


Northumberland news

SUMMER 2024 



EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

INVESTING IN SCHOOLS

TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE TOGETHER

WALKING FOR WELLNESS



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 telephone Northumberland Communities Together on:

01670 620 015

NORTHUMBERLAND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

If you or someone you know is worried about rising costs of household bills, feeling lonely or struggling with family pressures and you want to speak to someone, contact the Northumberland Communities Together team:

Email: nct@northumberland.gov.uk

Tel: **01670 620 015** (9am - 6pm, seven days a week)

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

Sign video: northumberlandcc-cs.signvideo.net

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:

Tel: **018001 01670 536 400**

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, report, apply, or pay for something. In the first instance, please visit:

www.northumberland.gov.uk

Tel: **0345 600 6400**

CITIZENS ADVICE

For consumer service advice, free phone **0808 223 1133**.
Helplines are open Monday - Friday 9am-5pm.

MAKE SURE YOU KEEP CONNECTED!

Sign up to receive 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

You can subscribe for free at: nland.cc/NNewsMag





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KEEP IN TOUCH...

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



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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**

Welcome to the summer edition of Northumberland News.

It is good indeed to see our wonderful county looking at its best.

It's a welcome relief from the winter that brought the highest rainfall since the early 1800s which caused really serious flooding which was responsible for landslides and widespread damage to our roads. But we are well on our way to dealing with this thanks to an extra £10 million we have allocated to repair our roads and the work of our teams and contractors.

We've made improvements to many of our parks and green spaces through our Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Schemes and they really are great places for people to enjoy – whether that's a family day out or a quiet place for reflection. There is more detail on our green spaces inside the magazine.

It's been another busy few months, and the D-Day 80th anniversary commemoration events across the county in June (pictured below) have been a real highlight, along with our Community Local Heroes event and our Love Northumberland Awards celebrating the



contributions made by local people where they live.

We've begun work on our major environment clean up at Lynemouth Beach after decades of neglect. We're continuing to invest in three new superschools, leisure centres, brand-new training facilities for our future generations, and funding regeneration of our town centres.

Later this year we'll have the opening of the Northumberland Line, bringing back passenger services between the south east of Northumberland and central Newcastle for the first time in decades.

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 throughout the year on behalf of residents, to whom I am very grateful.



Above: Some images from our D-Day commemoration event in Blyth.

Front page: Dr Caroline Pryer, the new Lord Lieutenant for Northumberland, with representatives from the Sea Cadet Corps, RAF Air Cadets and Army Cadet Force standing next to a beacon lit to commemorate D-Day.



POTHOLE REPORTS ON THE WAY DOWN

The number of potholes reported in Northumberland fell by three-quarters over recent months.

Across the county, the number of pothole reports peaked in February at 2,100, but fell to just 535 in May, with 12,588 road repairs carried out since April 1.

Tackling highway repairs is a priority and this year's budget included £36 million in funding to maintain the



county's roads. Extra funding was also set aside specifically for repairs to smaller U and C class roads in rural areas.

The council's Fix My Street app is also making it easier for people to report any issues so that they are quickly resolved.

HEXHAM'S HISTORIC HEART RESTORED

The historic heart of Hexham has been revitalised and preserved for current and future generations.



We've been working with Historic England to deliver a £3.4million scheme to restore and refurbish buildings in the town centre while preserving their unique character and historic features. We've also completed public realm enhancements.

The Hexham High Streets Heritage Action Zone scheme has had a really positive impact on the town with more business premises being occupied and trading as confidence increases, particularly in Priestpopple, Cattle Market and Battle Hill.



The works have significantly improved the condition of the town's Conservation Area, which was designated as 'at risk' by Historic England.

Here's what's been happening:

- Ten heritage buildings have been refurbished. This has included improvements to the front of buildings and work to enable long term vacant buildings to be brought back into use.
- A major public realm scheme has improved the streetscape in the town centre with new planters,



trees, better on-street parking, electric vehicle charging points and upgraded paving and pedestrian safety.

- Heritage street lighting has been installed with the latest energy saving LED technology.
- A community programme helped to promote the history of the town and engage local residents – this included a digital town trail, heritage research training and oral history sessions to record memories of the town. Local school children got involved too.

A big thank you to Hexham's residents and businesses for their patience and understanding while this important work has taken place.

The work is now finished and the town centre looks fantastic!



COUNTDOWN ON FOR OPENING OF NEW TRAIN LINE

The countdown is on to the opening of the Northumberland Line in the coming months.

Excitement is growing for the re-introduction of passenger services later this year - the culmination of an ambitious project involving the County Council, the Department for Transport, Network Rail and Northern.

Ashington, Newsham and Seaton Delaval stations are nearing completion and 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 next year.

Along with the stations, huge amounts of engineering and infrastructure work have taken place to replace track and install state-of-the-art signalling for the new service.



Above: Signalling and track work being completed at Bedlington.
Picture courtesy of Ontrackimages Ltd

RAIL TRAVEL INFORMATION

- Two passenger trains per hour in each direction on Monday - Saturday daytimes
- Hourly trains on evenings and Sundays
- Ashington to Newcastle in around 35 minutes
- Newsham to Newcastle in around 24 minutes
- Fares from £1 single for U21s with Pop Blue Card

**For all the latest updates go to:
northumberlandline.uk**

CREATING MORE AFFORDABLE HOMES FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

Improving the quantity and quality of affordable housing to help create more homes for rent and affordable home ownership, continues to be one of our top priorities.

