

Northumberland news

WINTER 2016

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**
at Wallington Hall

TOWN INVESTMENTS
Making great places even better
What's on?
Winter events in Northumberland



Pay-as-you-go car hire

in Morpeth and Hexham



from
£4.50
per hour

Have a car when you need it...

...and not when you don't!

You can drive whenever you want, for as long as you need with your local car club in Morpeth, Hexham, and across the North East. Co-wheels is the cost saving and environmentally friendly alternative to car ownership, taxis, or traditional car rental companies.

How does it work?

It's quick and easy to get going. Once you join the club, you can book a car online, then unlock the car with a smartcard, and drive away!

It's a quick and convenient pay-as-you-go service. Car hire is charged per hour or per day with a small per miles fee for petrol cars – this is free for the electric vehicle in Morpeth. Insurance and the cost of refuelling is included.



Find out more and claim your free driving credit:

co-wheels.org.uk/northeast



8 YEAR IN REVIEW



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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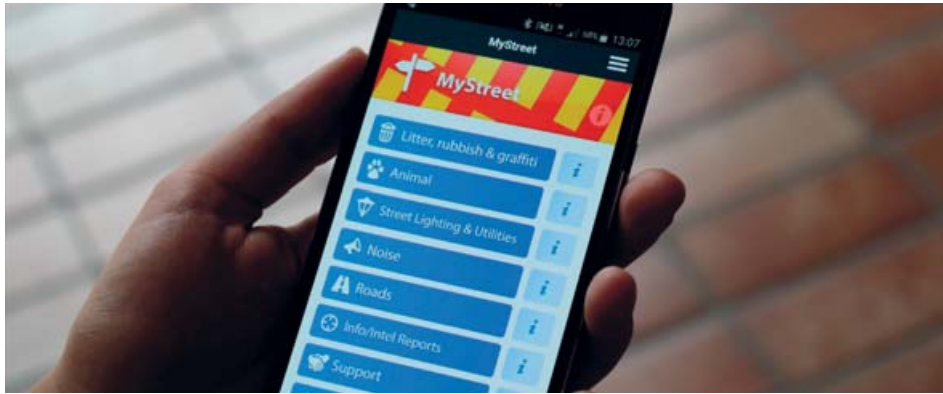
YouTube at:
www.northumberland.gov.uk/youtube

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Front cover:
Matthew and Alice Quarmby
Wallington Hall



A round up of the latest news and events from around Northumberland



MyStreet Northumberland

Residents can download a new app to access advice and report incidents affecting their local community.

The mobile app, 'MyStreet Northumberland', provides information on problems such as anti-social behaviour, noise, litter and street lighting. The app also acts as a gateway to the council's online reporting system where residents can report specific incidents. Reports will be

reviewed by council teams who will work with services and partners to offer solutions.

The app was designed by the Safer Northumberland Partnership and Improving Croft and Cowpen Quay (ICQ) and funded by Safer Northumberland.

MyStreet Northumberland is free to download onto iPhone, Android, Windows and Blackberry devices by searching 'MyStreet Northumberland' in the app store.

Anyone with concerns about crime or disorder where they live should contact their local neighbourhood policing team on 101. You should always call 999 when it's an emergency.

Trainline plans progress

The next stage of ambitious plans to reintroduce direct trains between south-east Northumberland and central Tyneside have been approved by councillors.

Several new or rebuilt stations along the route will link towns to key areas of employment, training and leisure attractions as well as providing transport links across the wider region and the UK.

The line would connect to the existing Metro system and include secure waiting facilities, parking and connections to cycling and walking routes.



Blooming beautiful

Green fingered Northumbrians did the county proud yet again as they collected a bunch of awards in this year's Northumbria in Bloom awards. Masses of villages and towns, churches, schools, businesses, day centres, tourist attractions and parks across Northumberland were recognised for their floral displays and manicured landscapes.

For the full list of winners visit www.northumbriainbloom.co.uk

Staff celebrations

The contribution council staff have made to the county was recognised at a special awards ceremony in September. The winners were announced at a ceremony at The Alnwick Garden with guests including Her Grace, the Duchess of Northumberland, finalists, council leaders and sponsors.

Have your say

The council is consulting on final changes to the Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy. You can have your say up to Friday 23rd December.

The Core Strategy provides the overarching planning policies that will guide where future development takes place for the period 2011 to 2031.

