

A MAGAZINE FOR NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL TENANTS

# **YOUR** *news*

## **ENJOYING YOUR GARDEN**

*including tips on how to  
get your garden tidy and  
summer ready*

## *Are you covered?*

**ADVICE ON CONTENTS INSURANCE  
FOR YOUR TENANCY**





# FOREWORD

## John Riddle, Cabinet member for Planning, Housing and Resilience

Whether it's enjoying a BBQ in your garden, heading to an attraction, or simply enjoying a day trip to one of the many beauty spots or spectacular beaches in Northumberland, there is no better time to get out and about with the family.

With this good weather however also come possible risks, with open doors and windows offering temptation to opportunistic criminals. It's therefore a good time to review what type of contents insurance you have for your personal possessions.

Whilst we all want to enjoy ourselves during these long summer days, it is important to remember that there are things you can do at this time of year to look after yourself and your home.

Unfortunately, the summer school holidays can also lead to an increase in anti-social behaviour as young people look for ways to keep themselves entertained. To help us tackle this we're asking for your help in stamping down on underage drink sales in your community.

*So whatever you do this summer stay safe and enjoy it.*



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**HELPING TO BRIDGE THE GAP**

**FRONT COVER IMAGE:**  
Youngster enjoying the beach.

## Michael Sanderson

**It is with great sadness that I inform you of the death of tenant Michael Sanderson. I'm sure many of you knew Michael and would have worked with him on various projects throughout the years.**

Michael, 60, was heavily involved in helping to improve the service we offer tenants, having been a member of a number of task groups including Anti-Social behaviour, Repairs and Maintenance and the editorial group which helps to produce this publication.

going more than a year helping people across the Blyth area.

Michael also attended a number tenant workshops and conferences and was also an active volunteer in his community with the British Red Cross and for his local church.

But it was his kindness and support that many of you will remember and his passion for helping others. It was this passion that led him to become the lead tenant for the Residents' Network Group. This group helps vulnerable and elderly tenants to feel part of the community, something Michael felt strongly about. His leadership of the group took it from strength to strength and it has now been

He will be greatly missed and we would like to offer our condolences to his family and friends.

*John Riddle*



**YOURnews** is now available from your local library, leisure centre or community centre. If you would like to receive an e-version via email please contact [hayley.quarmby@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:hayley.quarmby@northumberland.gov.uk)



# COUNCIL OFFERS HELP TO ARMED SERVICES, PERSONNEL AND VETERANS



**Northumberland County Council has become one of the first local authorities in the country to offer a dedicated service to help the armed forces community.**

The council now employs two armed forces outreach workers who can help with a broad range of issues, including; housing, education and training, employment, mental health and social welfare. The roles are funded through The Gateshead Housing Company.

Northumberland is part of the Armed Forces Outreach Service partnership which covers County Durham, Tyneside and Northumberland. The service is unique in employing outreach workers who work solely with the armed forces community, and is the only scheme of its kind in the country.

Jonny Harrison and Paul Havelock, both ex- Royal Navy, have been working with serving officers and veteran staff on issues including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), homelessness and financial issues.

Once a referral is made, with many coming from the council's housing team, an initial assessment call is made to establish what the individual's needs are. Working closely with external partners such as SSAFA - the Armed Forces charity; the Royal British Legion and the Regular Forces Employment Agency they

help them get the advice and support they need to start a new life outside of the armed forces.

Jonny said: "Coming out of the armed forces can be quite daunting, you come from being part of something big to feeling isolated and overwhelmed. Many veterans have not had to deal with things like managing their own money and can struggle with finding employment and housing.

"We can help to put them on the right path to settling back into civilian life."

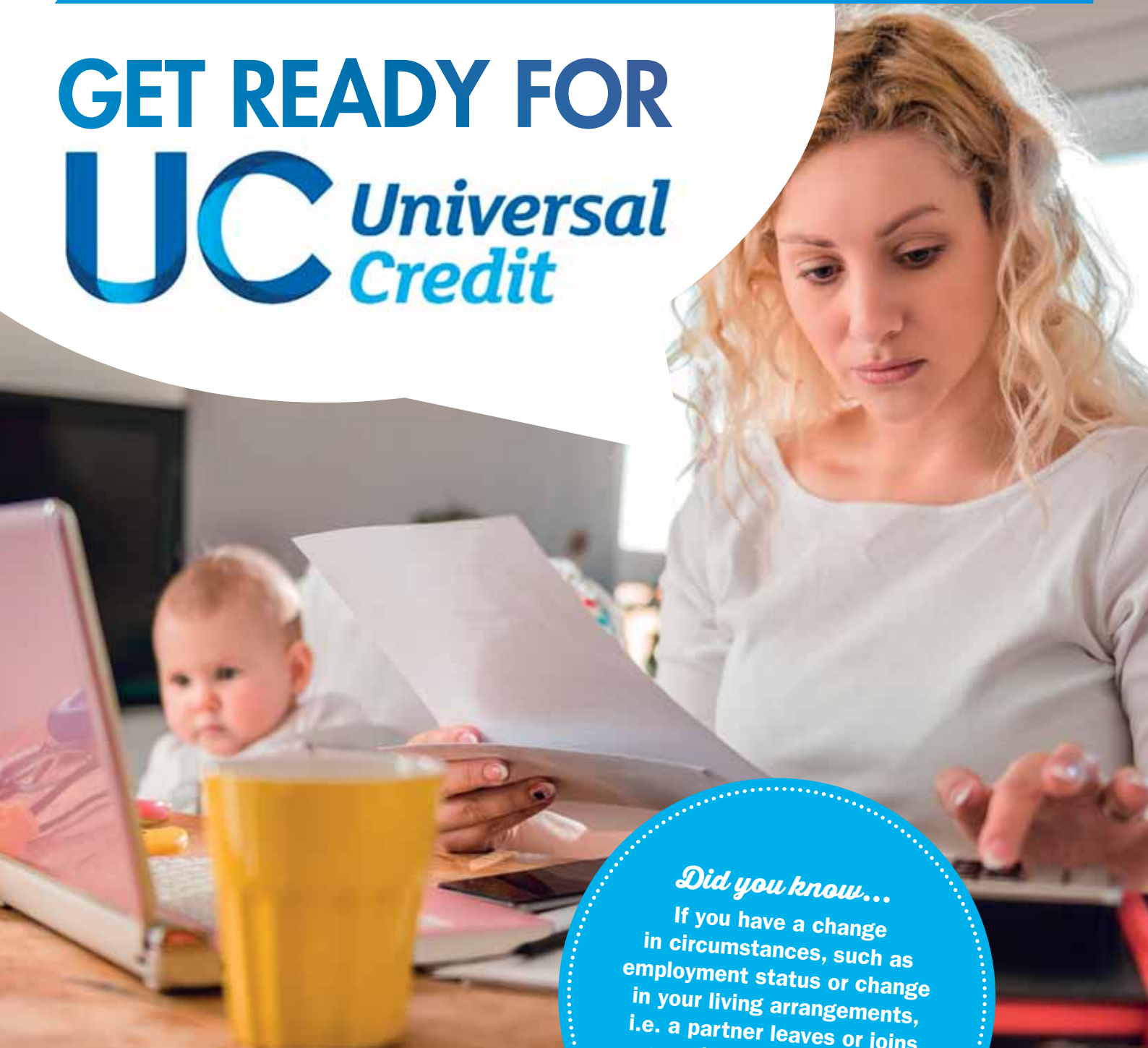
Cllr Gordon Castle and Cllr Dave Ledger, armed forces champions, for the council said they were delighted Northumberland is now able to offer this dedicated service and would urge anyone who is about to leave the armed forces or who is a veteran and needs some help and advice to get in touch.



