find out by downloading the **FREE Be Food Smart app**

Download on the **App Store** GET IT ON **Google Play**

Search Change4Life

Help us to help you this winter

With the cold weather upon us, here is some advice on how to look after yourself well.

Practise good self-care – keep a well-stocked medicines cabinet at home and treat a large range of common winter conditions without needing to use the NHS.

Ask a pharmacist – they're highly-trained health experts on everything from colds to long-term conditions.

Contact your GP – many GPs can offer advice over the phone and can arrange referral to a hospital specialist if you need it.

Call NHS 111 – if you need medical help fast, but it's not life threatening or you're not sure where to go, a 111 advisor will assess you and direct you to the best-placed service in your area. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

If it's urgent – use your local urgent care centres at Wansbeck, Hexham and North Tyneside general hospitals if you have an urgent problem but it's not life threatening.

**STAYWELL
THISWINTER**

**For more information
and advice visit
www.nhs.uk/staywell**

Please keep The Northumbria hospital free for serious, life threatening emergencies:

Suspected stroke



Loss of consciousness



Persistent and severe chest pain



Sudden shortness of breath



Severe abdominal pain



Severe blood loss



Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust is urging people in Northumberland to use NHS services appropriately this winter and to keep 999 and emergency services free for those who need them most.

This winter so far has been extremely busy for the NHS in Northumberland, and across the country, with unprecedented demand for urgent and emergency care services.

Please help us to help you and keep The Northumbria hospital free for those with serious or life threatening emergencies.

Remember: for urgent but non-life threatening conditions, visit your local urgent care centres at Wansbeck, Hexham and North Tyneside general hospitals where the waiting times are considerably shorter than that at The Northumbria, as patients do not need to wait behind serious emergencies.



No Smoking Day 2017

Smokers in Northumberland are being urged to take the first step in giving up cigarettes for good on No Smoking Day which takes place on Wednesday 8 March.

The annual campaign is supported by the British Heart Foundation (BHF) and each year thousands of smokers choose No Smoking Day as the day they start to stop - proudly turning their backs on a life with cigarettes.

Northumberland County Council and Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust will be active on No Smoking Day to help smokers make this the day they start to stop.

The Stop Smoking Service, which is provided by Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, now has over 100 advisors offering support across the county.

Evidence shows that smokers are four times more likely to stop smoking for good if they have support from their local NHS stop smoking service. People accessing the service can expect to benefit from free expert NHS advice and a personalised quit plan, as well as range of evidence-based treatments to help beat cravings.



TOP TIPS TO STOPPING SMOKING

Stopping smoking isn't easy, but there are things you can do to improve your chances of success.

- ❌ Pick a quit date - choose a day that will be stress-free, and stick to it.
- ❌ Make a list of all the reasons you want to quit. Keep the list and read it if you get any cravings.
- ❌ Pair up with someone else who's looking to give up smoking and support each other.
- ❌ Contact your local NHS Stop Smoking Service for support from trained specialists.

@ To receive information and support on stopping smoking, people living in Northumberland can contact Northumberland Stop Smoking Services by calling 01670 813135 or visit www.northumbria.nhs.uk/stopsmokingfriend

The Golden Guide is out now!

The Golden Guide, a free booklet that provides practical support for the over 50s, is now available.

It is packed full of helpful information and advice about leisure, health, money, care and your home.

To get hold of a copy, ring the **Age UK Northumberland's Advice Line** on **01670 784821** and they will post one out to you free of charge.

Copies are also being distributed in local libraries, Citizens Advice Bureaux, GP surgeries and selected branches of Boots Pharmacies.



We've adopted Motor Neurone charter

Northumberland County Council has become the first council in the north to adopt the Motor Neurone Disease Charter (MND).

The council is a key service provider for people with MND and its adoption of the Charter signals a clear commitment to transform lives, by working with other organisations to support those who are living with the disease and their carers.