Find out more at www.northumberland.gov.uk

Pupils vote change

Almost 7,000 Northumberland pupils voted in a national ballot to decide what was debated by the UK Youth Parliament in November. Students across the country voted for education, racism and religious discrimination, public transport, votes at 16 and the health service to be debated at the House of Commons, which was attended by Northumberland's elected young

SPREADING

investment across our roads

£1m
FLEET
INVESTMENT

As the county heads into winter, there's some 'grit' news for drivers as the council has invested £1million in updating its fleet of salt spreaders.

The authority has just bought seven state-of-the-art gritters to increase its fleet up to 29 wagons which cover thousands of miles each year. Costing more than £100,000 each, the hi-tech machines help ensure the county stays open for business, whatever the weather.

The actual gritting is the last step of a process which is planned for months in advance and relies on detailed weather forecasting and good old local knowledge.

Michael Carle, the council's operational lead on delivery of winter services, said:

“We have access to detailed weather forecasts which contain information ranging from air and road temperature to the amount of humidity in the atmosphere.

“Using state-of-the-art software and road mounted cameras across the region giving us real-time information on weather conditions, we can establish exactly where needs gritting and at what level.”

FIND OUT MORE -

Watch Michael explain how the gritters keep our roads safe by going to northumberland.gov.uk/grit



THE WINTER IN NUMBERS:

- 100+ staff including managers, supervisors and drivers
- 36,000 tonnes of salt in place ready to be used
- 29 multi-purpose gritting vehicles
- 1,600 grit bins and 200 grit heaps
- Over 3,000 miles of county roads

Follow us... on Twitter and Facebook for live updates on:

- School closures
- Severe weather warnings
- Winter service information
- Service disruptions and closures



Twitter:
[@northumberlands](https://twitter.com/northumberlands)



Facebook at:
www.facebook.com/nccalerts

Oh BUOY

What a weekend!

The sun was shining over Blyth on August bank holiday as visitors from far and wide celebrated the North Sea Tall Ships Regatta.

The four day event was a huge success as Northumberland welcomed 23 majestic Tall Ships and entertained the masses with free family fun, live music, a carnival parade, street theatre, fairground rides and a nightly firework display and evening performance.

The event also included an extensive cultural programme thanks to a £120,000

grant from Arts Council England and National Lottery funded grants.

Northumberland County Council, in partnership with the Port of Blyth and Sail Training International, hosted the prestigious Regatta with support from Fergusons of Blyth as the Principal Sponsor.



1.5 miles of free entertainment



23 Tall Ships from across the world



500,000 visitors



“ It was a magnificent and truly brilliant four days which was enjoyed by everyone. Roll on the next time ”

Mr J McLeod.

Trainees return...

80 lucky trainees aged between 15 and 63 experienced the trip of a lifetime as they sampled life aboard a Tall Ship when they joined the ship crews and captains on a 500 mile race from Blyth to Gothenburg.

Trainee Paul Cozens from Blyth said: “It was absolutely amazing. We had loads of fun, gained loads of experience and confidence on the sea and learned loads of skills onboard the ship.”

Trainees joined their fellow shipmates, sponsors and councillors in County Hall on their return to tell their tales from sea and to celebrate their adventure.



Millions added to the local and regional economy



1,000 staff members and volunteers

Pictured above:
Captain Jack Sparrow

Celebration fireworks at Blyth Tall Ships by Graeme Peacock Photography

2016 Year

It's been another busy and exciting year for Northumberland County Council.

January

The new state of the art £20m council funded Ashington Leisure Centre officially opened its doors to the public. The popular facility includes: indoor cricket nets; a six-lane 25-metre swimming pool; exercise studios; a tranquillity spa; and a six-court sports hall.



February



A new partnership scheme called 'Produced In Northumberland' was launched to promote and raise the profile of food and drink produced entirely in the county. The certification scheme aims to boost business for local producers while enhancing the visitor experience when eating in the county.

March

The council secured £14.6m in government funding to help repair damage inflicted on the county's road network by record-breaking wet winter weather. The Tyne Valley in particular, suffered significant flood damage to homes, businesses and infrastructure.



April

A much needed extension to the car park at Alnmouth Railway Station was completed by the council. The £370,000 scheme added 37 extra spaces to help alleviate congestion in and around the station.