*(L-R) Cllr Gordon Castle and Cllr Dave Ledger, armed forces champions for the council pictured with Paul Havelock and Jonny Harrison, armed forces outreach workers.*

To contact the team email - [jonathan.harrison@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.harrison@northumberland.gov.uk), [paul.havelock@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:paul.havelock@northumberland.gov.uk)

# GET READY FOR UC *Universal Credit*



*Did you know...*  
If you have a change in circumstances, such as employment status or change in your living arrangements, i.e. a partner leaves or joins your household you will automatically go on to Universal Credit.

## So what is Universal Credit?

It's a new benefit for new claimants, of working age, and will replace the following benefits:

- ✓ Housing Benefit
- ✓ Child Tax Benefit
- ✓ Working Tax Credit
- ✓ Income Support
- ✓ Job Seekers Allowance
- ✓ Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

✓  
The Universal Credit Helpline  
0800 328 5644  
is now a FREE phone number





## When is it being introduced?

The roll out of the full service will take place in Northumberland during November and December 2018. After this time all new applicants, single, couples, families who make a new benefit claim or current claimants with a change of circumstances will go onto Universal Credit.

Once the roll out for all new claimants is complete, all existing claimants will be moved over to Universal Credit however, we do not currently have a schedule for this.

## Will I still receive Housing Benefit, and therefore will my rent be paid directly to Northumberland County Council?

NO, you will no longer receive Housing Benefit, your rent or Housing Element will be paid directly to you on a monthly basis and you will need to take responsibility for paying your rent to us. Contact us to set up a direct debit.

## What do I need to do now?

- ✓ Open a Bank account/savings account with a bank or credit union - Universal Credit will be paid direct into your bank account, building society or credit union account.
- ✓ Start saving now - it can take up to 8 weeks for your first payment to come through, if your rent is due in that time having savings would mean you are still able to pay on time. Remember failure to pay your rent can affect your tenancy.
- ✓ Also see information overleaf, about Northumberland Community Bank.

## How will I be paid?

You'll get a single payment every month to cover your living costs. This will be paid directly into your bank, building society or credit union account.

If you make a joint claim as a couple, you'll get a single payment for both of you.

The payment can take up to 8 weeks for the first payment.

A full month's advance payment can be accessed within 5 days of making a claim. The repayment of this advance has now been extended from six to 12 months.

Any new Universal Credit claimant in receipt of housing benefit will continue to receive the support for the first 14 days when transferring to the new system.

After your first Universal Credit payment, you'll be paid monthly. If you pay rent or have a mortgage and you think a payment will be late because you're waiting to be paid, you should talk to your landlord or mortgage lender and explain.

If you think you won't have enough money to live on, you can ask for an advance payment of Universal Credit, by calling the **helpline** on **0800 328 5644**.

*Did you know...*

Universal Credit will no longer pay you an additional amount for a third or subsequent child born on or after 6 April 2017.

**If you think you will struggle managing and budgeting your money, have physical or mental health problems that might prevent you paying your rent on time, or if you need help dealing with debt please contact us.**



If you want to talk to us about what you're entitled to, whether you're going to be better off on Universal Credit, or any concerns you have, please call us for specialist advice on **01670 542424**.

# Grant helps community bank *to help you*

**Northumberland County Council has given a grant of £50,000 to the Northumberland Community Bank, a local financial cooperative that offers secure savings and affordable loans to anyone living or working in Northumberland.**

The community bank is a local, ethical alternative to high street banks and the council's grant will help it to build up greater reserves which it can draw on to assist and support more local people in need.

The bank offers small loans with structured, affordable repayment plans tailored to individuals needs. The loans can be taken out by anyone but are particularly helpful in assisting local micro business to grow and preventing people under financial pressure from overloading credit cards or turning to high-interest loan sharks.

The bank also offers savings schemes for children, adults and organisations which are protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme so your money is always safe.



