

Northumberland news

WINTER 2024 



A YEAR IN REVIEW

CHRISTMAS BIN DATES

WINTER HEALTH AND WELLBEING

WARM WELCOME HUBS



Northumberland
County Council

WWW.NORTHUMBERLAND.GOV.UK



USEFUL CONTACTS

WE ARE HERE TO HELP



COST OF LIVING SUPPORT HUB

For up-to-date information for you and your family about local and national cost of living support, including payments that you may be eligible for, your nearest community spaces and people across our county who are here to support you - visit our homepage:

www.northumberland.gov.uk/support

If you don't have access to a computer, please contact our Customer Experience Team on: **Tel: 01670 620 015**

It contains information such as:

- Discounts and payments from the government including household support fund
- Support for household bills - gas and electricity
- Benefits checker
- Keeping warm this winter and warm community spaces
- Support for families – including family hubs
- Help with transport costs
- Mental health and wellbeing support
- Advice for council tenants
- Support for businesses
- Skills, jobs and work
- How to volunteer

ONECALL

If you are worried about a child or adult's immediate welfare: **Tel: 01670 536 400**

Email: onecall@northumberland.gov.uk

If you have speech or hearing difficulties, you can use Relay UK: **018001 01670 536 400**

WANT TO SPEAK WITH SOMEONE?

If you or someone you know is worried about staying warm, winter bills, feeling lonely or struggling with family pressures and you want to speak to someone, contact our Customer Experience team: **Tel: 01670 620 015**

Language translator: If English is not your preferred language you can ask the advisor to use a translator. Type talk: **01800 10845 600 6400**

If you are deaf or can't speak on the phone, contact us using Relay UK: **018001 01670 623 515** or Sign video: **northumberlandcc-cs.signvideo.net**

DOMESTIC ABUSE SUPPORT SERVICE NORTHUMBERLAND

This service is available 24 hours a day, providing confidential support and advice for women and men who are at risk of domestic abuse. **Tel: 01670 820 199**

CONTACTING THE COUNCIL

If you need to contact the council in relation to council tax, bin collections, housing queries or report, apply, or pay for something - in the first instance, please use the council's website **www.northumberland.gov.uk** alternatively ring **0345 600 6400**

MAKE SURE YOU KEEP CONNECTED!

Why not sign up to get our latest job updates and news?

You'll receive one email every Friday, tailored for you and it's easy to opt out. You'll receive a bulletin containing:

- **Council jobs** – we spotlight our latest vacancies, so you never miss out.
- **Latest updates** – bin collection changes, major road works, and more.
- **What's on this weekend** – events and activities for you, your family and friends.
- **Latest news** – local stories and videos.
- **Join the conversation** – have your say about the services you rely on.
- **Public Health updates** – to prioritise your wellbeing.

We've also 12, one-month passes for Places Leisure sports centres to give away in the coming months. You can subscribe for free at: **nland.cc/NNNewsMag**

WIN ONE OF 12 ONE MONTH PASSES
for Places Leisure sports centres





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KEEP IN TOUCH...

To stay informed about all our service developments please follow us on our social media channels.



facebook.com/
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x.com/
N_LandCouncil



instagram.com/
NLandCC



youtube.com/
NorthumberlandTV

A MESSAGE FROM THE LEADER OF NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL, **GLEN SANDERSON**

As we near the end of 2024, I've reflected on another busy and productive year here in Northumberland – as well as thinking about what's been happening elsewhere in the world.

Of course, Northumberland can feel somewhat detached from international events, but our thoughts remain with the millions affected by war, strife and suffering.

Closer to home, we are working hard to support those who need our help, while continuing to move forward on a number of major schemes and growing our economy.

Personal highlights for me include progress on the Northumberland Line passenger rail service, which is due to open imminently, and the planned new data centre in the south east of our county – a huge £10 billion investment over the coming years which will benefit not just the county but also the wider region and beyond.

New schools in Seaton Valley, Amble and Berwick are springing up, supported by state-of-the-art training facilities, while regeneration of our town centres and improvements to our parks and green spaces up and down Northumberland continues.



But we know the cost of living remains an issue for many of us and we've been working hard to provide a comprehensive package of support to all those who need it.

I look ahead to 2025 with much optimism, with a renewed focus on nature and the environment, improved opportunities for travel, education and work and celebrating everything that makes us so proud to live in our county.

Of course, all this work wouldn't have been possible without the dedication and support of the thousands of council staff who work up and down our county on behalf of residents, to whom I am very grateful.

So, as we say farewell to 2024, may I wish you all a safe and peaceful Christmas and a very Happy New Year!