MND is a fatal, rapidly progressing disease which affects the brain and spinal cord. It affects up to 5,000 adults in the UK at any one time, and six people die every day from the disease.

Councillors have an important role to play in helping to shape the services which people

with MND rely on, such as social care, housing, health care, and public transport, as well as supporting the Champion the Charter campaign.

The five-point Charter was launched to improve people's understanding of the disease as well as the care and support on offer, by coordinating efforts and improving local standards of care.

@ For further information please visit www.mndassociation.org/mndchar

Local Hero Joan receives award

Northumberland resident Joan Miller has been honoured as a local hero for the contribution she has made to her community.

The Local Heroes Awards are the council's way of honouring and thanking residents who have gone out of their way to help others.

For twenty years Joan has been a driving force behind the sale of poppies to generate funds for the Royal British Legion. She is President of the local WI and has volunteered in the community cafe at Hadston House for many years.



Joan Miller receives her Local Heroes award from Councillor Liz Simpson, deputy business chair at Northumberland County Council

Do you know a local hero?

We know that there are a lot of heroes in our county but we need your help to find them.

If you know someone who inspires you with their dedication to

improving your local area, or helping others, you can nominate them by logging on to hero.northumberland.gov.uk



LOVE Northumberland Awards

There is still time to nominate a special individual, group, school or business for this year's LOVE Northumberland awards.

The LOVE Northumberland awards recognise and celebrate projects and initiatives improving neighbourhoods or local areas for the benefit of the local community. Entries are invited for the categories of Best Children's Project; Best Young People's Project; Best Urban Project; Best Coast or Countryside project; Best New Project and an Individual award. **The closing date for entries is Wednesday 31 May.**



@ Visit www.northumberland.gov.uk/love to find out more

County Wedding Fair set to boost business

A major wedding fair held in the county last month provided the perfect opportunity for couples planning their big day to meet local wedding suppliers and find everything they need for their perfect day under one roof.

The event was extremely well attended and we've received lots of positive comments from couples who found it really helpful to meet over 70 local wedding suppliers, gain specialist advice and talk to our registrars all in one venue.

Couples spend thousands of pounds on their wedding day which is great for the economy and local businesses, so we organised the event to encourage more people to come to our amazing county for their big day.

Northumberland is currently experiencing a wedding boom and it's no surprise the county has become such a popular wedding venue. With over 70 stunning venues to choose from and such beautiful and dramatic scenery, Northumberland really is a magical setting for any wedding.



- Last year the county's wedding co-ordination team officiated over 1700 marriages.
- Around 60% of couples who are getting married in Northumberland are actually coming from outside of the county
- Weddings bring in up to £30million to the county's economy each year.



3 NEW Leisure Centres announced for Northumberland market towns

It's a hat-trick!

Three new leisure centres have been announced for Morpeth, Blyth and Berwick, thanks to multi-million pound investment by Northumberland County Council.

Residents are being asked to have their say on the plans for the state of the art complexes in the three market towns, and will be able to give their views on what facilities should be included at the new leisure centres.

In December 2016, Northumberland County Council announced plans to build a new leisure centre and community hub in Morpeth, complete with library, restaurant and hotel. The leisure centre, to be built on the proposed site at Gas House Lane, will also incorporate a customer service centre and potentially a performance venue. The modern complex will allow customers to benefit from longer opening hours and access to a range of other services all under one roof. Plans for the proposed redevelopment are currently being drawn up and are scheduled for consultation in March 2017.

Later in December 2016, it was announced that two much-needed multi-million pound leisure centres would be built at Berwick and Blyth as part of the council's Market Towns Initiative. The current leisure centres do not meet modern expectations and will be replaced with two 21st century, state of the art leisure and cultural facilities. At this early stage, residents will be asked for their views on the plans and consultation dates will be announced soon.