For further information contact **01670 522779**  
 Email: [enquiries@northumberlandcommunitybank.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@northumberlandcommunitybank.co.uk),  
 Web: [www.northumberlandcommunitybank.co.uk](http://www.northumberlandcommunitybank.co.uk)



# ARE YOU COVERED?

## Do you currently have home contents insurance for your tenancy?

Adequate contents insurance is designed to protect your possessions from flood and fire damage as well as theft.

Whilst it's not a legal requirement as a tenant to have it, it's worth considering as it can cover everything from clothes and jewellery, appliances and electronics as well as family heirlooms.

When you think about it that's a lot of stuff which could be easily lost, damaged or stolen.

There are all sorts of different policies you can choose from so it can be confusing. Make sure you choose a reputable company, and remember that the cheapest offer isn't always the best.

Or why not make it easier for yourself and take out cover through our Tenant Contents Insurance Scheme?

We have negotiated, on your behalf, a competitive policy through Thistle Insurance Services. You can insure your possessions up to a value of £35,000, through a standard cover policy, for as little as £20 a month.

The policy covers things such as theft from an outbuilding or garage, theft of money, damage to electrical goods and theft of an individual valuable item (up to the value or £1,500).

As well as the standard cover, there are also optional extras you can add to your policy such as wheelchair cover and hearing aid cover.

To find out more about the policy contact us on **01670 542424**





# REPORT UNDERAGE DRINK SALES

*in your community*

**Alcohol use in young people can cause problems with health, education, safety as well as having an impact on anti-social behaviour in your community.**

As well as dealing with the problem of underage drink sales our Trading Standards Team are also heavily involved in investigating the sale of illicit or illegal alcohol - this is alcohol which has been made outside of government controls, where the true ingredients and alcohol levels are unknown.

Illicit alcohol can be extremely dangerous as they often contain chemicals such as cleaning fluids, car screen wash and nail polish remover. Counterfeit alcohol may also contain hazardous substances. For example, counterfeit alcohol mostly contains a highly poisonous substance called methanol. Methanol can be found in products like anti-freeze and paint remover. If consumed it can lead to breathing difficulties, liver damage or even death.

We are working with a number of different agencies including the Police and the HMRC to tackle this issue, but we need your help.

If you know of a business or individual selling alcohol to underage drinkers then reporting it to us is essential in being able to solve the problem. This can be anything from your local shop, restaurant or pub, or someone in your community who is selling alcohol from their property.

Once a report is made we can take appropriate action which could be giving guidance to a business or taking legal action against them. If a tenant is selling illegal products from their property it can also affect their tenancy and ultimately result in them being evicted.

Councillor John Riddle, Northumberland County Council's Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Resilience, said: "Underage drinking can be a real blight on a community causing not only anti-social behaviour but also health implications for young people.

David Sayer, Business Compliance & Public Safety Manager at Northumberland County Council said, "In order for us to be able to tackle this issue we need the community to help by letting us know of any illegal activity in their area. So if you know of a business which is selling to young people or an individual who is selling from their property, then we want to hear from you. We are happy to receive anonymous complaints as it all helps to create a picture of what is happening in our communities"

## REPORTING IS EASY:

Online: Go to [www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk) and search for underage sales and fill in the form

Call us: contact the team on **01670 623870**

Email: [tradingstandards@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@northumberland.gov.uk)





# NEW DATA RULES

# GDPR

What you need to know

**By now we are sure you've heard of the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) rules that came into force in May.**

Part of these new rules require us to ensure that all tenants we currently engage with are aware of what information we hold on them, how we use that information and to check that they still want to receive information from us.

## Why is information recorded about me?

We need it to be able us to carry out specific functions for which we are responsible and to provide you with a service. We keep records about tenants, leaseholders and residents. These may be written down (manual records), or kept on a computer (electronic records).

They include: basic details about you, such as, name, address, date of birth, NI number, or correspondence we have had with you.

## What its used for?

Your records are used to ensure that we provide you with the service that you need. It's important your records are accurate and up-to-date as they will help make sure that our

staff are able to provide you with the help, advice or support you need. If you don't provide us with this information then we will not be able to manage your tenancy and your community effectively.

## How long for?

### TENANCY AGREEMENTS

- ★ **Signed tenancy agreements**  
- expiration of agreement + 6 years.
- ★ **Sealed tenancy agreements**  
- expiration of agreement + 12 years.
- ★ **Correspondence re tenancy**  
- termination of tenancy agreement +12 years.
- ★ **Leaseholder Agreement** -  
Leaseholder files - end of lease + 6 years

We may need to share your information with other agencies such as Social Services, Police, Health Professionals, Landlords. Information will only be shared with third parties if they have a genuine and lawful need for it.

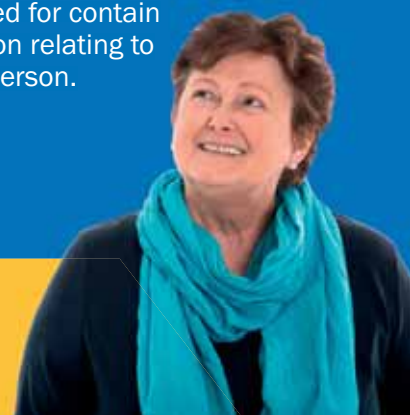
Anyone who receives information from us has a legal duty to keep it confidential.

## Can I see my records?

GDPR allows you to find out what information is held about you, on paper and computer records.

If you wish to see a copy of your records you should submit a Subject Access Request, available on our website or from the Information Governance Office directly. You are entitled to receive a copy of your records free of charge, within a month.

In some cases access to your records may be limited, e.g, if the records you have asked for contain information relating to another person.



If you would like to know more, or if for any reason you don't wish to have your information used in any of the ways described above, contact:  
**informationgovernance@northumberland.gov.uk**

# Improvements TO YOUR HOME

Our work to carry out essential home improvements continues apace across our properties.



As part of our annual capital works programme we carry out major planned improvements such as new kitchens, bathrooms, heating systems, the replacement of roofs, windows and doors and electrical rewires.

Work started in April on an eight-year, £80m investment plan with homes across Blyth and Alwick set to receive improvements.