We're working closely with housing developers, housing associations and the North East Combined Authority to deliver new affordable housing.

We delivered 1,802 affordable homes in the last five years, representing about a sixth of all new homes built in the county. There are also an additional 1,414 affordable homes (to rent or buy) with planning permission which are due

to be built in communities right across Northumberland.

The houses vary in size to meet residents different housing needs and include those designed for families, the elderly, single people and our most vulnerable residents.

Over recent months we've been working to provide more new affordable housing for rent in Alnwick,

Amble, Blyth, Embleton, Hexham and Cramlington.

We're also upgrading our existing council housing and are investing over £10 million each year to make our social housing modern and energy efficient.

A major scheme is also in the pipeline to completely renovate over 70 council homes in Blyth thanks to council and Government funding.



Local ward and county councillors Gordon Castle and Martin Swinbank, Stuart Morgan (Land Director) Story Homes and County Councillor Colin Horncastle, Cabinet Member for Looking after our Environment at the new council affordable housing in Alnwick.

COASTAL CLEAN-UP

Major clean-up works are getting underway to tackle historical pollution on the coast at Lynemouth.

The council has allocated £5m to undertake the works on its land to clean up this stretch of coastline and stop historic waste deposits from washing into the sea in this area.

Over the summer, contractors will be excavating and processing the waste materials, with completion aiming for autumn 2024.

AGED 16-25? NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING?

Would you like to gain new skills, a qualification and meet new people in a friendly and supportive environment?

The Prince's Trust Team Programme is a 12-week personal development programme, delivered by the team at Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service to help young people get into work.

When you join you will get the chance to take on challenges, work on a project, do some work experience and take part in an action-packed residential trip.

Louise Spiers, 23, has recently completed the course and highly recommends it. She said: "The course has helped me gain confidence and I've developed both personally and professionally.

"I was given continual support, during and after the course. I was also given volunteering opportunities which has helped me to secure an apprenticeship with the county council."



Above: Assistant Chief Fire Officer Stephen Kennedy presenting a certificate to Louise Spiers on completion of the Prince's Trust Team Programme.

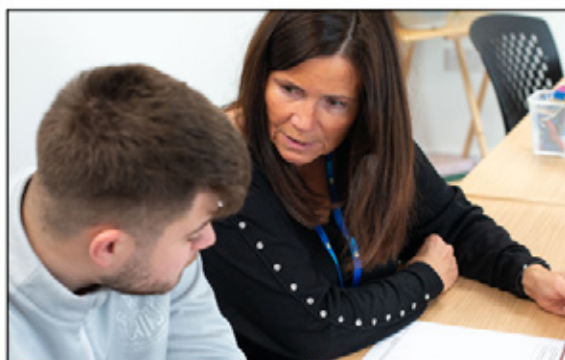


If you know someone who would benefit from taking part in the Prince's Trust Programme, visit Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service's website (www.northumberlandfireandrescue.gov.uk) and apply. The next course will begin in September, so keep an eye out on their Facebook page (@NlandFRS) for updates!



Our partners have a wealth of experience to support you in overcoming challenges you may face such as:

- Debt
- Disabilities
- Addiction
- Self-doubt
- Mental and physical health concerns
- Literacy or numeracy challenges
- Previous criminal records



FREE support will be provided through activities such as job application advice, skills courses, help with budgeting, and health and wellbeing services

We can provide coaching, guidance and mentoring.

Email: admin@thrivingtogethernorthumberland.org.uk
Website: www.solidfoundationsnorthumberland.co.uk
Phone: 01670 618020



Learn. Discover. Grow.



Full-time study programmes and apprenticeships for school leavers, starting in September:

- »»»» Building Services & Construction
- »»»» Childcare & Education
- »»»» Engineering - Renewables
- »»»» Engineering - Welding & Fabrication
- »»»» Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), including Supported Internships



Delivering on behalf of
 Northumberland
 County Council

ENERGY CENTRAL CAMPUS IGNITES THE SPARK FOR FUTURE ENGINEERS

The new Energy Central Learning Hub in the Port of Blyth is set to welcome its first students when it opens its doors in September.

Northumberland Skills, the council's post-16 education provider, will house its latest campus at the state-of-the-art new training facility. Enrolment is currently open for its advanced manufacturing and

renewable energy courses to train the next generation of power engineers, maintenance experts and technicians.

The Energy Central Learning Hub is part of Energy Central Campus, which is a strategic partnership between Northumberland County Council, Port of Blyth, and Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Catapult.



Find out more: www.northumberlandskills.co.uk

MULTI-BILLION INVESTMENT SET FOR SOUTH EAST OF COUNTY

Up to £10 billion of investment is coming into the county after the council secured a deal with Blackstone, one of UK's largest investors, on land at Cambois, to develop a cutting-edge data centre campus.

The project will deliver long-term jobs to operate the centres, plus 1,200 long-term construction jobs over up to seven years of construction.

It will also enable the council to establish a £110 million fund which will drive long-term investment, including in growth and jobs schemes

in the economic corridor along the Northumberland Line – which will open later this year.

As one of the world's leading investors, Blackstone is already at the forefront of data centre development. In 2021, it acquired QTS, which is the fastest growing data centre platform in the

world, with 34 operational facilities in Europe and the United States.