Leader of Northumberland County Council, Councillor Grant Davey, said:

“It's great news for residents living in Morpeth, Berwick and Blyth that they will finally get the 21st century leisure and cultural facilities that they deserve. These important council investments will make a tremendous difference to people's lives and will allow them to access far better facilities than are currently available.”

All the new leisure centres will be built to high environmental standards with lower running costs.



Other investments:

In Ponteland the gym has been revamped and the town's new library has opened inside the leisure centre where it will stay until the new multi-million pound landmark project to create a combined schools and leisure campus is completed in 2019.

In Ashington, Northumberland County Council invested £20 million into a brand new leisure centre with Sport England contributing a further £1 million of funding.

Cramlington's Concordia Leisure Centre underwent a multi-million pound upgrade which included the modernisation of the gym, and the provision of a new Clip 'n Climb activity, soft play facilities and a tenpin bowling alley.

Prudhoe Waterworld underwent a major £650,000 revamp with a refurbished gym and fitness studio, and the installation of new state-of-the-art technogym fitness equipment.

Newbiggin Leisure Centre has had investment to upgrade heating, toilet and changing facilities. There have also been a variety of smaller projects in centres across the county, including new state of the art gym equipment, with further investment planned for 2017.

Active Northumberland, manages all leisure and cultural services on behalf of Northumberland County Council, including fitness and sports centres, community sites and beach facilities.



TOP ATTRACTIONS

To take part in Residents' Weekend

Top attractions in Northumberland will be offering **FREE ENTRY OR DISCOUNTS** to people living in the county during the annual Residents' Festival on 1st and 2nd of April.

The festival aims to give people who live in the county the chance to explore and enjoy some of the world class venues and fantastic heritage that we have right here on our doorstep.

Throughout the weekend, castles, gardens, stately homes and museums will be opening their doors free of charge or offering generous discounts to visitors from Northumberland. There will be something for all ages with tours, events and activities bringing local culture to life.

The event is organised by Active Northumberland in partnership with leading visitor attractions from across the county.

This year over thirty attractions are due to participate.

These include
Alnwick Garden, Bamburgh Castle,
Chillingham Castle, Corbridge Roman Town,
Housesteads Roman Fort,
Kielder Water and Forest Park,
Paxton House Gallery and Country Park,
Warkworth Castle,
Woodhorn Museum and
White House Farm Centre.



Residents will need special vouchers to receive FREE or DISCOUNTED ENTRY

These can be downloaded from www.activenorthumberland.org.uk/northumberland-festivals-and-events. They are also available in the Residents' Festival leaflets displayed in local libraries, county council offices, tourist information centres and sports centres.



April

Northumberland Residents' Festival

Over the weekend, Northumberland residents can gain free and discounted entry to some of the county's top tourist attractions.

www.active.northumberland.org.uk/northumberland-festivals-and-events

Saturday 1 & Sunday 2 April

Children's Easter Party

Join Willy Wonka and the Sugar Plum Fairy for an Easter party filled with games, songs, storytelling and activities. Suitable for children 3-10.

£10 per child with

1 free adult

10am-1pm & 2pm-5pm

Kirkley Hall

Monday 3 April

Kielder Ultra Trail

50, 80 and 100 Km runs. Set in the vast expanse of Kielder Water & Forest Park which spans 600 square kilometres and features many miles of purpose-built trails.

£35-50 per person

For further information call Hawkhirst Activity Centre, Kielder

Phone: 07535 818107

Saturday 8 April

Easter Adventure Quest

Warkworth Castle & Belsay Hall Castle & Gardens.

Adventurers wanted this Easter! Join the quest, meet characters from the past and crack the clues on a hunt as you explore Belsay Hall and Warkworth Castle. Rise to the challenge and reap a chocolate reward!

£9.20 adult, £5.50 per child,

£23.90 family, £8.30 conc.

Phone: 03701 113381

Email: customers@english-heritage.org.uk

Friday 14 April to

Monday 17 April

St George's Day Pageant

Warkworth Castle & Hermitage. Be transported back to medieval times and join the pageant of St George to celebrate this special day. Meet the mysterious knight in his shining armour as he faces his famous foe, the dragon and join in with the St George's Day festivities.

