

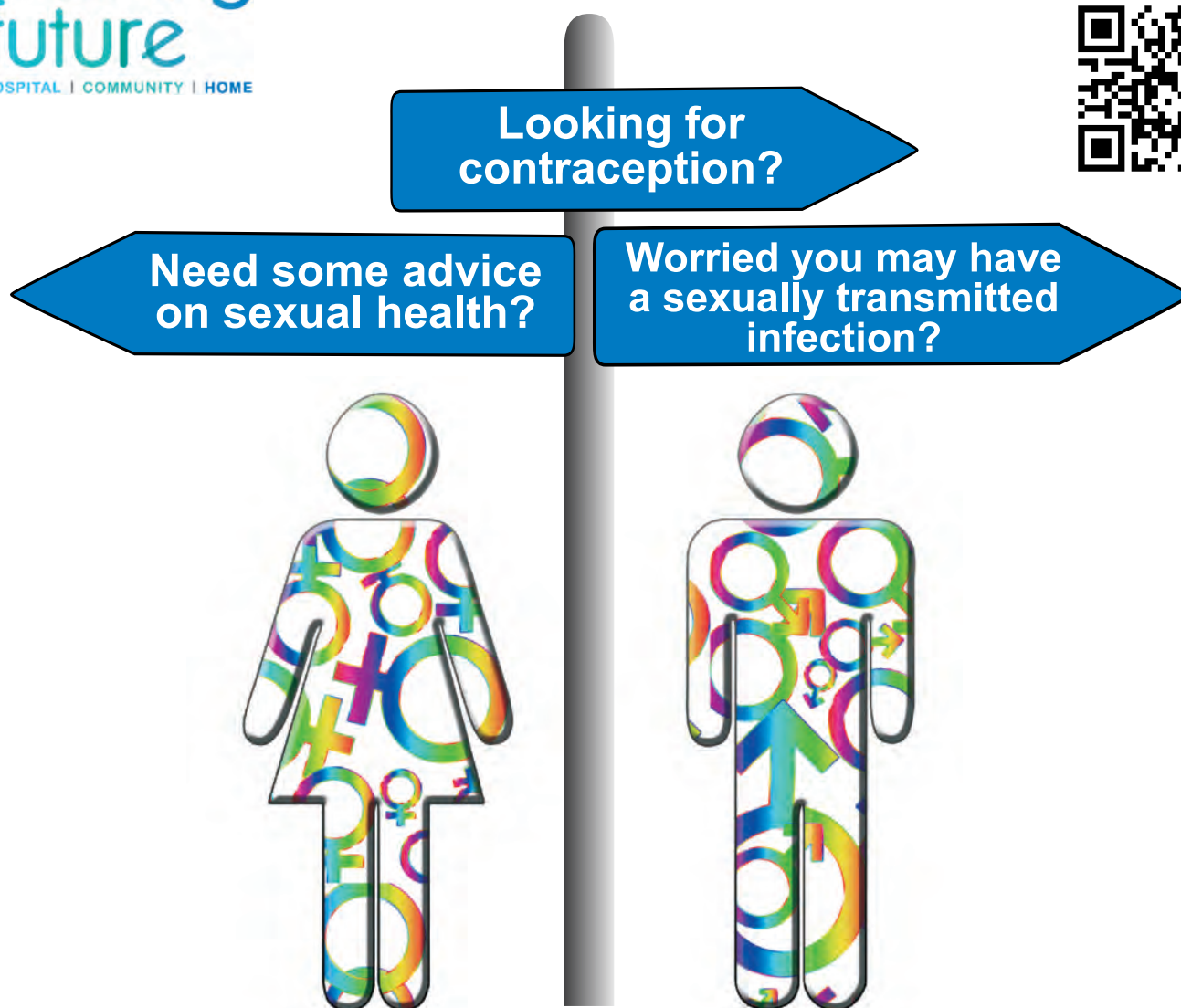
Northumberland news



Opening soon Ashington Leisure Centre

Win A Northumberland hamper

What's on? Events and activities



Clinics and free confidential advice on all
aspects of sexual health for everyone

Call Northumberland Sexual Health Service

01670 51 51 51



Plan B

In brief...

Christmas bins

There will be no change to your bin collection days over the Christmas period.

If you are unsure which bin to put out, visit our website www.northumberland.gov.uk and follow the bin collection link on the home page.

New 0345 council number

Please don't forget we've introduced a new telephone number which will help cut the cost for those ringing for help and advice. The new number is 0345 600 6400.

You can also call a local number based on your local exchange. These are listed on our website.

Community grants

Are you looking for help to fund a worthwhile local project or cause? Why not try our community chest grant scheme which is open to any voluntary or community, not-for-profit groups based in Northumberland.

You can find more information and an application form on our website.

Tall ships date

Blyth is to host the prestigious North Sea Tall Ships Regatta 2016, an event involving some of the largest and most spectacular Tall Ships in the world.

The Tall Ships will sail into the port over the weekend of 26-29 August, giving residents and visitors the opportunity to see one of the greatest maritime sights in the world. Put the date in your diary now!