RESCUE DOGS ARE STARS OF CHARITY CALENDAR

A charity calendar, featuring dogs rescued in Northumberland is now on sale with all the proceeds going directly to local animal charities. The calendar features

12 dogs that have been rescued by our animal welfare team and partner charities. Each dog has their back story printed alongside their photograph.

The calendars are available for a minimum donation of £4.49 and can be ordered online at nland.cc/rescue

Front page: Everly and her Grandma Deborah reading a festive story at Alnwick library.



KEEP CONNECTED WITH A WARM WELCOME

Throughout the winter months a network of community spaces have opened up across Northumberland so people can come together in a warm, safe and welcoming environment.



Voluntary groups, community organisations and others from our communities have opened up the warm spaces in venues such as community centres, church halls, libraries and community hubs.

Some places offer hot drinks, activities

or free access computers and WiFi. You can come and spend time quietly or meet other people in your community for a chat.

They are free to visit and we promise a warm welcome when you arrive. Each warm space is different and may not be

open every day. To find Warm Spaces near you go to: nland.cc/Warmspace

Or contact Northumberland County Council on **0345 600 6400** between 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

GET VACCINATED! PROTECT YOURSELF AND THOSE YOU CARE FOR

This winter there are three autumn/winter vaccination programmes covering flu, COVID-19, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

Vaccination is the best way to boost your immunity and protect you from these viruses. This winter there are three vaccination programmes available for free to certain eligible groups.

To find out if you or your child are eligible for the flu vaccine go to nland.cc/influenza

To find out if you or your child may be offered the seasonal COVID-19 vaccine go to nland.cc/covid

You can book adult flu and COVID-19 appointments through the NHS App and website, or by calling 119 for free.

Flu vaccines will also be available through your local GP practices or pharmacy. Pregnant women will receive their vaccinations from maternity services or their GP.

This year the NHS is also offering vaccines for RSV to those aged 75 to 79, and also pregnant women to protect their child. Those eligible will be invited to receive their RSV vaccination with their GP or from maternity services.



BECOMING A WARM SPACE

If you are an organisation offering a warm space in your community already and you'd like to join the network, please get in touch. All our partners agree to a warm welcome promise.

Please tell us about your facilities and services so we can add you to the directory. You can complete the online form: nland.cc/warmspaces





ARE YOU MISSING OUT ON PENSION CREDIT?

Could you or someone you know be missing out on Pension Credit worth an average of £3,900 per year? People over State Pension age (66) could be entitled to Pension Credit and other help.



Pension Credit tops up pension income and can help with day-to-day living costs.

You may be eligible to claim Pension Credit, even if you own your home or have savings.

People who claim Pension Credit may also be able to get other help with heating costs, rent, Council Tax and the cost of NHS services such as dental treatment and glasses.

You could be eligible for Pension Credit if your weekly income is below £218.15 or, if you have a partner who lives with you £332.95. Qualifying income level may be higher in some circumstances.

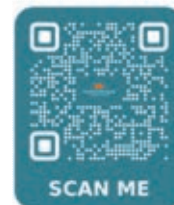
Age UK Northumberland and Citizen's Advice Northumberland can support you to claim the money you're entitled to, whether that is Pension Credit or other benefits.

For expert advice call:

Age UK: 01670 784 800

Citizen's Advice: 0808 278 7944

Scan the QR code for further information:



DON'T MISS OUT!

**NORTHERN
POWERGRID**

PROUD NORTHERNER?

We are too but we all
need a little extra help sometimes.

Join our free **Priority Services Membership** if you might be more vulnerable in a power cut. Be prepared, whatever the weather. Save our power cut map and **105** in your mobile phone. We're here for you 24/7.



Find out more and join our priority services community today at northernpowergrid.com/care



COASTAL CLEAN-UP REACHING FINAL STAGES

The final stages of work to tackle historical pollution on the coast at Lynemouth are underway.

We've allocated £5 million to clean up this stretch of coastline which was scarred from decades of colliery spoil which was washing into the sea. Contractors have spent recent

months excavating and processing thousands of tonnes of waste material before restoring the dunes and cliffs to their former glory. The work is key to our commitment

to put the environment at the heart of everything we do - with the restored landscape bringing benefits for local residents, visitors and wildlife.

CHRISTMAS BIN COLLECTION DATES

When will my bins be collected this Christmas?

The week commencing 16th December 2024 is not affected (normal collections - Monday to Thursday).

The week commencing 23rd December 2024 is affected by two bank holidays, one on Wednesday 25th December and another

on Thursday 26th December - collections will be two days later to cover this.

The week commencing 30th December 2024 is affected by one bank holiday, on Wednesday 1st January - collections will be one day later to cover this.