£6.50 adult, £3.70 child,

£15.90 family, £5.50 conc.

Phone: 03701 113381

Email: customers@english-heritage.org.uk

Saturday 22 to

Sunday 23 April



The Story of Lindisfarne

Lindisfarne Priory. The holy island of Lindisfarne has a chequered past, a home of saints, sinners, serenity and violence. Discover the origins of the Lindisfarne Gospels and tales of grisly Viking raids as three actors tell the 1,000 year story of this wonderful island.

£6.30 adult, £3.80 child,

£16.40 family, £5.70 conc.

Phone: 03701 113381

Email: customers@english-heritage.org.uk

Saturday 29 April to

Monday 1 May

May

Rothbury Food & Craft Fair

Featuring local crafts, food and recipes. A great day out.

Free Admission

Email: info@rothburyfoodandcraftfestival.co.uk

www.rothburyfoodandcraftfestival.co.uk

Monday 1 May

Hadrian's Wall charity Walk

A 27Km, 8 hour walk taking in some of the most spectacular sections of the Wall. You choose the charity and get sponsorship and you will be supported throughout the day.

£30

Phone: 0191 4133775

Email: info@northeastguides.com

Saturday 6 & Saturday 20 May

Haltwhistle Plant Festival and Craft Fair

An annual specialist nurseries plant festival. A must for keen gardeners. Also includes a wide range of attractive craft stalls and a pop-up cafe. Haltwhistle Swimming and Leisure Centre.

Phone: 01434 344582

Saturday 20 May



Amble Puffin Festival

Fun and activities for all the family in Amble. Includes guided nature walks, boat trips, bird watching, local history talks, photo exhibitions, arts and crafts, watersports and live music. There will be events throughout the town to interest all age groups.

Friday 26 May to

Monday 29 May

June

Northumberland Miners' Picnic

This event celebrates the area's proud people and coal mining heritage combining music, family entertainment and history on the historic Woodhorn Colliery site www.experiencewoodhorn.com
Saturday 10 June



Mighty Dub Fest

Set overlooking Alnwick Castle. Fully packed family entertainment, trade stands, live music and 3 bars. Enjoy a weekend of music, mayhem and awesome VWs. Saturday night is party night: hippy, flower power and summer of love fancy dress.
www.mightydubfest.co.uk
Friday 16 June to Sunday 18 June



Alnmouth Arts Festival

An annual must see event for all art lovers, situated in 27 venues throughout picturesque Alnmouth you will discover 90 exhibitors work on display and for sale.
www.alnmouthartsfestival.com
Saturday 17 June to Sunday 18 June

Northumberland Live - Blyth

Free family music festival. Blyth Beach. Live music, street theatre, fun fair and food.
Free Admission
www.facebook.com/NorthumberlandLiveFestival
Saturday 24 June

Brick Dinos

Enter the Jurassic period and meet dinosaurs face to face, each one masterfully built using LEGO® bricks. Working in collaboration with a paleontologist, artist Warren Elsmore and his team have painstakingly recreated some of the largest beasts to ever walk this earth in miniature form!
£4.50* adult, £3.50 child (5-16), child under 5 FREE, £4.00 conc.
Family tickets available.
Normal parking charge applies.
Wednesday-Sunday 10am-4pm (5pm from April) plus Mondays and Tuesdays during Northumberland School Holidays.
www.experiencewoodhorn.com

July

Felton & Thirston Fair

A traditional village fair with something for everyone. Recreation Field, Recreation Lane, Felton.
Adults £3, Children free 11am-5pm
Saturday 8 July



Northumberland Live - Bedlington

Free family music festival. Gallagher Park. Live music, street theatre, fun fair and food.
Free Admission
www.facebook.com/NorthumberlandliveBedlington16
Saturday 29 July

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