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Northumberland News

Now available online, by email or in print.

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

Published in December, March, June and September 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.

If you would like to receive Northumberland News in large print, Braille, audio, or in another format or language please contact us.

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YouTube at:

www.northumberland.gov.uk/youtube

Front cover:

Kielder Winter Wonderland.



Team set to show their

TRUE GRIT

They're the team responsible for keeping us all moving this winter.

While many of us are tucked up in our beds they're out in all weathers ensuring the roads are safe and free of snow and ice when we get up the next morning.

But there is a lot more to winter planning across the county than simply checking a weather forecast and driving a gritter up and down the roads. It involves months of planning and a dedicated and committed workforce operating around the clock.

In this edition we meet two of the winter services team tasked with ensuring the county stays open for business, whatever the weather.

Michael Carle

Council operational lead on delivery of winter services

Michael is one of three 'Winter Service Duty Managers' who between them work 24 hours a day, seven days a week during the winter season.

Michael's first job each day is to analyse the detailed weather forecasts which contain information ranging from air and road temperature to the amount of humidity in the atmosphere. The geography of the county presents unique challenges where it can be snowing over the tops but bright sunshine at the coast.

Using this state-of-the-art software, and ice predication stations which give him access to road mounted cameras across the region giving real-time information on weather conditions, Michal establishes exactly where needs gritting and at what level. This information is then passed to the gritter drivers.



Photo: Michael Carle.



The Winter

(in council numbers)



36,000 tonnes of salt in place ready to be used


3,000 miles of county road

1,600 grit bins and 200 grit heaps



110 staff

40 farmers and sub-contractors assist our operations by removing snow from more remote roads



29 primary gritting routes. These include principal road networks, school and major bus routes and areas around emergency establishments. There are also 29 secondary gritting routes



29 multi-purpose gritting vehicles with snow plough attachments

11 depots where salt stocks are stored and gritters operate from

Graham Farrell

Gritter driver

Graham has worked at the sharp end for nearly 20 years on the gritters and is now part of the 24/7 call out rota for the next five months.

In a typical 'night' Graham comes to the depot and checks his gritting vehicle over before loading it with salt – up to three tonnes at a time.

All drivers have a set route – Graham's is in and around the Cramlington area. Depending on conditions an average run takes around three hours. On severe nights a second run might be needed.

If conditions are really bad and snow is falling Graham can fix the snowplough to the gritter and continue working round the clock to keep the roads open.

On dual carriageways this means ploughing the outside lane first to push the snow into the inside lane, then ploughing the inside lane and pushing the snow onto the verge before a third run where the road is gritted.

Join the thousands already in the know

Sign up to Twitter or Facebook. We'll send you information on:

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



@northumberland



@northumberland/nccalerts



Photo: Graham Farrell.

Ashington Leisure Centre

NEW CENTRE NEW YOU!

A flagship leisure centre is to open in Ashington on Monday 4 January providing a regional centre of excellence for sport.

Northumberland County Council has invested £20 million in the centre which will be managed by Active Northumberland. Sport England contributed £1million of National Lottery funding to the facility.

Councillor Grant Davey, leader of Northumberland County Council, said: "The iconic Ashington Leisure Centre is part of the council's wider plans for the regeneration of the county which will see more services provided locally. It will be a fabulous facility for Ashington and Northumberland offering excellent facilities for schools, individuals, community sports groups and families."



Gym

The new gym provides more than 70 stations, has been fitted with the very latest range of Technogym cardiovascular, strength and conditioning equipment, and has a functional training area.



Studio Cycling Theatre

The cycling studio has a big screen projecting forward-motion videos to take riders across some of the world's most breath-taking and challenging roads, forest tracks, mountains and even volcanoes.



Safari softplay

Young explorers will enjoy four storeys of safari fun and adventures whilst parents and guardians relax with a well-earned cuppa! Great for children's parties!



Facilities include:

- A 25-metre swimming pool and smaller studio pool.
- A luxurious spa with treatment rooms, sauna, steam.
- A multi-functional, 6-court sports hall
- Indoor cricket nets
- Gym
- 2 spacious, air-conditioned studios for fitness classes
- A dedicated studio cycling theatre
- GO WILD! Softplay for under-8's
- Library
- Café

Pre-opening tours

See this fantastic facility for yourself before it opens to the public. Book your 'sneak peak' pre-opening tour of the centre by contacting the sales team:

salesenquiry@activenorthumberland.org.uk

Pre-opening membership offers

Save over £40 on a single anytime pre-opening offer. Purchase now for £79 and pay nothing until 5 April 2016. Other memberships include: daytime, couples and juniors.

You could also save with a bolt-on spa membership, available for £99 today and nothing more to pay until 5 April 2016.

For full information about the facilities, classes, costs, opening times and more, please visit www.activenorthumberland.org.uk

ACTIVE
NORTHUMBERLAND



Library

The new Ashington library will be situated on two floors in the building. It will incorporate an extensive range of books and digital resources, a dedicated IT hub with free wi-fi, and a bespoke children's library.