ORIGINAL COLLECTION DAY

Wednesday 25th December – Christmas Day

Thursday 26th December – Boxing Day

Wednesday 1st January

Thursday 2nd January

REVISED COLLECTION DAY

Friday 27th December

Saturday 28th December

Thursday 2nd January

Friday 3rd January

WHAT'S THE CHANGE FOR ME?

Collection 2 days later than normal

Collection 2 days later than normal

Collection 1 day later than normal

Collection 1 day later than normal



CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING

We recycle real Christmas trees into good quality compost or soil conditioner, or into chippings. You can take them to your local household waste recovery centre during normal site opening times or to a local collection point.

To find opening times of your local household waste recovery centre or your nearest Christmas tree collection point go to:

www.northumberland.gov.uk/waste



KEEPING OUR ROADS SAFE: STEPHEN AND THE WINTER SERVICES TEAM

With winter now upon us, we count on dedicated drivers like Stephen, who work through the harshest conditions to keep our roads safe and accessible.

For Stephen who has 24 years' experience in the job, a day often begins before dawn.

"Sometimes I'm out at 3:30 in the morning, we load up, do safety checks, and hit the road. It's challenging but we care about supporting our community and knowing we are helping so many people to travel safely makes it worthwhile."

"And there are other rewards too – such as spotting deer on an empty road under the moon – a unique experience in the early hours."

Stephen describes the careful planning behind gritting.

"Leading the team are experienced managers who monitor detailed weather forecasts and weather station data and road surface temperatures around the clock and coordinate operations across the county."

"Our team are usually out around 90 days of the year, including Christmas Day if needed, gritting thousands of miles of road and responding to



requests from the public. In severe weather the drivers can be working around the clock making our roads safe."

Stephen recalls the toughest time on the job was tackling the roads during the Beast from the East in 2018, where the snow fall was so heavy the drivers had to stop due to white-out conditions.

Fortunately, all the gritters are fitted with a tracking device to ensure their location is known at all times – providing an extra level of safety especially for those working in remote areas.

"Freezing rain is our worst enemy" said Stephen, "We have to stop and start the



gritting route again, and winds causing drifting snow is another big challenge. One minute the roads can be clear, the next they are white again."

"We travel slowly to do a thorough job, often just 25 miles an hour, and on roundabouts we have to take wide turns and cross over lanes to make sure they are well gritted."

There is a special plea from the team - if you do happen to be following a gritter, please give it a little extra time and space - it makes a big difference to the drivers, helping them to do their job safely to keep the county moving.



Please drive carefully this winter and be prepared. Northumberland is a vast county and while it may be bright sunshine at the coast it could be snowing in the hills.





BRINGING EMPTY HOMES BACK INTO RESIDENTIAL USE

With housing in high demand, we've been working hard to help bring long-term empty properties around the county back into residential use.

Over the last seven years we've assisted in returning over 600 empty properties back into much-needed residential homes.

We offer a range of advice and assistance, including:

- Help to find a tenant, via free advertising on Northumberland Homefinder.
- Free tenant reference checks.

- We help tenants raise the deposit needed to move into a previously empty property.
- We can also use a range of enforcement powers to repair, re-let and manage problematic long term empty properties on the owner's behalf.

If you are an owner of an empty property or if there is a long-term empty property in your neighbourhood we'd like to hear from you to see if we can help.

Tel: 0345 600 6400 or email: privatesectorhousing@northumberland.gov.uk

TIS THE SEASON TO BE SAFE! HERE ARE SOME OF OUR FIREFIGHTERS' TOP 'ELF AND SAFETY' TIPS



- Check to see if the lights you buy conform to British Safety Standards.
- Always turn Christmas lights off when going to bed or leaving your property.
- Ensure any wires or cables are secure and not a trip hazard.
- Don't overload sockets.
- Keep candles away from the tree and flammable materials and never leave burning candles unattended – or use battery operated candles instead.
- Keep decorations away from lights, fires and heaters.
- Alcohol and cooking don't mix. Leave your well-deserved drink until after you've finished cooking.
- Switch any chargers off before you go to bed, especially devices with a lithium-ion battery, such as e-bikes and scooters.
- Make sure you have working fire alarms on all floors of your home and test them every week.



STAMPING OUT CRIME TO KEEP YOU SAFE

Our Trading Standards service works hard throughout the year to protect consumers and legitimate businesses from rogue traders who sell illicit, unsafe and counterfeit goods.

They do spot checks on businesses and also act on tip-offs from vigilant members of the public.

This year they've seized thousands of illicit vapes, cigarettes and counterfeit goods that were being sold illegally across Northumberland.

WHAT'S THE HARM?

The sale of counterfeit goods is not a victimless crime.

Non-compliant vaping products are imported and don't meet the required safety standards. They can have puff counts over ten times the legal limit and they are often sold to children.

Illicit tobacco brings crime into local communities and encourages children to take up smoking.