The number of new kitchens fitted in a year will double as part of the plan with 450 completed by April 2019. A total of 200 homes will receive new bathrooms and 450 new heating systems will be installed.

We have also teamed up with Anglian Homes to replace windows at almost 70 homes and doors at almost 80 properties, between August and November.

A further 280 homes will receive an electrical rewire and up to 240 properties will be getting new roofs.

Tenants whose homes are involved in the work have now been informed and will be contacted again nearer the time the work is due to start on their property.





# A thousand sign up to Green Dog Walker scheme

**More than 1,200 people have signed up to a scheme aimed at reducing dog fouling in our communities in just one year.**

The Green Dog Walker scheme launched by the council in July 2017 is a community-led programme which also aims to promote responsible dog ownership across the county.

In that time there has also been a 26% reduction in the number of complaints received by the council in relation to dog fouling.

Dog owners are encouraged to join by signing the Green Dog Walker pledge. Those signing the pledge agree to always clean up after their dog and put the bag in the bin and to use a friendly approach to encourage other dog walkers to do the same.

Those who sign up are sent a green dog walkers armband to wear, as well as green doggy bags and pledge leaflets.

The council can also provide a Green Dog Walkers support kit to local community groups and individuals who want to get involved.



**We are hosting a series of Green Dog Walker events this summer where you can sign up to the scheme. There will also be free micro-chipping and check-a-chip on offer and a small dog walk.**

The events will be taking place at:

-  **Cambois Beach Shelter**  
11 Aug 11am-3pm,  
dog walk at 12pm
-  **Spittal promenade**  
18 Aug 11.30am-2.30pm,  
dog walk at 1pm
-  **Hexham bandstand, Sele Park**  
1 Sept 11.30am-2.30pm,  
dog walk at 1pm

To find out more go to  
[www.northumberland.gov.uk/greendogwalkers](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/greendogwalkers)

# ENERGY DRINKS

## What do you need to know?

**A recent report by the World Health Organisation (WHO) looked at the potential harm of energy drinks.**

**These were mainly associated with the high caffeine content of the drinks, as well as the risks of combining them with alcohol.**

**“ENERGY DRINKS COULD CAUSE PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEMS, ESPECIALLY WHEN MIXED WITH ALCOHOL”**  
says a World Health Organisation study

### What are energy drinks?

Although there is no standard definition of an “energy drink”, it is taken to mean a non-alcoholic drink that contains caffeine, taurine (an amino acid) and vitamins, in addition to other ingredients.

They have become increasingly popular with young people, especially as a mixer to go with alcohol.

In the EU, it is estimated that 30% of adults and 68% of adolescents consume energy drinks, with global sales estimated to be around \$12 billion in 2012.

### What are the risks associated with energy drink consumption?

Researchers state that the health risks associated with energy drink consumption are mainly related to their caffeine content.

Potential risks associated with energy drink consumption include:

- ⚡ caffeine overdose (which can lead to a number of symptoms, including palpitations, high blood pressure, nausea and vomiting, convulsions and, in some cases, even death)
- ⚡ type 2 diabetes – as high consumption of caffeine reduces insulin sensitivity
- ⚡ late miscarriages, low birthweight and stillbirths in pregnant women
- ⚡ neurological and cardiovascular system effects in children and adolescents sensation-seeking behaviour
- ⚡ use and dependence on other harmful substances
- ⚡ poor dental health
- ⚡ and even though they are associated with some sporting brands ironically, obesity

Energy drinks also contain a variety of other ingredients, such as guarana, and the effect of long-term regular consumption of the combination of the substances in energy drinks is unknown.

The increasing practice of mixing energy drinks with alcohol also carries risks. The researchers state that the consumption of high amounts of caffeine reduces drowsiness without diminishing the effects of alcohol, resulting in “wide awake drunkenness.” Therefore, there is the risk that people will engage in risky and dangerous behaviour, as the mix of alcohol and caffeine can lead to a loss of inhibition.





## What policies exist to regulate the labelling, distribution and sale of energy drinks?

Energy drinks can be sold in all EU member states. Energy drinks that contain at least 150mg/l of caffeine have enforced additional caffeine labelling under European regulations. These will be labelled with, "High caffeine content. Not recommended for children or pregnant or breastfeeding women," and the caffeine content will also be expressed in mg/100ml.

## What do the researchers suggest to minimise the potential for harm?

Establishing an upper limit for the amount of caffeine allowed in a single serving of this type of drinks Regulations to enforce restriction of labelling and sales of energy drinks to children and adolescents;

- ④ Enforcing standards for responsible marketing to young people by the energy drink industry;
- ④ Training health care practitioners to be aware of the risks and symptoms of energy drinks consumption;
- ④ Individuals with a history of diet problems and substance abuse, both alone and combined with alcohol, should be screened for the heavy consumption of energy drinks;
- ④ Educating the public about the risks of mixing alcohol with energy drinks consumption;
- ④ Further research on the potential adverse effects of energy drinks, particularly on young people.

To find out more go to [www.nhs.co.uk/livewell](http://www.nhs.co.uk/livewell)



## #NOBRAINER

A group of young people at Silx Teen Bar in Blyth have joined forces with health and social care staff to develop a campaign raising their concerns of the effects of energy drinks on young people.

The #NOBRAINER campaign aims to highlight the dangers of energy drinks on the body and mind.

The group carried out research last summer asking young people in the Blyth area about their consumption of these types of drinks. The results were worrying with some young people saying they drank between 2-5 cans a day. One small 250ml can often has around 80mg of caffeine in it, the same as two cans of cola or a small mug of coffee.

Energy drinks have been banned at Silx for a number of years following an incident with a young person having to be taken to hospital after consuming too much caffeine through energy drinks.

A leaflet has now been designed and developed by the group of young people to get the message out to people of a similar age. The leaflet will be sent to GP surgeries, community centres, schools and youth clubs.