The Tranquillity Spa

The luxury spa facility has 3 treatment rooms, manicure and pedicure bays and a tanning room. There is also a spa pool, sauna, steam room, aromatherapy room, monsoon showers and foot spas.

Don't hibernate

we're here to help you stay active!



As the days draw in and the temperatures drop you may be tempted to pack away your exercise gear and hibernate. Don't!

This winter Active Northumberland is offering plenty of incentives to help keep you on the move throughout the festive season!

Exercising regularly:

- Keeps your heart healthy
- Reduces your risk of serious illness
- Boosts your immune system
- Strengthens your muscles and bones
- Lifts your mood and makes you feel more energetic

Earn free gifts by become a fitness champion

To keep you focussed we are offering those who attend regular exercise classes during December the chance to win some goodies. There are water bottles, gym bags and t-shirts up for grabs.

Family fun

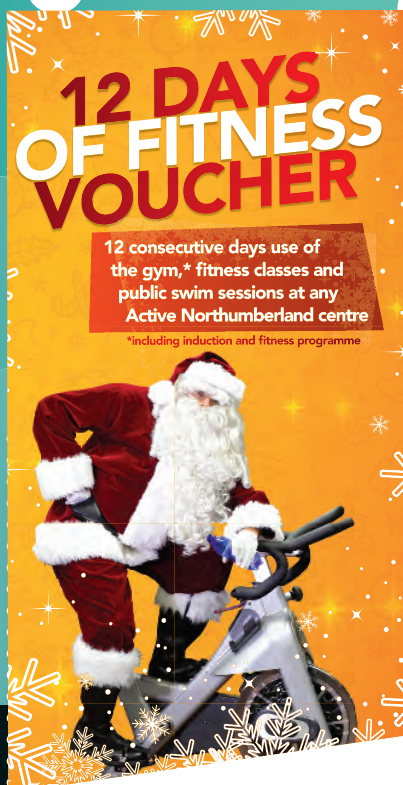
Why not try out our new state-of-the-art leisure centre in Ashington, when it opens in January. It has a 25m pool, spa facilities, studio cycling theatre, four storey safari themed soft play and more!

Get the gym bug

We have 14 gyms throughout Northumberland. Why not book a session with one of our highly qualified instructors who will create a personal fitness programme to help keep you motivated and make sensible choices over the festive period.

Keep calm or get fighting

To keep calm this Christmas why not try one of our yoga, pilates or body balance classes. If that's not your style, fight your winter blues away in one of our 'fight klub' classes.



12 days of fitness voucher

You can experience 12 consecutive days of fitness for £12 if you buy a fitness voucher. It allows unlimited use of the gyms, fitness classes, swimming pools and other facilities at any Active Northumberland site. The voucher is a great way to treat yourself in the run-up to the festive period. They also make great stocking fillers and can be used in the New Year to help get your friends and family back into the exercise habit.

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! By building safety into your Christmas planning you can make sure you keep your loved ones safe and protected.

Here are some of our top safety tips:



In the home

- 1 Never overload electrical sockets.
- 2 Check your Christmas tree lights carry the British Safety Standard sign and always switch them off and unplug them before going to bed.
- 3 Test the batteries in your smoke alarm every month. Never remove them.
- 4 Most fires start in the kitchen. Avoid leaving a cooker unattended and remember – cooking and drinking alcohol don't mix!
- 5 Never place candles near your Christmas tree, or decorations on lights or heaters. Never leave burning candles unattended.

Out and about

- 6 Don't share your holiday plans on social media – you're advertising the fact that your home will be unattended.
- 7 Visibility can be poor even during the day. Wear bright, fluorescent or reflective clothing or accessories when out and about.
- 8 Thieves are opportunists. Keep alert to your surroundings when out shopping. Put expensive items out of view, keep your bag zipped up and make sure your expensive mobile phone isn't hanging out of your back pocket!
- 9 Going to a party? Arrange a taxi or designated driver in advance. Never leave your drink unattended or accept drinks from a stranger.
- 10 Be aware the morning after. You could be over the legal limit many hours after your last drink, even if it's the 'morning after'. Sleep, coffee and cold showers don't help to sober you up. Time is the only way to get alcohol out of your system.



Council services at your fingertips

Finding out about Northumberland County Council and its services is now quicker and easier than ever before with the launch of a new website.

The new style web pages encourage the public to save time and money with facilities to pay bills and council tax, report issues and fill out forms from the new site.

Users can find out about their local area through 'My Place', which gives information on local schools, planning applications, bin collection times and who their councillors are. The use of geolocation technology will enable the pages to adapt to the user and feature news stories relevant to their area.

The site also uses the latest design technology so whether you are using a tablet, PC or smartphone, the pages will work for you.

For further information visit:
www.northumberland.gov.uk



**ENTER TO
WIN**

**We'd love to hear
what you think**

We are always trying to improve the information we provide to you in our resident magazine Northumberland News.

We'd like you to take part in a short survey to let us know what you think of the magazine so we can improve it further.

What's more, by completing the survey, you will be entered into a prize draw with a chance of winning a Northumberland Hamper.