May



Work started on a major £1.5m scheme to re-open Ashington's Station Road to traffic to help boost trade. The work is part of an ambitious regeneration scheme for the town centre.

June

Local groups, organisations and individuals were honoured at our special LOVE Northumberland awards ceremony which celebrated the very best in community and voluntary environmental work across the county.



in review

Take a look at some of the investments, events and announcements that took place during the year to help boost jobs, support the local economy and improve our environment and communities.

July



Northumberland Hall, one of Alnwick's most iconic buildings, reopened after a £328,000 refurbishment which has turned it into a beautiful venue for community events, parties and affordable weddings.

August

Over 20 of the most spectacular tall ships in the world sailed into Blyth port for the Tall Ships Regatta. The event created lasting memories for hundreds of thousands of people, attracted international publicity for the area and generated millions for the local economy.



September



Thousands of pupils in Alnwick, Bedlington and Prudhoe started the Autumn term in state of the art new high schools. The schools were funded through the Priority School Building Programme with a £12.2m contribution from the council.

October



An independent report concluded that council plans to introduce a regular rail service between Ashington, Blyth and Tyneside were feasible. The council is now lobbying government for funding to progress the scheme which could boost the local economy by £70m, and be used by 380,000 people each year.

November

A new £2m bus station opened in Hexham providing modern facilities for bus users including an enclosed waiting area, toilets and refreshment facilities.

The old bus station site will be regenerated with new retail and residential properties bringing an estimated 126 new jobs to the town.



December



A £2.8m scheme to build 26 new affordable bungalows in Blyth reached completion. Earlier in the year we funded and built 16 affordable homes in Embleton and 20 in Shilbottle. These have been rented out to people with a local connection to the area.

Reducing risk *on the roads*

The council has adopted new national safety standards to reduce the risk of collisions between HGVs and vulnerable road users such as cyclists, pedestrians and motorcyclists.

Council vehicles over 3.5 tons are being fitted with adaptations such as cameras and audio sensors to eliminate vehicle blind spots. Drivers will undergo training aimed at reducing the risk to vulnerable road users by providing knowledge, skills and techniques to deal with the challenges of driving in busy environments. This includes taking part in a simulation exercise to give drivers a 'real life' experience of using roads from a cyclist's perspective.

County councillors Kate Cairns and mother Heather Cairns have campaigned tirelessly to eliminate lorry blind spots and bring improved HGV cab design at European Level with their See Me Save Me campaign. The pair began campaigning after their sister and daughter Eilidh Cairns, from Ellingham, tragically died in 2009 after being knocked off her bike in London. The driver later admitted he had not seen Eilidh.



Cllr Kate Cairns, Cllr Heather Cairns, Cllr Ian Swithenbank and Cllr Anne Dale

“Needless death and injury is happening right across the country not just in London. Time after time, just like in Eilidh’s case, drivers say they didn’t see the victim. Truck design has barely changed since the 1960s; We must give drivers the tools and training to do their job safely to minimise risk on the road.” *Cllr Heather Cairns*

A background image for a water utility advertisement showing a winter scene with snow falling and bare tree branches against a dark sky.

NORTHUMBRIAN WATER *living water*

WRAP UP WARM

Be prepared this winter and keep your water pipes cosy to avoid bursts and save money

To find out more visit:
www.nwl.co.uk/btf
@nwater_care

Community Chest

Council grants can help community projects

Are you looking for help to fund a worthwhile local project or cause?

If so, why not apply to our community chest grant scheme which is open to any voluntary or community, not-for-profit group based in the county.

The money can be used for a range of purposes including events, or for the purchase of equipment.

Grants of up to £10,000 are available and there is no minimum amount for applications.



Take a look at some of the groups who have benefited from the Community Chest scheme in your area...

Amble Netball Club

£900

for equipment

Ellington Colliery Band

£2,900

to purchase musical equipment



Ashington Community Cinema

£2,999

for projector and audio equipment

Ashington Panto Group

£500

for costumes and stage sets

Blyth Photographic Society

£1,850

for IT equipment

Cramlington Voluntary Youth Project

£3,483

for indoor archery equipment and outdoor to support the Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition

Newbiggin Traders Association

£417

for tables and bunting

Stakeford Juniors Football Club

£1,600

for portable lighting

Seaton Sluice Bowling Club

£5,000

for a changing room



@ For more information, or for an application form, visit www.northumberland.gov.uk

Making great places even better in Southeast Northumberland

£12.2 million

Bedlingtonshire Community High School

Bedlington high schools students are enjoying their first term in a new state of the art school building thanks to a multi million pound investment in education by the council.