To find out more go to [www.silxteen.com](http://www.silxteen.com)



# ENJOYING YOUR GARDEN

## *this summer*

When the sun is out our thoughts turn to enjoying ourselves outside, getting together with friends and having a BBQ or enjoying a few drinks in our garden.

So we've given you a few tips on how to get your garden summer-ready, how to stay safe when cooking on a BBQ and why it's so important for the future of your tenancy to make sure your garden is tidy.

**GET YOUR GARDEN SUMMER-READY**  
Take advantage of the good weather to get your garden ship-shape and ready for socialising with your friends.

### Bulky Waste

Get rid of bulky waste, such as furniture, electrical goods or large garden items like a trampoline or lawnmower by booking a collection online or over the phone, [www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk) or **0345 600 6400**. Prices start at £16 for a single item (£8 for concessionary rate - this applies to households on certain benefits (but not for quote jobs). Appointment day slots can be chosen, and quotes can be requested for big jobs.

NB. Freecycle or Charity shops might want your unwanted goods and some collect them at no charge.

If you have transport you can take your own household items along to your nearest Household Waste Recovery Centre (HWRC). This is free to use except for some rubble / DIY materials for which there is a charge. Some vehicles require a free permit to gain access. Business waste and landlord waste is prohibited.



### Garden waste

Strimmed and trimmed and now you have masses of garden waste? Don't know what to do with it?

Hire a kerbside garden waste bin. £36 for a season of maximum 20 collections (2018 season prices) or why not buy a home compost bin from £17.99 plus delivery charge? [www.getcomposting.com](http://www.getcomposting.com)

Or take it along to your nearest HWRC and send your grass cuttings and hedge trimmings to be recycled into a good quality soil conditioner/ compost. Some vehicles require a free permit to gain access. Business waste and landlord waste is prohibited.







**MAKE SURE IT'S ONLY THE SAUSAGES THAT SIZZLE ON THE BBQ**

BBQs are great fun but without the proper care and attention of both the BBQ and the food preparation they can turn into a nightmare.

Read our Top Tips on staying safe and healthy:

**Top 10 BBQ tips:**

- 🔥 Never leave a lit BBQ unattended
- 🔥 Follow the safety instructions provided with disposable BBQs
- 🔥 Keep children, pets and games away from the cooking area
- 🔥 Never use petrol or paraffin to start/revive a barbecue
- 🔥 Never light a barbecue indoors
- 🔥 Never move a hot BBQ, leave it to cool
- 🔥 Make sure it is well away from sheds, fences, trees, shrubs or garden waste
- 🔥 Empty ashes on to bare garden soil, never into dustbins, if they are still hot they can cause a fire
- 🔥 Enjoy yourself, but don't drink too much if you're in charge of the BBQ
- 🔥 Always keep water nearby in case of emergency.

**Top food hygiene tips**

Take care when cooking food on a barbecue. Just a couple of hours out of the fridge can cause nasty bacteria to develop.

- 🍴 Wash your hands and work surfaces
- 🍴 Keep raw meat products wrapped and separated from other foods
- 🍴 Use separate utensils for raw food
- 🍴 Thaw frozen food thoroughly in the fridge before cooking
- 🍴 Ensure all food is cooked thoroughly before serving

**And remember: Your food isn't rubbish, even if it is leftovers.**

Check the [www.lovefoodhatewaste.com](http://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com) website for some great leftover recipes for your BBQ eg. tasty topped BBQ burgers which use up all your leftover dips, followed by baked apples and pears made from tired fruit from your end-of-the-week fruit bowl.



**WHAT TO DO WITH RUBBISH**



Separate your waste into rubbish and recycling -

**Recycling bin** - paper and cardboard, cans and aerosols and plastic bottles. Put these things into your kerbside bin - loose and unbagged.

**Glass** - Take your glass bottles and jars to your local glass banks to be recycled.

**Rubbish bin** - those other bits and pieces from your event which cannot be recycled can be put into your kerbside rubbish bin (But not hot BBQ's). The waste from your bin is taken to be burnt to make electricity.

If there's too much rubbish to fit in your recycling and waste bins, don't leave it lying around in that nice tidy garden. Separate it as you collect, ready for putting it into the correct container at your nearest HWRC (see above for advice about permits, landlords etc).

**WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU FAIL TO KEEP YOUR GARDEN TIDY?**

If you fail to keep your garden tidy then you may be in breach of your tenancy agreement and we may be forced to take action. If you are struggling to manage your garden, please speak to your housing officer for advice. Contact us on **01670 542424**.





# STAY HEALTHY and well this summer

With the summer season in full swing the Northumberland Integrated Wellbeing Service is encouraging people to follow these health and wellbeing tips:

☀️ You can feel healthier, lose weight and save money by simply nominating days to take off drinking. For practical daily support to help you stick to it, Public Health England's free Days Off app is a simple and easy way to track the days you drink alcohol and the days you don't.

☀️ Most skin cancers are caused by too much sun. When UV is high remember to spend time in the shade when the sun is at its strongest, cover up, wear a hat and sunglasses, and use sunscreen with sun protector factor (SPF) of at least 15 and a high star rating. Sunbeds emit ultraviolet radiation, which can cause tanning and sunburn. Public Health England discourages the use of sunbeds for cosmetic tanning.

☀️ Has the World Cup inspired you to get active? Start today and brisk walk your way to a healthier, more active you.



For more information go to [www.northumbria.nhs.uk](http://www.northumbria.nhs.uk)

## STEP UP YOUR HEALTH WITH WEEKLY WALKS



Free health walks are taking place across the county to encourage more people to get out into the great outdoors and improve their health.

The walks are suitable for all levels of ability and take between half an hour and an hour and a half.

All you have to do is turn up at one of the venues wearing sensible footwear and appropriate outdoor clothing. You'll have great company, trained walk leaders and safe walking routes to get you on your way to a healthier lifestyle.