The survey shouldn't take more than a few minutes. Please log on to:

northumberland.gov.uk/nnews





The hidden harm of alcohol

We're backing a campaign # Seven Cancers to raise awareness of the link between alcohol and seven types of cancer.

The campaign is being run by Balance, the north east alcohol office, to highlight the links between alcohol and seven cancers: mouth, pharyngeal (upper throat), oesophageal (food pipe), laryngeal (voice box), bowel cancer, breast and liver.

Almost two in five of the region's adults are regularly drinking more than the recommended daily limits. These are two to three units for a woman (no more than a standard 175ml glass of wine) or three to four units for a man, (a pint of strong lager).

Many of us underestimate how much we drink, not realising we're drinking at risky levels and in turn increasing our risk of developing cancer.

Please think about your alcohol intake and, if necessary, cut back and help reduce your risk.

ALCOHOL CAN CAUSE 7 TYPES OF CANCER INCLUDING BREAST CANCER.

The more you drink, the more you increase your risk. Reduce your risk of developing breast cancer. Go to reducemyrisk.tv for the facts. Concerned about your drinking? Call Drinkline: 0300 329 3330

breast cancer now **BALANCE** Getting the measure of alcohol

For more information visit: reducemyrisk.tv

No alcohol is safest option during pregnancy



Mums-to-be in Northumberland are being advised to avoid drinking alcohol throughout their pregnancy.

Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a term given for a range of permanent disabilities that can be caused when a developing baby in the womb is exposed to alcohol – this can include physical disabilities, learning difficulties and behavioural problems. There is no cure for FASD but it is preventable – no alcohol means no risk.

For information and advice log on to:
www.nhs.uk/conditions/foetal-alcohol-syndrome

Sign up to Dry January

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.



DRY JANUARY®

For more information visit: www.dryjanuary.org.uk

Health and Well

Hen-keeping a cracking new therapy

Tina, Emily, Emma and Ruler are new feathered additions to The Briardale Centre in Blyth.

They are sociable characters, lay lots of eggs and each one has their own little personality - but they are also playing a starring role in a project which encourages social interaction and the improved wellbeing of elderly people.

The hens are part of the Northumberland Cooping Well project which has seen elderly enthusiasts get involved in the day-to-day care of the poultry.

The first coops have been set up at The Alnwick Garden and Briardale Community Centre in Blyth.

One chicken enthusiast is Joyce Fletcher who attends the Briardale Friendship Group, "I used to live on a farm when I was younger so the hens bring back happy memories for me. They are getting much tamer, are great fun and lovely to have around."

The project is part of the Ageing Well programme, funded by Northumberland County Council, and which helps people to stay active, connected and well as they grow older.

Northumberland County Councillor Scott Dickinson, chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board said:

"Although the project seems light-hearted it has a serious side. An in-depth study found that looking after hens improves the health of elderly people by reducing depression, loneliness and the need for associated medication."

"It's really important for elderly people to keep busy and if they are able, to learn new skills and enjoy new experiences. Those involved in the project are not just interacting with the hens, but with each other, sharing their experiences and making new friendships."



Photo: Councillor Scott Dickinson with members of the Briardale Friendship Group.



Photo: Gordon Hogben and Tom Dundas of Alnwick.



Volunteers urgently needed!

- Could you commit regularly to a couple of hours each week?
- Do you want to help people with dementia to live well?
- Are you patient and understanding?



The Alzheimer's Society urgently needs people to provide companionship to people living with dementia.

The new Northumberland befriending service aims to support people with dementia to maintain their interests or continue with activities they enjoy - either in their own home or out and about. Some people may enjoy coffee and a chat; others will want to go shopping or for a walk or do some gardening; while others may have a particular hobby.

All volunteers will receive training before they start, ongoing support from the staff team and agreed personal expenses will be paid.

If you think you could help please contact: Suzanne Johnstone, Volunteering Office
Tel 01670 813255 or email Suzanne.Johnstone@alzheimers.org.uk

Reducing hospital visits for the elderly

A trip to hospital can be distressing and disorientating for the elderly and infirm and it is often better, if they become ill, that they are treated within the familiar surroundings of their care home.

With this in mind, work is continuing to provide additional support to care home staff to enable patients the option to remain within their care home should they become poorly.

Councillor Scott Dickinson, chair of the Northumberland Health & Wellbeing Board has visited community hospitals and care homes throughout the year, providing feedback to help inform these improvements.

He said: "Much progress has been made over the past year to help care home staff deliver extra medical care. We will continue to work closely with all those involved to ensure that further improvements are made so residents in care homes get the best support available."

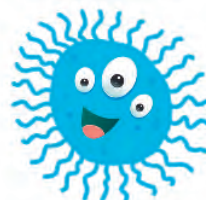


Some of the improvements that are being made include:

- A lead pharmacist has been appointed to carry out medication reviews and improve the quality of prescribed medicines to residents.
- Better access to GP support with the provision of a dedicated telephone number for care home staff.
- The role of community matrons is being developed with a focus on improving emergency health care plans.
- Care home staff are being supported with training, education and awareness raising programmes.