New technologies, used increasingly in everyday life and work, require data centres and the significance of the investment in Northumberland puts the county at the forefront of this new and critical area of technology.



SWAP TO STOP SMOKING FOR FREE

If you are over 18, live in Northumberland and smoke - you can now take advantage of a **FREE** scheme to help you to swap cigarettes for vapes.

After signing up to a 12 week programme of support, free vape starter kits will be offered to smokers to help them kick the costly and dangerous habit.

Swap to Stop is part of a national programme to help people to quit. Although it is not risk free, vaping is a fraction of the risk of smoking.

For more information call **01670 813 135** or email **stopsmokingservice@northumberland.gov.uk**

FAMILY SUPPORT AND FUN DURING THE SUMMER

Families will continue to be supported with the cost of living over the summer holidays.

Parents or carers of the 9,000 children and young people who receive free school meals during term time are eligible to receive vouchers that can be used towards food, fuel and other essentials including school uniform. Those eligible will receive communications via their school.

The fully funded Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF) will also be running during the holidays.

Eligible children and young people will be able to fill their holidays with adventure as they make new friends, learn new skills and make lasting memories.

Those taking part will also receive a healthy meal as part of the council's

wider commitment to ensure those who receive free school meals in term time continue to do so.

- For more information regarding Northumberland Holiday Provision or to book a place visit northumberlandholidayprovision.co.uk
- If you think your child/ren are eligible for Free School Meals but haven't yet applied, please visit nland.cc/FSM
- A variety of Summer Holiday Activity and Sports Camps operate across our Northumberland Schools Partnerships. If you would like to know more about what is available in your location, contact your school.



ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR CHILDCARE SUPPORT?

Eligible working parents in Northumberland can now apply for 15 hours childcare for a child aged nine months old and over.

It's the latest stage in the rollout of the Government's expansion to childcare support for families.

From September 2025, this will be extended further so eligible working parents with children between nine months up to school age can access 30 hours childcare.

Childcare is also expanding for primary-school age children. From September, parents can expect to see an expansion in the availability of childcare in their local area before and after school, that runs from 8am until 6pm or later, also known as 'wraparound childcare'.



Help for Households

Looking for support with childcare costs?

Get help that fits your family

Find out more
childcarechoices.gov.uk

Childcare
Choices



FUND TO HELP WITH THE COST OF LIVING

If you are struggling financially – you may be able to get help through the Household Support Fund.

This is a government fund to support households in need, particularly those who may not qualify for other types of government support and those with a disability or with young children.

It is available until 30 September 2024 so if you feel you need some extra help get in touch quickly to see if you qualify.

The fund can support with:

- **Food costs**
- **Energy and water** - heating, cooking, lighting and water bills
- **Essentials** including warm clothing, blankets, hygiene products and the purchase or repair of equipment such as white goods, heating boilers etc
- **Wider essentials** including other bills, clothing, and essential transport related costs
- **Housing costs** to support some elements of housing costs where existing housing support schemes do not meet the need

How to apply for the fund:

Contact Northumberland Communities Together phone: **01670 620 015**

Email **NCT@northumberland.gov.uk** 9am-6pm (Mon-Fri)

Your application will be dealt with by one of our team who may need to contact you for further information to support your application.

Visit our website for more information:
www.northumberland.gov.uk/Support



COPING WITH LONELINESS

Feeling lonely is completely normal. Many of us can feel lonely while checking our social media, on our own or with others.

Sometimes admitting we feel lonely can be hard but it's important to remember that many others experience similar feelings of loneliness too, and that this feeling can pass.

If you are feeling lonely, or know someone else who is, there are plenty of simple, affordable actions you can take, such as:

- 1 **Going for a walk** with someone; exercising can lift your mood and help take your mind off things – you could also try cycling or running.
- 2 **Inviting someone out for a coffee and a chat.** By reaching out you can both feel the benefits of social connection.
- 3 **Calling in to one of our community hubs** which offer an opportunity to grab a coffee, take part in activities or meet others in a welcoming environment. For more information go to **nland.cc/hubs**
- 4 **Learning with others** - you could join an online class for arts and crafts, cookery, DIY or gardening.
- 5 **Join a society or local community group** to meet like-minded people – online or in person.
- 6 **Volunteering** can make a difference to your own life and those around you. Reach out to a local charity or visit **nland.cc/volunteer** for local volunteering opportunities.

Search 'Loneliness Every Mind Matters' online for more support and advice.

PLEASE DO YOUR BIT TO KEEP OUR COUNTY BEAUTIFUL

Help us to keep Northumberland beautiful and dispose of your waste correctly.



If you have items that don't fit in the weekly wheelie bin collection, they should be taken to your nearest Household Waste Recovery Centre or speak to us about arranging a bulky waste collection.

Here's everything you need to know!

Dispose of waste for free

We've 12 Household Waste Recovery Centres (Tips) across Northumberland where you can dispose of virtually all household waste for FREE. Charges only apply to some household DIY waste materials.

If you have a van, pickup truck or trailer

If you want to deliver waste to a HWRC with a larger vehicle you may need a permit. These are available online for FREE. Only certain types of commercial/larger

vehicles are permitted on our sites, please check our website for details.

Your household is allowed up to 12 permits per year. To book a permit go to: nland.cc/tip

DIY waste disposal

If you are taking DIY waste to one of our HWRC sites, you will need a separate permit to dispose of this.