🕒 To view a timetable of walks in your area log on to [www.activenorthumberland.org.uk](http://www.activenorthumberland.org.uk) and search health walks under the A-Z section.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT...

For south east area:  
**Andrew Tunnah** on  
[Atunnah@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Atunnah@northumberland.gov.uk)  
or 01670 623512

For north Northumberland:  
**Jane Hardy** on:  
[jhardy01@activenorthumberland.org.uk](mailto:jhardy01@activenorthumberland.org.uk)  
or 01670 627327

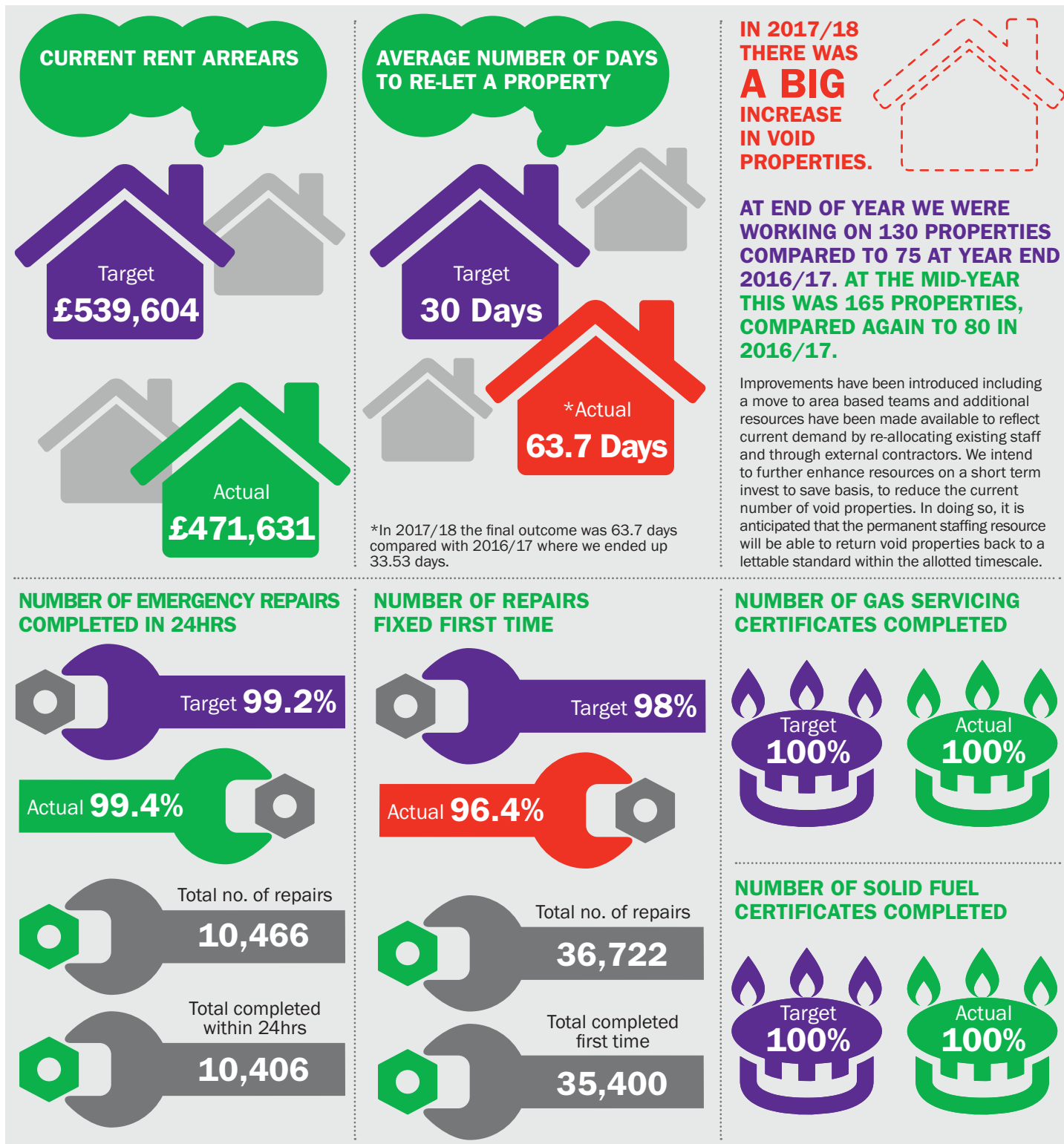
For west Northumberland:  
**Loraine Oliver** on:  
[loliver@activenorthumberland.org.uk](mailto:loliver@activenorthumberland.org.uk)  
or 01670 622368

# PERFORMANCE

We aim to be the best we can and offer the best service we can to our tenants. This is why we are constantly monitoring our performance and measuring our work against a set of performance indicators.

Performance indicators are targets used to measure our performance in specific areas and provide important information in key services we provide. These have been agreed by tenants.

Our latest figures show the results for the year 2017/18.





# MENTAL HEALTH *awareness*



**If you or someone you know is in need of urgent help with their mental health or learning disability it can often feel there is nowhere to turn.**

However, there are a number of services available to you in Northumberland which can offer help, support and advice.

You can get in touch with Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust's initial response services - open for anyone to call 24 hours on 0303 123 1146.

More information is available on the trust's website: [www.ntw.nhs.uk](http://www.ntw.nhs.uk).

If a person has been harmed or is at immediate risk you may require an emergency response and therefore your first contact should always be 999.

If you have a learning disability, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust's community learning disabilities team can support you either in your home or a clinic or GP surgery.

They can be contacted on 01670 536 400. More information is available on the trust's website: [www.northumbria.nhs.uk](http://www.northumbria.nhs.uk).

There are also services such as Talking Matters Northumberland, which offers a free psychological treatment, support and recovery service for the people of Northumberland over the age of 16 for depression, anxiety, stress and other mental health related problems.