Stay well this winter



**STAY WELL
THIS WINTER**

Winter can be challenging on our health, especially for the elderly and those with long-term conditions. But there a number of things we can all do to help prepare for the cold weather and ward off common winter illnesses:

- ❄️ Get the flu vaccination. Those over 65, pregnant women, children aged two to four and in school years one and two and people with long-term health conditions can receive this free from their GP or pharmacist.
- ❄️ It is important to keep warm in winter – both when you are inside or outdoors.
- ❄️ At the first sign of illness, seek immediate advice and help from your pharmacist.
- ❄️ Take prescribed medicines as directed, completing the course of medicine.
- ❄️ Pick up any prescription medicines before Christmas Eve and keep stocked up with medication such as paracetamol or ibuprofen.
- ❄️ Stock up well on winter food supplies.
- ❄️ Wash your hands regularly to prevent the spread of infection.
- ❄️ Keep an eye on elderly or frail friends, neighbours and relatives.

If you do need help over the holiday period when your GP surgery or pharmacy is closed, call NHS 111 on 111.

An adviser will assess your symptoms, give advice or direct you straight away to the best service for you in your area.

For more information visit:
www.nhs.org.uk/staywell

Smokefree new year

A mother of one has quit smoking for her daughter and is using the money she saved to go on their first holiday.

Amy Cumberledge, 25 who lives with her three year old daughter, Maisey in Prudhoe has been smokefree since March 2015.

She started smoking at 17 and quit when she found out she was pregnant but started again soon after Maisey was born.

Amy quit with help from Northumberland NHS Stop Smoking Service who run weekly clinics at Oaklands Healthcentre.

She said "I wanted to quit for a long time but I never thought I would be able to. I'm doing it for Maisey and with the brilliant support I received from my stop smoking advisor I've succeeded.

"I now have more energy and I'm going to use the money I saved on our first family holiday."

The financial benefits of not smoking soon added up for Amy who'd typically

smoked 20 cigarettes a day, and could save almost £3,000 a year.

The Northumberland NHS Stop Smoking Service is provided by Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. Clinics are available in a range of places including GP practices, pharmacies, and community centres. Evening appointments are also available.

Brenda Warner, manager of Northumberland NHS Stop Smoking Service urged others to get in touch and find out more about quitting:

"Amy has done really well and I hope this encourages others to make stop smoking their new year's resolution for 2016 and to come to us for free friendly advice and support. We can advise on different medications, use of e-cigarettes, and what to do to stop the cravings."



Photo: Amy Cumberledge with her daughter Maisey.

For more information visit
www.northumbria.nhs.uk/stopsmoking
or call 01670 813 135

Could you support a vulnerable adult?

The Northumberland Shared Lives scheme is offering a good quality of life and stability to vulnerable adults in their community. You too could play a part in making a real difference to adults in need, while working from home in return for a weekly fee.

Shared Lives is particularly interested in hearing from people who would like to care for people with specific mobility and mental health needs and young adults who have turned 18 and are coming out of foster care.

What does the work involve?

The Shared Lives scheme provides short term or long term support in a family home for adults who are unable to live alone because of their age or disability.

Could you be a Shared Lives carer?

We welcome carers from all walks of life, from different backgrounds and family circumstances. You must be over 18, be patient and enthusiastic. We will match the right carer for each cared for person. You will need to provide a comfortable and stable home for people to live in or visit.

We will provide you with a financial allowance and ongoing support, training and advice.

How do I become a Shared Lives carer?

To find out more call
01670 536 400

or visit

www.northumbria.nhs.uk/sharedlives
for details of adult fostering opportunities across the county and how to become a carer.

Shared Lives Northumberland is delivered through a partnership between Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust which manages the service on behalf of Northumberland County Council.

Maureen Beal lives in Blyth with her partner, Steven Young. They share their home with 39-year-old Stuart.

Maureen said: "Stuart has lived with us for six years and I think the absolute world of him. When we were introduced I knew straight away he would fit in with our family. He is so funny and has a great sense of humour. I have never looked back, it's the best thing I ever did.

When someone comes to live permanently in your home you develop a bond and it really feels like they are part of your family.

I'm doing something for Stuart, but it has been so rewarding, he is also doing something for me. My life has been so much better since Stuart came to live with us."



Photo: Maureen Beale and her partner Steven Young with Stuart.

Know where to go for help

People in Northumberland are being reminded where to go for urgent or emergency care, following the pioneering changes which took place this summer and are now leading the way in the NHS.

In June, the new Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital opened in Cramlington and now treats all serious emergencies. It has emergency medicine consultants on site 24/7 and specialist consultants in a broad range of conditions also work seven days a week.

For patients who are seriously ill or injured, this means they have much quicker access to specialist care, which is helping to save more lives and maximising chances of survival and a good recovery.

For those residents with less serious conditions, urgent care continues to be provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week at walk-in services at Hexham and Wansbeck general hospitals. You can also access this service at North Tyneside General Hospital if this is closer to you.