You can dispose of 100 litres of DIY waste for free – after that there are charges.

Commercial or trade waste

Commercial or trade waste of any sort cannot be taken to the Household Waste Recovery Centre. For help and advice on how to dispose of your business waste correctly please email: centralwasteteam@northumberland.gov.uk

Bulky Waste Collection Service

We run a bulky waste collection service for any waste type that is too large to be disposed of via our regular waste collections. This can be anything from garden furniture, fridges, and carpets.

We determine collection prices by how many items you have, and whether or not you are eligible for a concessionary discount.

Watch out for rogue waste carriers

Many of the culprits we've caught and prosecuted for fly tipping are rogue waste carriers who charge

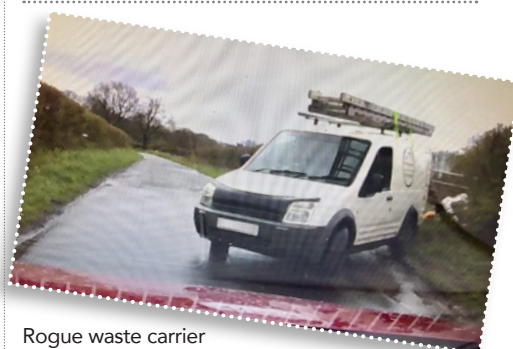
residents to collect their bulky household waste, but then dump it unlawfully.

If you are using an independent waste carrier you should always ask to see the operator's waste carrier licence, issued by the Environment Agency.

This is really important because, if you make the mistake of employing an unlicensed waste carrier and they dump your waste illegally - you could also be fined along with them.

Be wary of:

- Businesses that only operate through social media.
- Businesses that do not have a landline phone number or business address.
- Anyone coming to your door offering to remove rubbish on the cheap.



Rogue waste carrier caught fly-tipping on camera.

How to check a waste carrier is reputable

Visit the Environment Agency's waste carrier register nland.cc/waste and enter the business name or, search for licensed waste operators near you on the public registers pages of the website.



For your nearest Household Waste Recovery Centre: nland.cc/tip
For information on bulky waste collections: nland.cc/bulky
For information about commercial waste: nland.cc/commercial

BE WILDFIRE AWARE!

Summer is here and with it comes the increased risk of wildfires. We've teamed up with Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service to help you reduce the risk of an accidental wildfire.



1 Pack a picnic, not a BBQ

Disposable BBQs are one of the biggest causes of wildfires. Opt for a picnic on your next day out instead. It's safer, and you won't have to worry about whether or not your food is fully cooked!



2 Avoid campfires

The area can stay hot long after you've left, and cause a fire you don't know about. Bring an extra layer to stay warm instead.



3 Take your litter home

Litter can actually be a fire hazard! Taking your litter home is not only good for nature, but it could prevent wildfire.

THINK WATER SAFETY!

Parents and carers – please have this conversation with your children.

Tragically over recent years there have been deaths in Northumberland due to children drowning in water.

Open water can be very dangerous

- The water may look calm on the surface, but there can be strong undercurrents that could pull even a strong swimmer under the water.
- The water may feel warm on the surface, but just a few feet below it can be icy cold. The cold water can cause shock or affect the stamina of even the strongest of swimmers.

Safety tips

- Never swim alone or after drinking alcohol.
- Choose your exit point before you enter water.
- Never swim in unsupervised areas like quarries, canals or ponds.
- Always keep within your depth.
- Don't dive in, it could be shallower than you think or there may be hidden underwater dangers.
- Don't swim near weirs, once caught in the undertow, you have little chance of escape.

What to do if someone falls into deep water

- Call 999 to inform Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service. If you don't have a phone shout for help - but do not enter the water.
- Encourage the person in the water to try and FLOAT on their back - if there is something that will float nearby, throw it to them.
- Never enter the water to try and save someone, this usually ends up adding to the problem.



Five steps to learn to float

- 1 Lie back, tilt your head back with ears submerged and keep your airways clear, push your stomach up and extend your limbs moving hands and feet to help you float.
- 2 Relax and try to breathe normally.
- 3 Move your hands to help you stay afloat.
- 4 It's OK if your legs sink, we all float differently.
- 5 Spread your arms and legs to improve stability.

Once your breathing is controlled, call out for help and if possible, try making your way towards safety.

Remember it. Share it.

Make sure your loved ones know what to do if they get into difficulty. Help them learn how to float.

More information on water safety is available: nland.cc/watersafety



OUR NEW CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

We have recently updated our Climate Change Action Plan for 2024 to 2026 with even more ambitious goals.

WHAT'S NEW...

Further greenhouse gas reduction

We're now looking beyond carbon dioxide reduction and are exploring ways to also reduce methane and nitrous oxide, which contribute significantly to our county's greenhouse gas emissions.

Protecting our environment

To help our residents have cleaner and healthier communities, we're empowering our front-line services to effectively deal with littering and fly tipping,

improve our green spaces and water quality and help encourage more active and sustainable transport.

Adapting to climate change

Preparing for the impacts of climate change is a new addition to the plan which looks at how we incorporate measures against flooding, coastal erosion, wildfires, energy security threats, infectious diseases and extreme weather events.

We hope that you will join us in our mission to make Northumberland a cleaner and greener place for generations to come.