You can make a self-referral via their website [www.tmnorthumberland.org.uk](http://www.tmnorthumberland.org.uk) or through your GP or call 0300 3030 700.

**There are a range of support services available in Northumberland if you, or someone you know is suffering from mental health or learning disability.**

# HELP TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF YOUR COUNTY

The council has prepared a draft Local Plan covering the whole of Northumberland. The Local Plan includes detailed proposals about where new homes, workplaces and facilities will be located, and how the environment will be protected.



Comments  
must be made by

**5pm on  
Wednesday  
15 August**

#### To find out more:

-  View the documents and comment at:  
[www.northumberland.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/localplan)
-  View documents in libraries, customer information centres and council offices.



**Northumberland**  
County Council

For further queries email: [planningstrategy@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:planningstrategy@northumberland.gov.uk)  
or call: **0345 600 6400**



# HELPING TO *bridge the gap*



The Bridge Project can help you improve your health and wellbeing, self confidence, self esteem, finance and employability skills.










The Bridge Project is funded by the European Social Fund and National Lottery, through the Big Lottery Fund as part of the Building Better Opportunities Programme.

Bridge can also improve your chances of accessing training, getting work experience or finding a job. You will have your own dedicated Bridge worker who will work with you and support you with your own personal action plan that is unique to your needs. Your issues can range from debt and financial hardship, not confident with reading and writing, homelessness, domestic abuse, health issues including mental wellbeing, drug or alcohol problems.



Bridge works with a wide range of partners and agencies who can provide specific support to help you move forward and overcome your barriers and challenges.

## AN EXAMPLE OF HOW BRIDGE CAN HELP

-  Carry out a review of your finances, help deal with debt and make you become more independent
-  Provide clothing for interviews or specialist workwear to help you attending training courses and volunteer placements
-  Help you to gain qualifications
-  Cover the cost of travel to appointments, training courses etc.
-  Give you the skills to write a meaningful CV
-  Prepare you for job interviews
-  Secure volunteering opportunities for you to learn new skills and experience to add to your CV

The Bridge Partnership, led by Northumberland County Council, is also part of the project. The partnership helps to connect, or reconnect, people who face the biggest barriers and challenges into education, training, volunteering and work. Working with a range of hand-picked organisations the partnership aims to improve peoples lives, create opportunities and make a positive contribution to Northumberland communities and the regional economy.



Not sure which way to turn?

Call us on: 01665 713109

Before the Bridge Project leaving the house made me really anxious - I've now learnt loads of new skills including creating a Podcast with Metro Radio and recently started volunteering with the North East Ambulance Service!

Why not get in touch to find out how WE can help YOU change YOUR life?

Find out how we can help at: [www.bridgenorthumberland.org.uk](http://www.bridgenorthumberland.org.uk)

To find out more go to [www.bridgenorthumberland.org.uk](http://www.bridgenorthumberland.org.uk) or to find out if you are eligible and how Bridge can help you call us **01665 713109** or email [Bridge@voices-northumberland.org.uk](mailto:Bridge@voices-northumberland.org.uk)

# NOTICEBOARD

## TENANTS FORUM update

We are currently reviewing how we communicate with you on things such as performance and evaluation.

Working closely with a group of tenants, we are looking at ways of improving and encouraging more of you to get involved in having your say on the services we provide.

Working together, we hope to develop a tenant panel who will work with housing staff in making sure our tenants views are always considered in the services we deliver.

**So watch this space for more updates!!**



## We have moved!

**...TO COMPASS HOUSE, BLYTH**

Whilst this building is not open to the public the team are still available to answer your enquiries or offer advice.

Pre-arranged meetings will continue to take place at Compass House, such as tenant sign-ups however these must be agreed with a member of staff.

You can continue to contact us via the Customer Contacts Centre on **01670 542424**. The opening times are Monday - Thursday 8.30am-5pm and Friday - 8.30am-4.30pm.

Or you can email us on **infohfn@northumberland.gov.uk**



**Northumberland**  
County Council

## HANDYMAN reminder

**Don't forget about our handyman service for elderly or vulnerable tenants.**

This FREE service is available for any odd-jobs you need help with around your home from hanging curtains, installing Key Safe locks or putting up pictures.

If you are classified as any of the following you are eligible for this FREE service:

- Over 60 years old
- Have a disability or severe health problems which prevent you from carrying out the work yourself
- A single family parent with a disabled child

**To book a slot call our Customer Contact Centre on 01670 542424.**



**Northumberland has been nominated as the 'Best UK Holiday County or Region' in the British Travel Awards 2018. Silver prize winners for the past four consecutive years, this year we want to go one better and take Gold.**

You can help us by:

1. Voting <https://www.visitnorthumberland.com/sharenland/vote>
2. Sharing with your social media followers using **#VoteNland #bta18**