People with less serious conditions can also make use of minor injury units at Alnwick and Berwick infirmaries (open 24/7), Blyth Community Hospital (open Monday to Friday 9am-5pm, last book-in 4.15pm) and Haltwhistle War Memorial Hospital (open every day 9am-5pm, last book-in 4.30pm).

Dr Jane Weatherstone, GP clinical director at Northumbria Healthcare, said: "It's really important that people know where to go for help whether they need urgent care or are faced with a serious emergency.

"Our urgent care walk-in centres at Hexham and Wansbeck general hospitals are open 24/7 to deal with a whole host of minor injuries and ailments.

"Whether it's a sprain, a cut or a wound infection, our team of highly-trained and experienced nurse practitioners are on hand any time of the day or night to treat people and get them home as quickly as possible.

"If the problem turns out to be more serious, our team has direct links to the specialists at The Northumbria hospital for advice in order to give treatment. They can also arrange for a patient to be transferred there should it be necessary.

"Residents attending the walk-in centres will find that it's likely they will be seen more quickly than before the changes because our teams are not being called away to deal with emergencies, which are now all based at The Northumbria.

"As we approach winter it's also worth reminding residents that many common seasonal ailments and illnesses are easily treated at home, or with advice from a local community pharmacist – with no need to see a doctor or nurse."

The trust runs shuttle services for residents visiting loved ones in The Northumbria, for details visit www.northumbria.nhs.uk/emergency/transport-and-parking or ask hospital reception staff.

Connie benefits from first-class care at The Northumbria

Grandmother Connie Brown from Mitford, near Morpeth, was one of the first patients to benefit from the consultant-led care at The Northumbria hospital.

After arriving by emergency ambulance, Connie, who has Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder (COPD), was quickly assessed in the emergency department, had diagnostic tests and then moved to one of the speciality wards for treatment for both pneumonia and pleurisy. She stayed in The Northumbria until the next day when she was well enough to be transferred to Wansbeck hospital so she could be nearer her family for ongoing care.

Connie, 90, said: "I'm a great believer in giving praise when praise is due and I was treated exceptionally well. The care was first-class and I cannot fault it at all.

"I was cared for on a beautiful ward with all en-suite facilities, I would go as far to say that I was treated like royalty. The doctor who saw me had an exceptional bedside manner and explained everything. I wasn't left on my own at all and there were lots of doctors and nurses around if I needed anything."

*Connie Brown
was one of the first
patients to be treated at
The Northumbria in Cramlington.*



SERIOUS EMERGENCIES



NEW HOSPITAL CRAMLINGTON

GO TO - Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital in Cramlington or call 999 for an emergency ambulance.

Suspected stroke

Loss of consciousness

Persistent and severe chest pain

Sudden shortness of breath

Severe abdominal pain

Severe blood loss

URGENT CARE



24HR WALK-IN SERVICES

GO TO - 24 hour walk-in services at Hexham, Wansbeck or North Tyneside general hospitals. For advice contact your GP or call NHS 111.

Minor head, ear or eye problems

Broken nose or nose bleed

Sprains, strains, cuts and bites

Children's minor injuries and ailments

Minor fractures or broken bones

Abscesses and wound infections

THINK GP FIRST



Treatment, medical advice and support is widely available from your local NHS. Play your part in using services wisely.

Your GP practice

Practise good self-care

Visit your local pharmacy

Call the free NHS 111 number 24/7

Minor injury units and walk-in centres

northumbria.nhs.uk/emergency

2015 YEAR

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

January

Morpeth Northern bypass plans received the green light from The Secretary of State for Transport. The scheme will alleviate traffic pressures around Morpeth and improve road links to the south of the county. The council is contributing £9m towards the £30m scheme.



April

By April we were ahead of our target for delivering new affordable homes in the county with nearly 65% of the council's target for 1,000 new affordable homes built.



February

Business was booming at a major trade event aimed at boosting the sale of locally made goods. 120 sellers turned up to promote their wares while over 180 buyers from around the region came along to meet and talk to local entrepreneurs.



May

In May we launched a new campaign 'LOVE Northumberland, HATE Litter' to crack down on litter louts and we've been working with local schools, communities and businesses to keep our county clean.



March

A pioneering £4.6m scheme opened in Haltwhistle providing a hospital and extra-care flats for the elderly under the same roof. The facility, the first of its kind in the country, is a partnership between Northumberland County Council and Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.



June

Over 11,000 people turned up to enjoy the Northumberland Live festival, a fantastic day of free entertainment which was laid on at Blyth Links. Chart toppers Doctor and the Medics and Top Loader were the headline acts.



IN REVIEW

The following is a snap-shot of some of the work and events that took place during the year to help boost jobs, the local economy, improve our environment and our communities.

July

Repairing our road network has been one of our top priorities. We've repaired over 100,000 potholes and are investing £19m to improve the county's highways and transport network.



October

Plans to reintroduce a rail passenger service between Ashington, Blyth and Tyneside took a major step forward with the initiation of a detailed feasibility study. This will establish what is required to deliver the scheme and the costs involved.