10 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- 1 Cycle, walk or scoot instead of using your car
- 2 Wash your clothes at 30 degrees Celsius
- 3 Use less packaging and recycle as much as possible. Find out more about recycling in Northumberland: nland.cc/environment
- 4 Shop local
- 5 Consider shopping second hand
- 6 Switch off your TV and devices instead of putting on standby
- 7 Fill the kettle with the amount of water you need
- 8 Compost your food waste
- 9 Switch to a green energy provider
- 10 Plant a tree for free. We'll be starting our free tree scheme again soon. Find out more nland.cc/freetrees

NORTHUMBERLAND
2030
CARBON
NEUTRAL

PLEA TO STOP BALLOON RELEASES

While balloon or lantern releases can be carried out with good intent, they can also have a devastating impact on wildlife and the environment.

We are encouraging people to use other less damaging ways to pay tribute to a loved one or mark an occasion.

Alternatively, you could:

- Plant a tree or flower bed
- Use jam jar tea-lights for a vigil
- Organise a memorial walk for a chosen charity.

There are plenty of other ideas if you look online.



BE AWARE OF SCAMS!

You should not provide personal information to any company that calls you or knocks at your door. Northumberland County Council and delivery partners will never ask you for any money.

- Accept there is a scam for everything and everyone. Scammers can be very friendly and convincing and can contact you at the door, by phone, post or online.
- NEVER EVER provide bank details or share your pin number or personal details by email or over the phone unless you are certain who you are giving them to.
- Never click on a link from an unknown email source as this can give the scammers access to your computer and personal details.
- If you receive a call or message claiming your account has been hacked, a fraudulent transaction

has occurred or a loan has been approved, it's most likely a scam. Only contact your bank using the number you know is correct.

- Never be rushed into making a quick decision on deals. Seek independent advice. Ask for the caller's details then check their credentials e.g. Trustpilot.
- Always log on to a website directly rather than clicking on links in an email or Facebook.
- Trust your instincts. If you're reading or listening to a message and something doesn't feel right, trust your gut and hang up or delete it.



WE CAN HELP MAKE YOUR HOME MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT

If your home does not have a mains gas connection, or you only have a gas cooker and another energy source for heating, you may be eligible to apply for energy-saving improvements to your home. This can help save you money on energy bills, improve the comfort of your home and reduce carbon emissions.

WHAT IS INCLUDED

Surveys and plans will be carried out on your home to assess which energy saving measures are most suitable.

This could include:

- Wall insulation (internal or external)
- Floor insulation
- Loft insulation
- Low carbon heat systems, such as air source heat pumps
- Solar panels
- Heating controls

Successful applicants will have an assessment completed for their property. All recommendations will be tailored to individual homes so that the most appropriate energy saving measures are installed.

Households can check their eligibility and apply at nland.cc/warmerhomes or call our Customer Services Team on 0345 600 6400 for more information.



NEW ENERGY ADVICE SERVICE

Home Energy Advice North East is a new free service providing:

- Expert impartial advice
- Links to local grants and installers
- Help to create home energy action plans

Phone consultations and home visits are being offered to guide residents through making energy-saving improvements like insulation or heating system updates.

For more details, visit: www.EnergyAdviceNorthEast.co.uk or call 0808 175 9345.



NEW FAMILY HUB APP LAUNCHES TO SUPPORT PARENTS

The Family Hub Northumberland app features top tips and ideas for fun everyday activities, such as songs to sing and games to play, that can support children's early learning and development, preparing them to be ready for school.

Developed together with our Early Years team, parents

and carers, it also gives easy access to the full offer of Family Hub support – including links to the popular what's on activity guides, DadPad and free online parenting and relationship advice.

Parents can add the name and age of their child and receive tailored advice and support. They can also find and register

with their nearest family hub so they can keep up to date with the latest services available.

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

Check out the latest what's on guides to find out what's happening near you.



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



YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE THEIR SAY

Thousands of pupils from across Northumberland went to the polls to select their new Youth Cabinet and Youth Parliament members.

Over 7,000 11-18 year olds from middle, high and secondary schools voted in this year's annual Youth Elections.

Key issues on the agenda included the climate emergency, mental health, inclusivity, the cost-of-living

and jobs for the future.

The new Northumberland Student Inclusion Council (SIC.) also aims to champion the voice of children and young people with SEND.

The new SIC. members (pictured) are passionate about making a difference and will work alongside the council's Education and SEND teams to play an active role in shaping the future of education and council services.



INVESTMENT IN SCHOOLS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

A groundbreaking ceremony took place to kickstart construction of the new Astley Community High School and Whytrig Middle School.

The "super-school" is part of the council's major investment in school facilities across the county and aims to transform education for young people for generations to come.

The new Gilbert Ward Academy in Blyth has welcomed its first pupils. The school, part of Prosper Learning Trust, aims to provide exceptional education for pupils with social, emotional, and mental health needs.

Projects are also underway to refurbish and rebuild schools in the Coquet 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.



Pupils at Grange View C of E First School in Widdrington buried a time capsule ahead of the arrival of their new classrooms.



Adopt North East

Adoption is life-changing.