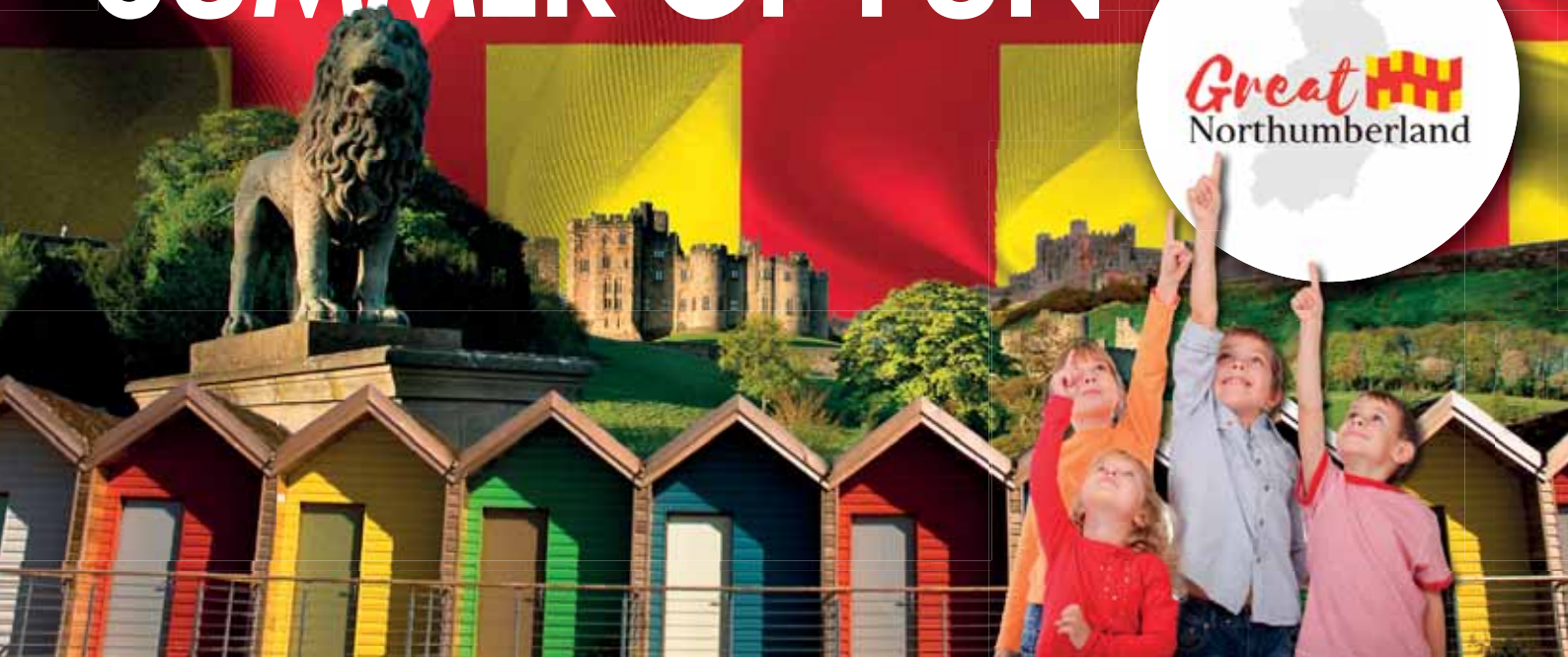
As a fantastic and diverse destination with some iconic attractions, landscapes and businesses that visitors want to return to again and again, Northumberland deserves it... **and so do you!**

**VOTING  
CLOSES  
30TH  
SEPTEMBER**





# COME AND JOIN THE *Great Northumberland* SUMMER OF FUN



## This summer we are celebrating the best Northumberland has to offer, and everyone is invited!

Great Northumberland 2018 is an eight-week extravaganza of arts, culture and heritage events, exhibitions and live performances.

Celebrations kicked off July 7 with a spectacular event in Hexham that included street theatre and music. A closing event will take place in Berwick on September 1 with a celebration of the unique musical traditions in the county, including the debut performance of a newly-commissioned song the 'Great Song of the North.'

Great Northumberland will showcase where the heritage of Northumberland meets its future - where arts, culture and traditions unite to shape tomorrow.

Experience specially commissioned exhibitions and events, including a major solo exhibition of sculptures by award-winning artist Joseph Hillier at Cheeseburn Sculpture Gardens near Stamfordham, and

traditional Northumbrian music, food and crafts at Alnwick Alive in the town's market place.

Expect new art exhibitions at Woodhorn Museum to celebrate the much-loved Ashington Group, famously nicknamed the Pitmen Painters.

There's also a celebration of Women on the Wall, Then and Now at Vindolanda and The Sill National Landscape and Discovery Centre.

Blyth beach will see an installation of 600 blue sailcloth flags to mark 200 years since one of the town's most extraordinary sons, Captain William Smith, became the first person to discover land in Antarctica.

Great Northumberland will offer free entertainment with something for everyone. It will bring together people from the region and beyond, to enjoy and experience a summer of free events.

So, come and join us. We can't wait to share the secrets of our Great county with you this summer.

**If you want to hear more and be in with the chance of winning some exclusive Great Northumberland prizes and offers make sure you sign up to our newsletter online.**

To find out more go to  
[www.greatnorthumberland.co.uk](http://www.greatnorthumberland.co.uk)

# INNOVATIVE CRAMLINGTON PROJECT

*picks up prestigious  
housing award*

*“Tenants are  
already noticing the  
benefits with their  
property feeling warmer  
and better insulated.”*  
Councillor John Riddle

**A project to transform “Dorran” style properties on an estate in Cramlington has picked up two awards at a regional awards ceremony.**

Northumberland County Council won the Large Project of the Year (Over £250k) and was highly commended in the Landlord of the Year category at the Energy Efficiency and Healthy Homes Awards for the project at Allerhope.

The project has transformed the “Dorran” style properties into more energy efficient properties. Dorran properties were a popular post-war style of construction, using concrete panels, and often have issues with insulation.

The council has been working with external wall specialists, Alumasc Facades, ArtBrick Limited and Westdale Services Ltd. A steel structure was added to the concrete panels to strengthen the external wall and ensure it could withstand the weight of new insulation and render. It was then finished with a unique “brick” effect render to



modernise the property. All the windows in the properties have also been replaced.

Phase one of the project, which included 39 homes, has just been completed and the council is now tendering for the second phase which would include a further 41 homes.

Coun John Riddle, Cabinet member for Planning, Housing and Resilience at the council, said: “This is fantastic

recognition for an innovative scheme, intended to not only improve the energy efficiency of these properties, but also the appearance.

“Tenants are very happy with the work and are already noticing the benefits with their property feeling warmer and better insulated.”





# Great Northumberland

7 July - 1 September 2018

56 days of *free* arts, culture and heritage events, exhibitions and live performances, celebrating Great Northumberland.



*Enjoy*

  GreatN\_Land     GreatNLand    [greatnorthumberland.co.uk](http://greatnorthumberland.co.uk)



Northumberland  
County Council