The new building is one of three schools to benefit from a Priority School Building Programme. The council bridged the gap of £12.2 million between the state funding and the final costs to invest in the young pupils' future.

The new Bedlingtonshire Community High School has been built on the old school's Palace Road site. It also accommodates a multi station cardio gym and dance studio which will be available for community use out of school hours.



£3.5 million

Concordia Leisure Centre

Concordia Leisure Centre has reopened following a £3.5 million refurbishment funded by the council and Active Northumberland.

Improvements include a luxury spa, a refurbished gym, the region's only clip 'n climb facility, a soft play area and a Strike 10-pin bowling alley as well as a new MyRide indoor cycling studio, a revamped cafe and new class studio. The foyer and entrance have been remodelled, along with the bar, catering areas and party rooms.

The centre has been redesigned to include the town's library and customer services providing a one-stop shop for easy access to council services and helping to protect frontline services.



**£5
million**

Ashington Blyth Tyne Line

Passenger trains could be transporting thousands of residents a day between south east Northumberland and central Tyneside in as little as four years time after ambitious plans were approved by councillors.

Several new or rebuilt stations along the route will link towns between Ashington and Newcastle to key areas of employment, training and leisure attractions as well as providing transport links across the wider region and the UK.

The line would connect to the existing Metro system and include secure waiting facilities, parking and connections to cycling and walking routes.

Network Rail's initial estimates are the line will cost around £191m and the council has so far committed £5 million for detailed development work on the project.



Rail scheme moves forward

**£550
thousand**

Druridge Bay Community Centre

Work is underway on a £550,000 major revamp for the Druridge Bay Community Centre which will bring a modern multi-purpose facility for local people.

The project will involve the construction of a two-storey extension, creating a community gym with state of the art equipment on the ground floor and a first floor dedicated to the town's thriving boxing club.



Artist's impression of the
Druridge Bay Community Centre

**£1.5
million**

Ashington Station Road

Ashington's main shopping street is reopening to traffic after investment by the council.

Reopening the road will boost local trade, improve the overall look of the street and help deliver wide economic benefits. The council is also exploring how it can support improvements to the shop fronts over the next two years as part of the longer term plans to boost the town centre economy.



Station Road reopens in December



Students join the debate

More than 200 pupils from across Northumberland took part in an interactive session with local councillors at County Hall to mark Local Democracy Week.

Schools across Northumberland celebrated the national event which aims to raise young people's awareness of how local councils operate and how they can get involved in decision making in their local communities.

Students aged nine to eighteen flocked into the council chamber over two days to take part in the event which included a live e-voting session, a question and answer session with local councillors and a presentation about democracy and Northumberland's Youth Cabinet.

Councillors Scott Dickinson, Richard Dodd, Brian Gallacher, Alan Sambrook, Bernard Pidcock, Heather Cairns, Anne Dale, Gavin Jones, John Woodman and Liz Simpson joined students in the council chamber to answer pupils' questions about local democracy, elections, council services and more.

Councillor Scott Dickinson, business chair at Northumberland County Council, said:

“Local Democracy Week is great for engaging young people in local politics and it's a fantastic opportunity for them to see where lots of the big decisions are made concerning their local communities.

“These events at County Hall will hopefully encourage young people to voice their opinions on things that interest or affect them and will help them to understand the role of the council and our councillors.

“We had some fantastic questions from the students and it was great to see them so enthusiastic to get involved in local issues.”



Students chat to Cllr Scott Dickinson

Students from: Berwick Middle School, Church of England Academy and St Benedict's Middle School in Ashington, Corbridge Middle School, Duke's Middle School and Lindisfarne Middle School in Alnwick, Dr Thomlinson Middle School in Rothbury, James Calvert Spence College in Amble, Bedlingtonshire High School, The King Edward VI School in Morpeth and St Benet Biscops Catholic High School in Bedlington, gathered together across two days to take part in the sessions.



Top 10 Christmas Safety Tips

Christmas brings a flurry of activity with presents to buy, rooms to decorate, meals to plan and families to entertain! During the rush, don't forget to build safety into your Christmas planning and make sure you keep your loved ones safe and protected.