Counterfeit goods undermine confidence in legitimate brands, shoppers are ripped off and the supply and sale of fake items is known to fund organised crime.



Above: Yoyo and Harley are specially trained tobacco detection dogs who work with the team sniffing out black-market tobacco



SHOP LOCAL IN NORTHUMBERLAND WHENEVER YOU CAN

It may be quicker and easier to click a computer button and make a purchase online, but it is important to remember that each purchase we make on our local high street helps the local economy, supporting that business and the people they employ.

Small businesses are the heart of our local economy and the impact we can have by shopping local should not be underestimated. Always try and shop local whenever you can.

**REMEMBER:
YOU CAN PARK
FOR FREE IN
MANY OF OUR
TOWN CENTRES.**

Go to:
nland.uk/parking



2024...A YEAR IN REVIEW

It's been another busy and exciting year in Northumberland.

Here's just a snapshot of some of the work and events that took place during 2024 to help boost jobs, the local economy, improve our environment and our communities.



JANUARY

Local voluntary and community groups receive £55k of funding to help with projects that enhance nature and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The scheme will re-open in early 2025.



FEBRUARY

The council agreed to invest £36 million to maintain the county's roads - fixing potholes and resurfacing stretches of the county's 5,000 kms of road.



MAY

15 new affordable bungalows were granted planning permission in Amble – the latest step in the council's commitment to provide more affordable housing for local people.



JUNE

Local heroes who have gone above and beyond to improve the lives of others and make a real difference to communities in Northumberland were honoured at a special ceremony.



SEPTEMBER

Northumberland enjoyed great success in this year's Northumbria in Bloom competition with towns, communities, parks and public spaces all being recognised.



OCTOBER

Thousands of runners from across the UK took part in the stunning Kielder Marathon weekend setting themselves new personal challenges and raising thousands for worthwhile causes.



MARCH

A groundbreaking ceremony took place to kickstart construction of the new Astley Community High School and Whytrig Middle School which aims to transform education in Seaton Valley.



APRIL

Up to £10 billion of investment is coming into the county after the council secured a deal to bring a state-of-the-art data centre to land at Cambois, creating jobs and investment.



JULY

Our Children's Services were rated outstanding overall by Ofsted placing the council among the top 15% in the country – a really fantastic achievement!



AUGUST

Hard-working students celebrated their A Level, GCSE and vocational results and prepared to take their next steps in education or the world of work. Well done everyone!



NOVEMBER

Thanks to grant funding, hundreds of eligible homes across the county are benefiting from energy efficient installations such as insulation and solar panels.



DECEMBER

We gave away thousands of free tree saplings to local communities to help enhance the environment and make Northumberland greener and cleaner.



FAMILY HUBS AWARDED '100% HAPPINESS AND KINDNESS RATING'

Family Hubs have been praised for their commitment to championing breastfeeding and improving care for all mothers.



Family Hubs have been praised for their commitment to championing breastfeeding and improving care for all mothers.

The county's network of hubs has received the global UNICEF UK Baby Friendly award - including a "100% happiness and kindness rating" - after passing its stage three assessment.

Sam Weston, attends the infant feeding drop-in sessions at Bedlington Family Hub with baby

son Daniel James, known as DJ.

The sessions are delivered by the Growing Healthy Northumberland infant feeding team and offer new parents the chance to access expert support and advice.

She said: "We come every week and it's been really good. You can get advice or sometimes we just sit and chat while we're feeding about other things too like the sleepless nights. It's great to know the support is there."

"It is testament to all staff involved, that mothers reported a 100% happiness and kindness rating when attending and communicating with the staff and service."

Our Family Hubs continue to grow now they can offer support to families with children of all ages.

Check out their website for the latest what's on guides – from free family fun to online advice and support.

For further information visit: www.familyhubsnorthumberland.co.uk

YOUNG WIZARDS SHARE THEIR MAGICAL IDEAS FOR WALK TO SCHOOL MONTH

Pupils in Cramlington came up with some magical ways to inspire families to get more active during International Walk to School Month.

Schools across Northumberland took part in the annual campaign that sees pupils celebrate the joys of walking and wheeling to school.

Young wizards from Eastlea Primary School in Cramlington manned the

school gates handing out reward stickers to those who walk, cycle or scoot to school.

Northumberland County Council's Big Northumberland Gear Change campaign aims to get more people thinking twice before picking up their car keys, given that a third of all trips made in the county are less than 5km.

The switch aims to improve physical



and mental health, while also helping the environment by reducing carbon emissions.

Find out how you can change gear by going to www.northumberlandgearchange.co.uk



YOUNG PEOPLE ON TRACK TO INDEPENDENCE THANKS TO LIFE-CHANGING TRAVEL TRAINERS

More young people with additional needs in Northumberland are enjoying the freedom of independent travel thanks to a new training programme.