August

GCSE results were up 5% on last year in the key measure of five A*- C including english and maths. Children aged 11 had their best ever results at Key Stage 2, with 82% reaching the national standard for reading, writing and maths.



November

Through Arch, our development company, we have assisted 49 business projects this year creating or safeguarding 908 jobs and leveraging £47 million private sector investment.



September

Excitement reached fever pitch as the Tour of Britain cycle race passed through Northumberland with the world's top cyclists taking part. We worked with our partners to bring the race to the county. The race attracted 115,000 spectators and brought over £2m into the local economy.



December

More than 144,000 homes and businesses in Northumberland now have access to high-speed fibre broadband. Hundreds more premises are joining them every month thanks to the iNorthumberland broadband partnership.



Christmas gifts at Morpeth Chantry

The Chantry
is open
Monday to Saturday
from
9.30am until 5pm
and on
Bank Holidays & Sunday
from 11am until 4pm
throughout
December.



The Chantry in Morpeth has turned into a true festive treat over the Christmas period and is a great place to start your seasonal shopping spree.

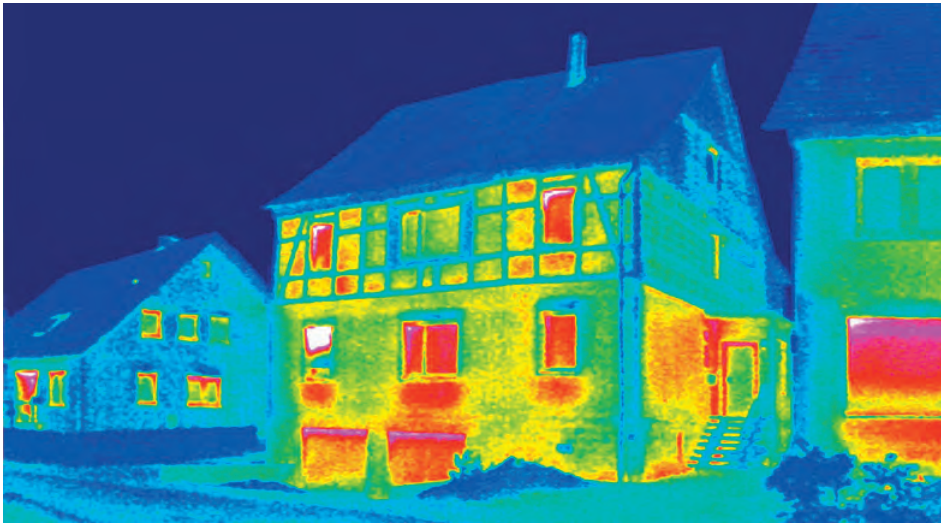
Over 100 local crafts people and entrepreneurs sell and display their unique, hand-made quality products in the town centre building, offering gifts for all ages and all occasion.

From water colours to woodcraft, fabulous home furnishings and floral displays, jewellery, hampers, ceramics or decorations, the shelves are full of wonderful workmanship.

Any craftspeople and producers interested in joining Morpeth Chantry's retail offer can call (01670) 623455 or 623454.

Our Tourist Information Centres also sell a range of local books, jewellery, gifts and crafts and are a great place to browse if you are looking for a true Northumbrian gift. For opening times visit: www.activenorthumberland.org.uk





Top tips to help cut energy bills this winter:

- Shut curtains at dusk to shut out draughts and trap heat inside.
- Choose a higher tog duvet in the winter to keep you feeling warmer.
- Avoid heating unused rooms by closing internal doors. If there are gaps underneath doors use draught excluders.
- Up to 25 percent of a property's heat is lost through the roof, so if your loft insulation is looking a little thin an insulation top-up can help trap in extra heat.
- Secondary glazing film can offer a cheaper alternative to double glazing. Film for four windows should cost around £8.
- Wear several thin layers, rather than one thick layer. This is because they trap warm air close to the body.

Winter proof your home

Temperatures may have fallen outside, but that doesn't mean they should fall in the home as well this winter.

With thousands of homes across the region living in fuel poverty, the landmark energy efficiency scheme Warm Up North is urging residents to find out how they could benefit from

energy saving measures. It has already helped hundreds of households by installing energy efficiency solutions, including cavity wall insulation, loft insulation and new efficient boilers.



To find out more about Warm Up North call the team free on 0800 294 8073 or visit www.warmupnorth.com.

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www.nwl.co.uk/btf
[@nwater_care](https://twitter.com/nwater_care)
www.welivewater.co.uk

December

Hepscott Christmas Fair

Head down to Hepscott Park where their heated greenhouse will be decked out with seasonal treats and gifts.

10.30am – 2.30pm

Wednesday 9 December



Kielder Dark Skies night

Come and join the inspirational team of astronomers as they observe the darkest of night skies above the internationally renowned Kielder Observatory. This late night event is timed to coincide with a new moon and when the skies are at their very darkest. 11.30pm – 2.30am. £40. Booking essential. Tel: 0191 265 5510

Friday 11 and Saturday 12 December

Victorian Christmas Market

A bustling Victorian Christmas Market, complete with an appearance from the Holly King and Sherlock Holmes. Linden Hall, Longhorsley.