Stay safe this Christmas

- 1** **Never** leave burning candles unattended and never place them near your Christmas tree, furnishings or decorations.
- 2** **Check** your tree lights carry the British Safety Standard sign and always switch them off and unplug them before you go to bed.
- 3** **Ensure** you have a working smoke alarm installed on all levels of your home. Check the batteries regularly.
- 4** Keep candles, lighters and matches **out of the reach of children.**
- 5** **Never** overload electrical sockets. Take extra care with Christmas lights.
- 6** Decorations burn easily. **Don't** attach them to or near to lights or heaters.
- 7** **Make sure** cigarettes are completely extinguished before going to bed. Take care when tired or after a few drinks. It is very easy to fall asleep while your cigarette is still burning.
- 8** Thieves are opportunists. **Keep alert** to your surroundings when out shopping, keep your bag zipped up and keep expensive items out of view.
- 9** Going to a party? **Arrange** a taxi or designated driver in advance.
- 10** **Be aware** the morning after. You could be over the legal limit many hours after your last drink. Sleep and coffee won't sober you up. Time is the only way to get alcohol out of your system.



Why not sign up to the *Dry January* challenge, either on your own or as a group, to give up drinking alcohol for a month.

Last year people told us they enjoyed the challenge; some people lost weight, some slept better, almost everyone saved cash and many said they naturally reduced their drinking for the rest of the year. So go on, sign up, join us and get ready to go dry. For more information visit: www.dryjanuary.org.uk



DRY JANUARY

CAN YOU STAY OFF THE
BOOZE FOR 31 DAYS?



Help us to help you this winter

With winter fast approaching, 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.

Last winter, the NHS in Northumberland experienced its busiest year on record with unprecedented numbers of attendances in urgent and emergency care.

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.



Become a winter friend

As the cold weather begins to bite, we are calling on residents to show some community spirit by checking in on a neighbour or family member who is elderly or vulnerable. It's not easy to know how to help but there's a few simple things that you can do...



Check their home is warm enough and make sure they are eating well and are stocked up on everything they need.

Ask if you can offer help by picking up a prescription, putting out a bin, posting a letter or giving them a lift to the GP, hairdresser or church.

Make sure the person you are helping has a warm coat, hat and gloves and shoes with a good grip. Offer to walk with them if they are not confident alone and clear a path to their door if it snows.

Many elderly people are very proud and don't like to put people to any trouble so it may take a little gentle persuasion at first.

If you are worried about a neighbour ask if there is a relative or close friend you can telephone or call the doctor or NHS on 111.

@ For more information visit www.nhs.uk and search 'become a winter friend'

Are you at risk of getting flu?

People who are most at risk from getting flu are being urged to get a flu vaccination, which is available for free on the NHS. They can do this through their GP or many local pharmacies.

At risk groups include anyone aged 65 and over, mums-to-be at any stage of pregnancy and people with a long-term health condition or weakened immune system, such as those with asthma, diabetes, liver, lung or heart problems.

Mums-to-be are reminded that the vaccine will not harm the baby and will actually help to protect the baby from flu after they're born.

Carers and healthcare professionals are also advised to be vaccinated and a children's flu vaccine is also recommended for all two, three and four-year-olds.

Some people believe that having the vaccine will give you the flu but the injection given to adults contains inactivated flu viruses so it can't make you poorly. The children's flu vaccine contains live but weaker flu viruses that will not give your child flu.

Remember that at risk groups should get the vaccine each year to protect them from the illness.



@ For more information about flu and the flu vaccination go to www.nhs.uk

Warm in time for Winter



Belford couple Frances and Maurice Octon are amongst hundreds of residents in the North East who received a cosy boost for winter thanks to funding from the Central Heating Fund.

Northumberland County Council, as part of the Warm Up North partnership, was awarded £6.5 million from central government to install central heating systems into homes for free.

Mr and Mrs Octon had been using a coal fire and costly electric night storage heaters to heat their home but after getting in touch with Warm Up North, they soon had an oil boiler and radiators in each room installed at no cost.