The Council has invested £100,000 in the pilot project that sees independent travel trainers work with eligible young people and empower them to develop the skills and confidence they need to travel safely and independently between their home and school or workplace.

Northumberland's two trainers, Donna and Dawn, work with young people alongside their school or learning facility, supporting them to explore different modes of transport so that they can travel

independently with their friends and peers.

They said: "It has been such a pleasure to spend time with the students and to see them grow in confidence. We celebrated their graduation with some special day trips around the region by train. The students navigated the trains like pros and made us all so proud."

Find out more about services for children and young people with additional needs on the new Northumberland SEND Local Offer website.

Find out more: www.northumberlandsend.co.uk

HUNDREDS OF NEW CHILDCARE PLACES CREATED IN NORTHUMBERLAND

Hundreds of new early years and wraparound childcare places are being created across Northumberland.

Government-funded childcare support for working families is expanding - including gradually introducing 30 hours of free childcare per week for children over nine months old by September 2025.

If you are an eligible working parent in England, you can now apply for:

- **15 hours childcare for your child aged nine months to three years old, rising to 30 hours from September 2025.**
- **30 hours childcare for your three and four-year-old.**

Among the new provisions opening their doors is My Little Kingdom Day Nursery in Ashington. It is the second day nursery founded by friends and business partners Emma Fullwood and Sarah-Jane Sewell.

Emma said: "I think the expansion of childcare support for families is going to make a huge difference, it will give families more choice and also means more children will be able to experience the benefits that quality early years provision can bring."



Emma Fullwood, Founder, My Little Kingdom Day Nursery, Ashington

We've made it easier to find childcare available in your area, with our new Northumberland Family Services Directory. It has all the information in one place including how to apply for childcare support.

Visit www.northumberland.fsd.org.uk, scan the QR code or shortlink nland.uk/FSD





LARGEST EVER INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION

Our exciting school investment and improvement programme continues to take shape.

The multi-million-pound projects across the county are part of the council's largest ever capital programme; transforming education and learning facilities for young people now and for generations to come.

Students are already enjoying new and improved facilities at Haydon Bridge High School, Ponteland High School, Hexham's Queen Elizabeth High School and Emily Wilding Davison School in Ponteland.

Projects are now underway to refurbish and rebuild schools in the Coquet, Seaton Valley and Berwick partnerships

of schools, which will include state-of-the-art new high schools as well as investment in primary schools, specialist, post-16 skills and post-18 provision.

Funding is also being channeled into remodeling and refurbishment projects across the county – from new modular buildings to general school improvements.



PLAYZONES TO OPEN FOR SPRING

Work is due to start on the first of Northumberland's new outdoor PlayZones which will be open in early 2025.

The PlayZones will provide a safe, outdoor recreational space which will be open throughout the year for activities such as football, netball, basketball, fitness.

The first three will be located at Alnwick Community Centre, Eastwoods Park in West Wylam, and Hirst Park, Ashington.

Conversations are being held with community groups across the county and it is hoped that further PlayZone sites will be developed in the coming year.

For more info: footballfoundation.org.uk/playzones-programme

EXCITEMENT FOR PUPILS AS AMBLE'S NEW SCHOOLS OPEN THEIR DOORS

The latest to open their doors are the new King Edwin Primary School and Barndale-by-the-Sea School in Amble on the site of the former Amble Middle School.



King Edwin Primary is the new home for the former Amble First School and includes an early years wing, library, hall, outdoor space and playing fields.

Barndale-by-the-Sea caters for pupils with a range of neurodiverse needs. A satellite hub of Barndale School in Alnwick, it features bespoke classrooms and therapy

rooms, a life skills studio, home economics classroom, STEM classroom and library.

New classrooms have also been completed at Amble Links, Red Row, Broomhill and Grange View C of E primary schools and a new building for James Calvert Spence College will also be constructed, opening to pupils in 2026.



COUNTDOWN ON FOR RAIL LINE OPENING

Excitement is growing for the re-introduction of passenger services on the Northumberland Line - a hugely ambitious £298.5 million project involving the County Council, the Department for Transport, Network Rail and Northern.

Ashington, Newsham and Seaton Delaval stations will be the first to open – with a journey along the entire route to Newcastle taking around 35 minutes. Stations in Bedlington, Blyth Bebside and Northumberland Park remain under construction and are due to open for customers travelling on the Line later in 2025.

Over recent months trains have started rolling along the full length of the line again, as a fleet of drivers work to learn the route ahead of passenger services starting.