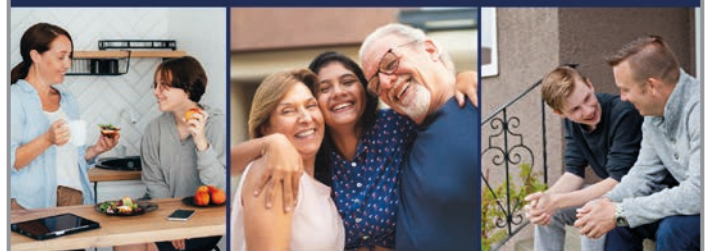
At Adopt North East, we have **30** children waiting for their forever home today.

Start your adoption journey right now and we'll be with you every step of the way.



www.adoptnortheast.org.uk

Do you have a room to spare and time to care?



Supported Lodgings Hosts

Could you guide a young person aged 16+ on their journey to independence and help them develop the skills they need for the future?

You will receive **full training** and a **weekly allowance** in addition to room rent.

Get in touch to find out more



 Northumberland
County Council

nland.cc/SupportedLodgings

NORTHUMBERLAND SCHOOLS RATED GOOD OR OUTSTANDING

The number of schools rated Good or Outstanding in the county is currently 92.6% - higher than the national average.

The vast majority of families in Northumberland have once again gained their top choice of first or primary school for September 2024.

First preference of place went to 97.71% of those who applied on time.

We look forward to welcoming the children to their new schools in September to start this exciting milestone in their education journey.



Above: Bothal Primary School celebrated after it was rated Outstanding across the board by Ofsted

NEW WEBSITE FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND

We've launched a new website to improve our support for parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

A one-stop-shop of information and advice, the SEND Local Offer aims to make it easier for families to find the information they need so that children and young people ages 0-25 can get the most out of life.

The Local Offer brings together services across education, health and social care. It also includes information on leisure activities and support to help young people and their family or carers plan for the future and prepare for adulthood.

Find out more visit:
www.northumberlandsend.co.uk



Above: Children's author James Campbell met children taking part in last year's Summer Reading Challenge during his Regional Libraries tour. The author coming this year is Josh Lacey.

SIGN UP FOR SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

If you're looking for a fun, free way to keep your children occupied during the holidays, while helping them to improve their enjoyment and confidence in reading, then why not sign them up to our Summer Reading Challenge in libraries across Northumberland.

This year's Challenge is called Marvellous Makers and it's all about creativity! From dance to drawing, junk modelling to music, there's something for everyone.

The children are encouraged to read six or more books unlocking rewards along the way.

There is also a mini reading

challenge for children under four years old.

SIGN UP FOR FREE at your local library to receive a colourful collector pack to keep track of their reading.

For further details and information log on to www.mylibrary.co.uk

There will be a variety of events in Northumberland libraries to support the reading challenge that can be booked via nland.cc/events

Last year over 2,400 children took part and over 46,000 children's books and 3,800 digital books were borrowed over the period of the Challenge.



Above: Children receive their certificates and medals at Blyth Library for completing last year's Summer Reading Challenge. They were presented by Heart of Blyth Co-ordinator Adeline Keogh.

DISCOVER WALKING AND WELLBEING PODCASTS

We've created a series of podcasts to help you slow down and take your time to notice the world around you while you are out walking.

In each episode, Amanda from Cygnus Mental Health will take you through meditation which includes bringing awareness to your breathing and walking, something we do every day but often don't think about. We hope the themes remind you of the beautiful county we live in and bring a sense of peace to your day.

Remember to walk safely, play your podcasts at a level where you can still hear and be aware of your surroundings.

You can access the podcasts for free at: nland.cc/podcast



FREE SUMMER WALKS TO STEP UP YOUR HEALTH

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

Physical activity is a great way to burn calories and has shown to increase endorphins which are great for our wellbeing.

The walks are tailored to the group's requirements and abilities and are a great way to keep fit and healthy. They are very social too!

All you need to do is turn up wearing sensible footwear and appropriate outdoor clothing and bring a drink if it is hot. We have safe walking routes across the county that will get you on your way to a healthier lifestyle.

If you are already an active walker, we also have longer walks available.

To find out more about a walk near you, please contact the Health Trainer Service, email HealthTrainers@northumberland.gov.uk or call **01670 623 840**

Our partner, Places for Leisure, also offer free guided walks across the county. To find out more go to nland.cc/walking or call **01670 620 200**

DO YOU RUN A WALKING GROUP IN NORTHUMBERLAND?

We'd love you to let us know so we can map them out and spread the word. Please email us at: gearchange@northumberland.gov.uk

FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN CHANGE GEAR

The Big Northumberland Gear Change is a local campaign to encourage us all to slow down and adopt more sustainable ways of moving around the county by walking, cycling and using public transport more often.

Reducing our reliance on cars is one of the things we can all do to help reduce carbon emissions into the atmosphere.

With a third of all trips made in the county less than 5km, there is plenty of potential for us all to ditch our cars, sometimes, in favour of healthier, greener and happier ways of getting around.

Find out how you can play your part and change gear by going to northumberlandgearchange.co.uk





DOWNLOAD OUR FREE WALK BOOKLET – WITH A DIFFERENCE

Our **FREE** walking booklet contains ideas for creative walks designed to inspire you to get out and explore your local area and discover wonderful things within walking distance of your home.

From taking a walk down memory lane by re-discovering a route you walked in your childhood, to mindful walking and even chalk walking, these activities are suitable for all ages and levels of mobility.

And, by leaving the car behind, you'll be helping the environment, your wallet and your health.