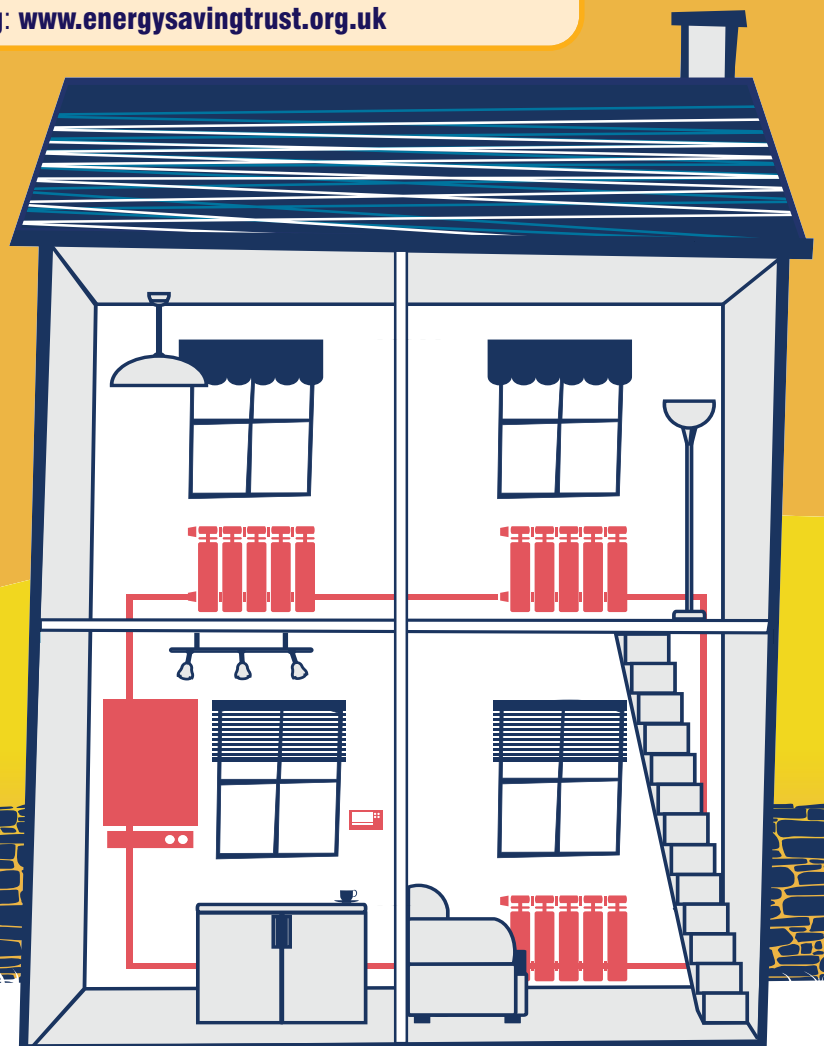
Mrs Octon said: "We're delighted with the difference the new heating system has made to our home. The house used to get cold and damp during winter and it would often affect Maurice's health but with the new heating system we're no longer worried about the winter months."

Councillor Allan Hepple, cabinet member for economic growth with Northumberland County Council, said: "By offering this support we were able to improve the energy efficiency of hundreds of Northumberland homes and protect our residents' general health and wellbeing."

"We wanted to make sure that the grant money would make a positive difference in the homes that needed it most and I'm delighted that the scheme helped so many local families."



Funding is no longer available through this scheme but you can find out about other energy saving government schemes by visiting: www.energysavingtrust.org.uk



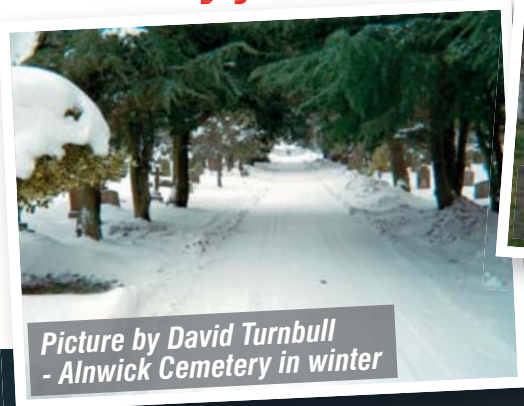
YOUR Northumberland

We want
to hear
from you

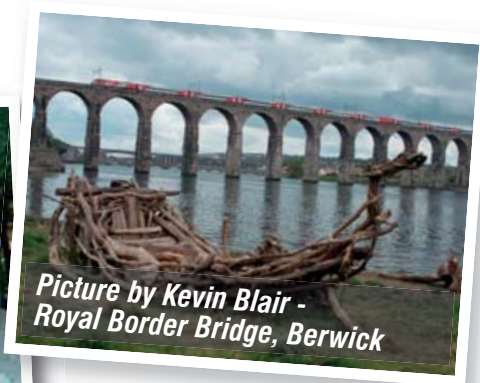
Our brand new residents' area, Your Northumberland, is ready to be filled with your entries.