For all the latest information go to www.northumberlandline.uk



NORTHUMBERLAND
REGISTRARS' WEDDING FAIR



SAVE THE DATE

11AM - 3PM | SATURDAY 18 JANUARY 2025 | MORPETH
TOWN HALL, NORTHUMBERLAND, NE61 1LZ

OVER 30 WEDDING VENDORS INCLUDING
PHOTOGRAPHERS, CAKE MAKERS AND MANY MORE WILL
BE JOINING NORTHUMBERLAND REGISTRARS WHO WILL
BE ON HAND TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS AND
HELP PERSONALISE YOUR SPECIAL DAY.

WWW.MYNORTHUMBERLANDWEDDING.CO.UK



MAKING YOUR HOME MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT

Fully funded energy efficiency measures are available for eligible households across the county, helping keep homes warm and save money on energy bills. These could include insulation, solar panels and/or low carbon heating.

To speak to an advisor and check what schemes could be available to you, please call our Customer Services team on **0345 600 6400** and ask to speak to the Warmer Homes Team or email us at **warmerhomes@northumberland.gov.uk**

For more information on grants and eligibility criteria go to **nland.cc/warmerhomes**

FREE HOME ENERGY PLAN

All residents in Northumberland can use our free online home energy plan tool which can help you understand the possible options for energy upgrades for your home.

This is available at **nland.uk/plan**



ENERGY SAVING TOP TIPS

- Unplug chargers as soon as batteries are fully charged, or the chargers are not in use.
- Wait for a full load before running your dishwasher and washing machine.
- Turn off all lights, appliances, and electronics not in use.
- Use energy efficient light bulbs.
- Shut doors to areas you're not using.
- Only cool or heat the rooms where you spend the most time.
- Take shorter showers to save water and energy.



Do you know a family member with a lifeline or community alarm?

Help them check if the **#DigitalSwitchover** will affect their service.

OUR NATIONAL TELEPHONE NETWORK IS GOING DIGITAL

What does this mean for you?

North East telephone services that rely on the old system such as home phones and healthcare devices will be switched to upgraded digital landline services as part of a national switchover led by the UK telecomms industry.

This may include:

- Home phones (traditional landline)
- Amplified phones (for those with hearing loss)
- Personal telecare products
- Fall and motion detectors
- Portable healthcare devices such as ECG or oxygen monitors

For most people, digital phone lines will have no impact on how you use your home phone. You'll still have the same service, and your price plan and bills will stay the same.

What do I need to do?

Your telephone provider will contact you to give you a switchover date and to check in and discuss what you need to do to make sure your service isn't affected.

If you have telecare safety devices

If you or someone you know depends on their landline and/or use a telecare device connected to a phone line such as a fall monitor, lifeline or personal alarm, then please contact the provider of this service to find out how this device will be affected.

Vulnerable users are entitled to a backup battery free of charge from their provider if they have critical services running such as telecare/telehealth.

In an emergency

You should tell your telephone provider now if you have no other way of making emergency calls.

What if I have no broadband, internet or mobile phone?

Contact your telephone provider now.

What happens now?

Your telephone provider should contact you before the switchover to let you know if you'll be affected. Please contact your telephone provider directly (BT, Virgin etc) if you have any concerns about the switchover.



Local resident Richard Cansdale, who has been visiting Bolam Lake for 50 years, Leader of Northumberland County Council Glen Sanderson and Graham Mitcheson, County Parks and Sites Officer (NCC).



MEMORIAL SCHEMES CELEBRATE LATE QUEEN'S LOVE OF THE OUTDOORS

Designed to honour the late Monarch's passion for the outdoors and countryside, these schemes have transformed parks, woodlands, and green spaces across the county.

COMPLETED PROJECTS INCLUDE:

Eastwoods Park, Prudhoe: A new circular path improving accessibility, tree planting and seating.

East Cramlington Local Nature Reserve: New circular paths improving accessibility, a car park extension and improved drainage.

Valley Park, Cramlington: New footpaths, ponds and a dipping platform.

Tyne Green, Hexham: New riverside paths improving accessibility.

Bolam Lake Country Park: New paths and tree planting.

QEII Country Park, Ashington: New circular paths improving accessibility.

Warkworth Beach: Installation of a new picnic area and coastal viewing point.

Queen's Garden's, Tweedmouth: A new garden entrance feature, seating and railings.

Isabella Heap, Blyth: A new path network, wildflower and tree planting, installation of new gates and barriers and installation of a pond dipping platform.

A number of other schemes in the county are still underway or in



development, including in Alnwick and at Gallagher Park in Bedlington.

The memorial projects are among the jewels in the crown of the county's spectacular landscape, which boasts eight country parks, 26 other parks and well over 20 nature reserves.

To find out more about our parks and open spaces visit: nland.cc/OurParks





NORTHUMBERLAND RESIDENTS ARE AN ACTIVE LOT!