Saturday 12 - Sunday 13 December.

Santa's Special Rail Ride

Take a seasonal ride on the railway and meet Santa! Trains will run at 12.30pm and 2pm. Tickets include a ride on the railway, refreshments, a meeting with Santa and a gift per child.

£9 per person. Booking essential. Tel: 01890 820317

The Visitor Centre, Heatherslaw, Cornhill-on-Tweed.

Sunday 13 & 20 December



'Ice' skating and Father Christmas

Get your skates on and step onto the WonderIce – a brilliant super glide skating surface. Adults £5.50, children £4.50 for 30 minutes. Or, visit Father Christmas in his special grotto in the stables. He's waiting to hear what is on your Christmas list and how good you've been during the year. For dates, times and admission costs log on to www.experiencewoodhorn.com. Woodhorn QE11 Country Park.

01670 624455

12, 13, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 December

Alnwick Garden Christmas Market

Fill your Christmas stockings with unique and eclectic delights from around the region. The market hosts a selection of handmade, artisan and traditional gifts, and offers shoppers the chance to indulge in festive nibbles and live caroling. Free entry.

11am – 5pm

12, 13, 19 & 20 December

Alnwick Garden Lantern Making & Parade

Make a beautiful willow lantern with Santa's elves and receive a free ticket to join the lantern parade on Sunday 20 December at 5.00pm. Lantern making costs £4 per lantern. Tickets can be purchased in advance or on the day in admissions. For times and details log on to www.alnwickgarden.com

12, 13, 19, 20 December.

Alnwick Garden A Christmas Tale

The Alnwick Garden's beautiful autumn spirit has fallen asleep and, as it slumbers, an enchanted forest has grown. Join in an after-dark tour of The Garden and encounter illuminations, projections, performances and music, which bring the unforgettable Sleeping Forest to life. Suitable for all ages, adult/concession £11, child 5-16yrs £6, child 0-4yrs free.

Visit www.alnwickgarden.com for times, further information and to book your place.

18, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23 December



Festive themed comedy

New Perspectives - He Wore a Red Hat. A brand new festive-themed comedy, full of twists, turns and slothful surprises. Part of the 'highlights' touring scheme.

7.30pm – 10pm. Admission £7.50

Middleton Village Hall, NE61 4RA.

10 miles west of Morpeth.

Tel: Ernie Coe 01670 772600.

Friday 18 December



Christmas Choirs

Enjoy some seasonal singing in the Library at Belsay. Please dress warmly as the hall is unheated. 11am – 4pm.

Adults £8.30, children £5, concession £7.50, family £21.60.

Belsay Hall, Castle and Gardens.

Saturday 19 – Sunday 20 December

Christmas Party

Netherton Folk Club. Christmas fun, games and seasonal music.

Bring your own drinks.

7.30pm – 11pm £2.

Netherton Memorial Hall, NE65 7EZ.

Tel: 01669 631090.

Saturday 19 December

January

New Hartley Pit Disaster Memorial Concert

Annual concert to commemorate the 1862 pit disaster, presented by Beeswing Folk Group and friends. Call Keith on 0191 2373152 or email keith.blackburn@gmail.com to reserve your ticket for this very popular event.

7.30pm -10pm. £5 entry, New Hartley Community Centre, Bristol Street, New Hartley.

Saturday 16 January



February

Sharp Shooters Day

Test your aiming skill on the laser clay shooting and archery ranges.

Kielder Water and Forest Park.

£10 per ticket. Booking essential

To book or for further information

Tel: 01434 250232 or log on to

www.calvert-trust.org.uk

Sunday 14 February

Children's Valentine's Party

Join Cinderella and Prince Charming for a Valentine's Party filled with games, songs, storytelling and activities.

Suitable for children aged 3 -10 years.

2pm – 5pm £10 per child with one free

adult, £5 per additional adult.

Booking is essential.

Tel: 01670 841235,

enquiries@kirkleyhall.co.uk

Sunday 14 February

High Ropes Day

Tackle the hanging cargo net, sprint along the swinging logs or make it across the balancing beams. Be brave and take the leap of faith.

10am – 3pm.

Kielder Water and Forest Park.

To book or for further information

Tel: 01434 250232 or log on to

www.calvert-trust.org.uk

Wednesday 17 February

Ugly Bug Safari

Small game hunters wanted. Grab a magnifying glass and join the Victorian explorer to hunt the Quarry Garden for some mini beasts. Discover the secret life of our creepy friends and create your own to take home.

Belsay Hall, Castle and Gardens

Adults £8.30, child £5,

concession £7.50, family £21.60.

11am – 5pm.

Saturday 13 – Sunday 21 February

How to be a Roman soldier

Could you hack it in Roman Britain?

Take part in a variety of activities from games to drills and crafts. Hear about Roman life as a soldier and citizen, try on costumes and handle Roman weapons and objects.

Chesters Roman Fort.

www.english.heritage.org.uk/northeast

Adult £5.80, child £3.40, concession

£5.20, family £15.

11am – 5pm

Saturday 13 – Sunday 21 February





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