We want to see and hear why you love Northumberland. Send us your photographs and messages of your favourite spots and you might be featured in the next edition of Northumberland News.

Taken by you...



Picture by David Turnbull - Alnwick Cemetery in winter



Picture by Kevin Blair - Royal Border Bridge, Berwick

Follow us...

For current news and to find out what's happening in Northumberland



Facebook at:
www.northumberland.gov.uk/facebook



Twitter at:
www.northumberland.gov.uk/twitter

Send us your letters and photographs followed by your name and your home town or village to:

nlandnews@gmail.com or
Communications, County Hall,
Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF

Be Bright, Be Seen

Now the dark mornings and nights are upon us, it is important to remember to stay safe and be **visible** when out and about.



So here are five top tips on how to be bright and stay safe:

- 1 Wear bright or fluorescent clothing in daylight or poor light.
- 2 Wear reflective clothing at night - Reflective vests, sashes and wristbands work well. Remember reflective clothing shows up in car headlights but fluorescent clothing is not so visible after dark.
- 3 Accessorise! Even small items such as clip on reflectors and stickers on clothing or bags are a great way to improve your visibility.
- 4 If you like to cycle, always use your lights when cycling after dark, in the rain or if the weather is overcast. It is the law to have clean and working lights at night (white lights at the front and red lights at the rear) as well as a rear reflector. It is good to fit spoke reflectors too.
- 5 If you're out at night, choose routes and crossing places that are well lit, avoid listening to music or using a mobile phone while walking outdoors and keep away from the kerb.

DON'T HAVE A RUBBISH Christmas!

WHEN WILL MY BINS AND RECYCLING BE COLLECTED THIS CHRISTMAS?

Collections week commencing 19 December will be as usual.

Collections week commencing 26 December will be two days later than usual

Monday 26 December will be collected on Wednesday 28 December

Tuesday 27 December will be collected on Thursday 29 December

Wednesday 28 December will be collected on Friday 30 December

Thursday 29 December will be collected on Saturday 31 December

Collections week commencing 2 January will be one day later than usual

Monday 2 January will be collected on Tuesday 3 January

Tuesday 3 January will be collected on Wednesday 4 January

Wednesday 4 January will be collected on Thursday 5 January

Thursday 5 January will be collected Friday 6 January

These changes will apply to both recycling and rubbish bins.



Christmas Tree Recycling

You can take real Christmas trees to your local household waste recovery centre, where they are collected and recycled along with other items of garden waste.

There are 12 household waste recovery centres across Northumberland. Seven are open seven days a week and five are open four days a week (excluding Christmas Day and New Year's Day) between 8am - 6pm.



To find out more visit www.northumberland.gov.uk/waste

December

Breakfast or tea with Father Christmas

Meet Father Christmas, choose a special present, enjoy a delicious breakfast or tea and decorate a Christmas biscuit at Heighley Gate Garden Centre. Visit the website to book online.

Breakfast from 9am or tea from 3pm

£9.99 for children, £7.99 for adult (mini plate options available £3.99 for adults)

Phone: (0844) 2885193

www.wyevalegardencentres.co.uk

Saturday 12 November

Saturday 24 December

Father Christmas at Wallington

Admire the beautiful themed decorations and soak up the special Christmas atmosphere at Wallington Hall. Meet Father Christmas in his cosy grotto, receive a special gift and hear stories from Mrs Christmas.

10:30am - 3:30pm

£10 per ticket

Phone: (01670) 773600

www.nationaltrust.org.uk

**Saturday 10, Sunday 11,
Saturday 17 and Friday 23
December**



Woodhorn Winter Market

Enjoy a selection of gifts, food and produce from some of the region's finest makers, crafters and producers in Woodhorn's beautiful Workshop Galleries. Visit the Pityard Skating Rink and Father Christmas Stable Grotto for a festive family day out.

10am - 4pm

Free entry but charges for car parking and individual attractions apply.