Northumberland residents are making their health and wellbeing a priority with record numbers visiting our sports and leisure centres.

There have been more than ½ million visits to the council's nine leisure centres over the last three months.

We are seeing people of all abilities come through the doors, where they are welcomed and supported on their own personal wellness journey. The centres, run and

managed by Places Leisure, offer something for everyone from toddler to teenagers, pregnant mums to pensioners. They cater for people just starting their fitness journey all the way up to elite athletes.

Over recent years the council has committed to its biggest ever spend on



sports and leisure facilities the county has ever seen investing many millions of pounds to build new centres and revitalise centres across the county,

providing state of the art equipment, facilities and classes for all ages.

To find your nearest Places Leisure Centre go to www.placesleisure.org

FREE STOP SMOKING SUPPORT

Smokers in Northumberland can now access a variety of FREE support to help quit.

By signing up to a programme of support, you will be able to access Nicotine Replacement Therapies and other medication to support you on your quit journey.

As part of our new Swap to Stop

programme, free vape starter kits may be offered to help you kick the smoking habit, with a choice of products, strengths and flavours available.

Although vaping is not risk free, it is a fraction of

the risk of smoking tobacco and is proven to be a popular and effective way to help smokers quit.



For more information about stopping smoking please call 01670 813135 or email stopsmokingservice@northumberland.gov.uk

SIGN UP NOW AND GET READY TO GO DRY...

Healthier insides.
Fuller wallet.
Deeper sleep.
Boosted energy.
Sharper concentration.
Mindful year-round drinking.

ARE YOU IN?



Be part of Dry January® dryjanuary.org.uk

Why not start the New Year with a clear head by signing up now for the Dry January challenge, either on your own or as a group, to give up drinking for a month.

Alcohol is linked to more than 60 medical conditions and diseases including liver disease, various cancers, stomach ulcers, raised blood pressure, stroke and dementia.

It is also important to remember that most people who suffer alcohol-related health problems aren't alcoholics. They are people who have been drinking at or above the recommended daily limits for a number of years.

Go on - sign up, join us and get ready to go dry!



CRACK DOWN ON FLY-TIPPING CONTINUES

We are continuing our crack down on fly-tipping across Northumberland with hefty fines for those responsible.

We also have legal powers to remove large accumulations of rubbish from gardens and charge those responsible for it the full amount for disposing of it.

Fly-tipping means dumping waste illegally, instead of using the kerbside collection service or your local recycling centre. From rubbish left in a back lane, to a mountain of tyres abandoned in a field, it is all fly-tipping.

Fly-tipping is a criminal offence and if you are caught you will face a fixed penalty of £1000.

If you get taken to court you could be fined an unlimited amount and face a prison sentence.

We've now launched a new campaign to tackle fly-tipping head on.

"Crime scenes" are being identified and marked with tape and we're tracking down and fining the offenders.



If you have big items to dispose of...

We offer a bulky waste collection service with discounts for concessions and people on benefits nland.cc/bulky

You can also visit the Environment Agency's website and search for licensed waste operators near you on the public register's pages of the website.

To find the opening times and your nearest Household Waste Recycling Centre go to nland.cc/tip



Please remember to recycle whenever you can



Charity shops take all sorts of good quality household items and clothing.

You can also give away old furniture for refurbishing and upcycling.

COULD THIS BE YOURS?

DON'T LET THIS BE YOUR FAULT

If you're having items removed from your home, it's down to you to check the company you use is legal.

Ask to see a waste carrier's licence or check online at nland.uk/licensed





Below: Hepscott Park Horticultural Skills Unit

CHECK OUT THE WORK OF OUR LOCAL DAY CENTRES

We run eight day centres around the county, helping more than 170 adults with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and mental health conditions to acquire new skills, develop confidence and meet new people.



HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT THEIR WORK

The centres welcome visitors and are keen for more volunteers. They produce a wide range of products that you can buy and money raised is reinvested back into the service.

WHY NOT CHECK OUT YOUR LOCAL DAY CENTRE

Alnwick: Visit the Pottergate Centre in Alnwick and sample the delicious cakes and biscuits for sale in the Pottergate Pantry.

Berwick: The Northstar Centre in

Berwick specialises in performing arts, including pantomimes, Makaton workshops and a drumming group known as The Shindiggers. You can see them perform at events in the local community.

Blyth: Blyth Riverside Centre in Cowpen has an accessible bike for service users and we are keen to hear from volunteers who could help with bike maintenance.

Choppington: Mowbray Day Centre in Choppington is the place to go if you fancy artisan bakery products.

Corbridge: The Tynedale Horticultural Service at the Minsteracres Retreat

Centre near Corbridge, specialises in woodland planting and grows woodland perennials for sale.