Put a spring in your step this summer and download the walking booklet at:
northumberlandgearchange.co.uk

PARKS PRIDE OF PLACE IN THE COUNTY'S CROWN JEWELS

For a county renowned for its stunning coastline and rolling hills, our parks and green spaces are among the jewels in our crown.

They provide ideal spots for a family day out, a chance to improve fitness and wellbeing or just spaces for quiet reflection.

The country parks, at Plessey Woods, Druridge Bay and Bolam Lake, vary greatly in their size and character. Open throughout the year, they include open coast, valley woodlands, lakes and grassland.

Each site has its own unique character, catering for the needs of local communities, as well as drawing visitors from further afield.

And it's not just our three country parks we're so proud of. In recent years the council has spent millions on a range of improvements on its local parks and green spaces, while Queen Elizabeth II memorial projects are being completed up and down the county.

These projects include new paths and benches, community orchards, tree planting, access improvements and refreshed play equipment.

All the work forms part of the council's push to place a greater emphasis on improving the environment for everyone over the coming years.

From dealing with littering to creating more green spaces and woodlands, the council is working hard to ensure the county's stunning natural resources are protected and enhanced, now and in the future.





BOLAM LAKE COUNTRY PARK

Bolam Lake Country Park lies about nine miles west of Morpeth and is signposted off the A696 from Belsay.

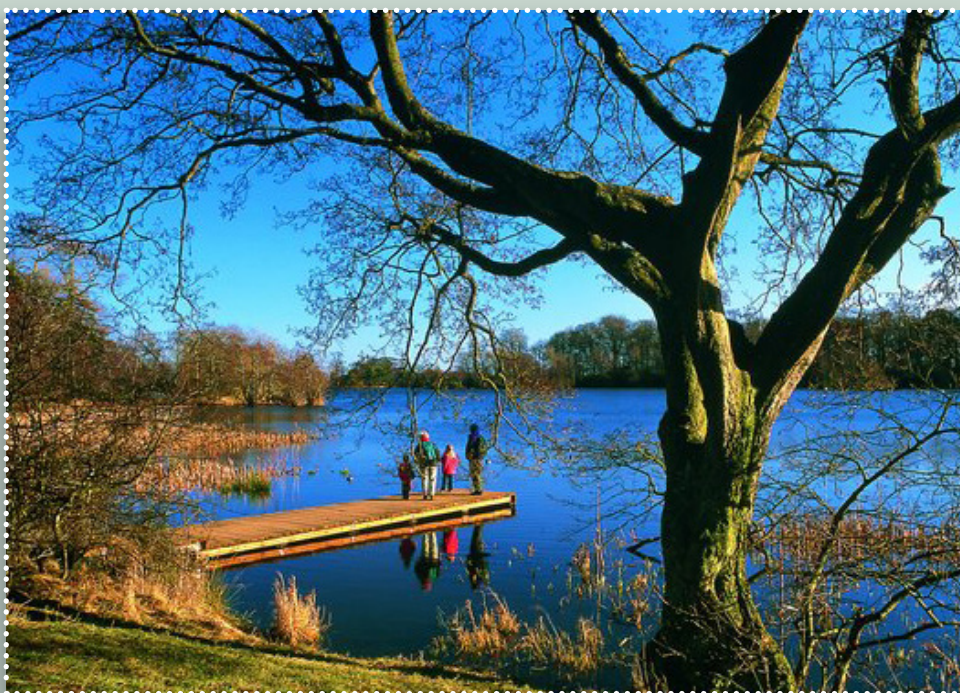
There are a variety of woodland and lake view walks throughout the park, including a fully accessible path around the lakeshore.

The park provides the perfect environment for wildlife such as roe deer, red squirrels, and nuthatches. Bolam Lake is also home to swans and other waterfowl.

DRURIDGE BAY COUNTRY PARK

Druridge Bay Country Park is a large park with a lake, woodland, visitor centre and beach just off the A1068, three miles south of Amble.

The park comprises a large freshwater lake, woodland, grassland and meadows. The park also contains three miles of beautiful beaches and sand dunes.



A network of paths allows you to explore the whole park and discover the wildlife and landscapes of Druridge Bay. A visitor centre, cafe, toilets, play area, and car park are all available for you to make the most of your visit to the country park.

PLESSEY WOODS COUNTRY PARK

Plessey Woods Country Park is located near Hartford Bridge, off the A192, mid-way between Bedlington and Cramlington and about five miles south of Morpeth.

The park offers 100 acres of woodland, meadow and riverside to explore. The woodland is home to many birds, such as the great spotted woodpecker, nuthatch and tree creeper, as well as

animals including the red squirrel, roe deer and fox. The banks of the River Blyth are also an important habitat for wildlife, such as kingfishers, dippers and otters.

A visitor centre and cafe, toilets, children's play area and parking are all available for visitors. It's a great location for a family day out to walk, play, explore, and picnic.

Parking charges

- First hour - Free
- Up to two hours - £2
- Over two hours - £4
- An annual permit is also available for regular visitors at a cost of £55 per household

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



Druridge Bay Country Park



Plessey Woods Country Park

PLAYZONE WORK ABOUT TO START ON SITE

Work is due to start soon on the first of Northumberland's new outdoor PlayZones.

They'll provide a safe recreational space which can be used for free and will be open throughout the year for activities such as football, netball, basketball and fitness.

They'll be located in Alnwick, West Wylam, Newbiggin and Amble on existing but run down outdoor multi-use games areas.