Phone: (01670) 624455

www.experiencewoodhorn.com

Saturday 10 and

Sunday 11 December

Victorian Christmas Kitchen

From Christmas puddings and sweet mince pies to turkey and the goose, see how the Victorian's created elaborate festive feasts that would make your mouth water at Belsay Hall. Don't forget to pick up take home tips and take home recipes to try yourself.

11am - 5pm

£8.80 for adults, £5.20 for children or £22.80 for a family

Phone: (03703) 331181

www.englishheritage.org.uk

Saturday 10 and

Sunday 11 December



South Tynedale Railway Santa Specials

Ride the steam train back in time to be greeted by the chief elf who will lead you across to see Santa in his cosy Grotto and then enjoy complimentary hot chocolate and seasonal snacks in the Cave Café.

10am - 5pm

Free for Children under two, £10 for children (aged 2-14) and £13 for adults.

Phone: (01434) 382828

www.southtynedalerailway.org.uk

**Saturday 10, Sunday 11,
Saturday 17 and
Tuesday 20 December**

The Jungle Book

Enjoy the comical adventures of Mowgli the man cub as he battles to survive and become the leader of the pack, presented by Oddsocks' Productions at Queen's Hall, Hexham.

Times and prices vary check website for details

Phone: (01434) 652477

www.queenshall.co.uk

Tuesday 13 December

Friday 30 December

The Paradise Tree

Grown in secret and revealed at the Alnwick Garden this Christmas the story of the Paradise Tree bearing its magical fruit will be told around the garden a magical Christmas Tale.

4:15pm - 8pm

Tickets from £5 per person.

Phone: (01665) 511350

www.alnwickgarden.com

Friday 16 to Friday 23 December



Hadrian's Wall Stargazing

Join Act of Space Astronomy for a fun and interactive way to learn all about the cosmos; exploring the planets, moons, stars and beyond from Housesteads Roman Fort.

6pm - 8pm

£8 per person

Phone: (0844) 2491895

www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Saturday 17 December

Christmas Cabaret

Treat yourself to an evening of entertainment with a live band and the Pantomime Society ensemble, you'll be dreaming of a white Christmas in no time.

7:30pm start

£10 per person

(0191) 2375460

www.seatondelavalartscentre.co.uk

Saturday 17 December

Christmas Zoo Club

Help keepers with their daily checks, feeding the lemurs, training the cockatoos and walking the Shetland ponies. Book between one and five days for children aged 5-8 and 9-15.

10am - 4pm

£30 per day, per child

(01670) 841235

www.kirkleyhallzoo.co.uk

Monday 19 December

Friday 23 December

Little Red Riding Hood

Visit the Newbiggin Maritime Centre and enjoy a magical and enchanting rendition of the classic Little Red Riding Hood and other stories.

6:30pm start

£6 for children with one adult

free, £4 per additional child

and £1.50 for additional adults

Phone: (01670) 811951

www.nmcentre.org.uk

Sunday 10 January

Pictures in the dark

Meet an Astrophotographer at Kirknewton Village Hall and learn the skills to take great photographs and pictures, whether it is of wildlife or the moon.

8pm - 10pm

£15 if booked in advance,

£18 on the night

www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk

Saturday 28 January

February

19th Century Mini Diggers

Unearth some of Northumberland's hidden past at Chesters Roman Fort and Museum. Mini archaeologists will join two Victorian characters, which would have helped John Clayton discover Hadrian's Wall Roman remains, ancient artefacts and more.

11am - 5pm

£6.20 for adults, £3.70 for

children or £16.10 for families

Phone: (01434) 681379

www.englishheritage.org.uk

Saturday 18

Sunday 26 February

The Bear

by Raymond Briggs

One night when Tilly is fast asleep she is visited by an enormous bear. It has a big black tongue and a yawn as big as your head. But Tilly's not scared. Join Tilly's adventure and enjoy a magical theatre production at the Maltings Theatre and cinema.

2pm - 3pm

£8 per person

Phone: (01289) 330999

www.maltingsberwick.co.uk

Wednesday 22 February

January

Aurora Night at Kielder

Learn about the energy that the sun releases second by second and how this interacts with the Earth's atmosphere to give us a light show like no other - the Northern Lights. Gaze at the glittering Milky Way from the observation deck in one of Europe's darkest locations.

8pm - 11pm

Tickets from £15 per person

Phone: (0191) 2655510

www.kielderobservatory.org

Friday 6 January



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