Hexham: The Tynedale Centre in Hexham recycles preloved or gifted furniture and electrical goods.

Morpeth: Herbaceous perennial plants are grown and sold at Hepscott Park Horticultural Skills Unit. There is also a café on the site which is open six days a week.

Sleekburn: Vegetable and salad crops are grown and sold at Sleekburn Horticultural Skills Unit on the Earth Balance site.

You can find out more about the services and facilities at nland.uk/DayCentres

ENERGY CENTRAL LEARNING HUB WELCOMES FIRST LEARNERS

The Energy Central Campus has welcomed the first learners to its state-of-the-art Energy Central Learning Hub (ECLH).

The £15m ECLH is an all-new STEM education and vocational training facility at the Port of Blyth delivering courses to young people and professionals looking to take up a career in the clean energy sector.

Find out more about the courses available www.energycentralcampus.co.uk

Next door, our Northumberland Skills Welding and Fabrication Training Centre has a record number of learners enrolled - from school leavers to apprentices and adults looking to change or progress their careers.





Northumberland
SKILLS

Unlock new skills for 2025

Enrol now to start in January

With flexible part-time courses, full-time study and apprenticeship training programmes starting from January 2025, your future is at your fingertips.



Flexible part-time courses
at campuses across
Northumberland



Choose from a range of
subjects, including: plastering,
welding, ESOL, creative courses,
English and maths, early years,
or health and social care



Explore a career change,
get help to get a job or
try out something new



Start dates from January 2025

Enrol now to unlock new skills for your future this New Year
- scan the QR code below, or visit www.northumberlandskills.co.uk



Delivering on behalf of



Northumberland
County Council



MORE SUPPORT FOR LIFE-CHANGING FOSTER CARERS

Foster carers play a life-changing role in supporting our children and young people when they cannot live at home or with family, providing stability, love and care.

They are a valued and vital part of our wider Ofsted "outstanding" Children's Services team.

We're increasing our payments to foster carers in the first stage of wider plans to grow our fostering provision and strengthen support available.



Share your home and shape their future.

Our children need different types of support, so we need single people, couples and families with different experiences and backgrounds to care for them on a short-term or permanent basis.



Contact our friendly regional hub on 0800 917 7771 or visit www.FosterWithNorthEast.org.uk



Northumberland
County Council

Foster with
NORTH EAST



BECOME A SUPPORTED LODGINGS HOST

Supported lodgings provide a stepping-stone for young people aged 16-24 who are cared for by the council, or who have presented as homeless and need support.

We're recruiting for supported lodging hosts who have the passion and enthusiasm to prepare a young person to live independently, guiding them as they

develop the skills they need for their future such as cooking, budgeting and using public transport.

Applications are open to anyone over the age of 21 that has a spare room. Hosts will receive a range of support, including full training and a generous weekly allowance in addition to room rent.



To register your interest go to nland.cc/SupportedLodgings





FLEXIBLE WORKING WITHIN YOUR LOCAL AREA

Care assistants work directly with the person who needs help, to support them with things that could include meal preparation and promoting independence.

You will be involved in many aspects of your employer's life and the role can be immensely varied depending on the person's individual needs and priorities.

Different people need support with different parts of their life, at different times of the day, so you can choose a role that suits you and fits in with your other commitments.

You can choose who you work with, when and where, and make a real impact on people's lives.

Qualifications aren't necessarily needed, and training will be provided when required.

For further information call Rebecca on **01670 629094 / 07814 606119** or sign-up directly visit **www.ukcil.com**

DO YOU HAVE ROOM IN YOUR HOME AND YOUR HEART

Could you share your life and act in a carer role to support adults who are unable to live alone because of their age or disability.

- You can provide long term or short breaks.
- Carers are matched with the people they support. We consider personalities and look for shared interests or hobbies too.
- A background in care is desirable but not essential. It's more important that you care about and understand people.
- You'll receive any training you need as well as a weekly fee for each adult you support.



Above: Kirsty and Kevin on a trip to the coast.

This is what our carers say:

"Shared Lives not only changes a person's life but has changed our life for the better."

"We love the person who lives with us. He is part of our family."

If you would like to make a difference to people's lives the Shared Lives team would love to hear from you. For further information please call **01670 629 130** or scan the QR code



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www.adoptnortheast.org.uk





Festive fitness!

Treat yourself to unlimited gym, swim and fitness classes this Christmas. Fully equipped gyms, quality swimming pools and 100's of fitness classes!



Gym



Swim



**Group
exercise**

Join now and enjoy unlimited:



Gym



Swim



Classes



Find your
nearest centre

For more information:

- Scan the QR code
- Visit placesleisure.org
- Download the Places Leisure app



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Places for People Leisure Ltd. working in
partnership with Northumberland County Council