We hope they'll help more people of all ages to become active in their community and reap the mental and physical health benefits that exercise brings.



- Alnwick's PlayZone will be situated at Alnwick Community Centre.
- West Wylam's PlayZone will be situated at Eastwoods Park.
- Newbiggin's PlayZone will be situated at the existing Newbiggin Sports and Community Hub.
- Amble's PlayZone will be situated at Amble Welfare.

The PlayZone scheme is a partnership between Northumberland County Council and the Football Foundation. There are 16 potential sites in

Northumberland with these four being the first for construction. Northumberland County Council has committed £300,000 towards the whole programme with 75% coming from Sport England via the Football Foundation.

Future potential PlayZones applications are being progressed in Ashington, Haltwhistle, Hexham East End, Berwick, Cramlington, East Bedlington, Blyth, Lynemouth, Cleasewell Hill Park, West Lea, Astley and Wooler, and will progress to final stage if all funding conditions can be met.

For more information visit: footballfoundation.org.uk/playzones-programme

INCLUSIVE SUMMER ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

Our Ability2Play scheme for young people and adults with special educational needs and physical disabilities will be running again this summer in south east Northumberland.

There will be a fantastic Stay All Day option where parents can drop their children off and leave them with fully qualified staff for an action-packed day of activity in a fun and safe environment. Activities include bowling, cricket, clip n climb, outdoor adventure camps and much more!

Ability2Play also has a full programme of term time activities.

To take part or find out more please email: Ability2Play@northumberland.gov.uk or visit Facebook @Ability2Play

IMPROVING FOOTBALL PITCHES ACROSS NORTHUMBERLAND

Twenty-three football sites across Northumberland are benefiting from Football Foundation funding to improve the quality of their pitches.

Over £450,000 of grant funding has come into the county and is being used to help enhance or sustain the quality of their grass pitches.

Clubs who have completed a pitch inspection and need improvement have then been provided a bespoke maintenance programme for their site and received funding to carry out the work.

Many grassroots football clubs tell us that poor grass pitches are their biggest issue with some becoming waterlogged and unplayable, meaning matches are postponed.

We've been working closely with the Football Foundation, Northumberland



Above: Ellington Juniors Football Club

FA and local clubs to ensure Northumberland receives the maximum amount of funding and that it is directed to the appropriate sites.

The investment into Northumberland will help provide good quality pitches for our local teams to play and spectators to enjoy.

Welcome to Places Leisure

We are passionate about helping you stay physically active and emotionally engaged in fitness, wellbeing and sport. We look forward to welcoming you to our Northumberland centres and all our other sites nationwide!



**Swimming &
lessons**



**Gym & group
exercise classes**



**Children's
activities**

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

 **Northumberland
County Council**

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

COULD YOU HELP US TO HELP YOU?

We'd love your views on how we can improve council services for everyone in Northumberland. We're looking for more residents to join our People's Panel.

WHAT'S INVOLVED?

Once you've signed up, you might be asked to:

- Try out new online transactions
- Answer questions by email
- Talk to our researchers about how you have interacted with our services in the past
- Attend workshops / focus groups to discuss a particular topic.

If you meet a researcher in person, you may get a voucher to say thank you for your time. You can say if you'd prefer to meet researchers in person or do online research when you sign up.

READY TO JOIN?

If you're over 18, live in Northumberland and want to find out more or get involved go to: nland.cc/people

Join Our People's Panel

Influence local decisions that affect you



 Northumberland
County Council



WORK PROGRESSING WELL ON BERWICK OLD BRIDGE

Work is progressing well restoring Berwick's oldest bridge – ahead of its 400th anniversary later this summer.

Berwick Old Bridge is a Scheduled and Grade 1 structure and is currently closed to vehicles so repairs can be carried out. Skilled stone masons are in full swing working on the spans.

As part of the conditions of the scheme getting the go-ahead, samples of replacement stone and examples of the mortar pointing have been provided to Historic England so they can see that the materials are of

the required standard.

The work has been programmed in phases to ensure that the bridge will be free of scaffolding for the 400th anniversary celebration weekend of August 3rd and 4th, and teams aim to be completed on site by late autumn this year.

The council is grateful for the understanding of local residents while the structure is closed to traffic and once complete, the bridge will be in a fantastic condition for future generations.

LIBRARY SERVICE IS A BEST SELLER



Our much-loved library service marks its 100th anniversary this year and is marching into its second century stronger than ever. It is **FREE** to join your local library which gives you access to:

- Thousands of books
- Free wi-fi and access to computers
- Lots of groups and hundreds of events for adults and children
- A welcoming space to meet, read and study

It's easy to join online or in person.

To find out more, head to your nearest library or to sign up online go to www.mylibrary.co.uk

ARE YOU HOUSEBOUND?

If you are housebound but would still like to use the library service – it can come to you! **Just call 01670 622 399**

PLAY THE NORTHUMBERLAND LOTTERY AND SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

The Northumberland Lottery is a weekly draw that benefits community groups across Northumberland.

It costs just £1 per ticket with prizes ranging from £250 - £25,000.

Pat Heard from Dogs First, a dog re-homing charity based in Cramlington said:

"Since we started, we have re-homed around 800 animals – mainly dogs.

"We are always fundraising so to have a regular income by people playing the Northumberland Lottery is just amazing for us and helps our rescue dogs to start a new life."

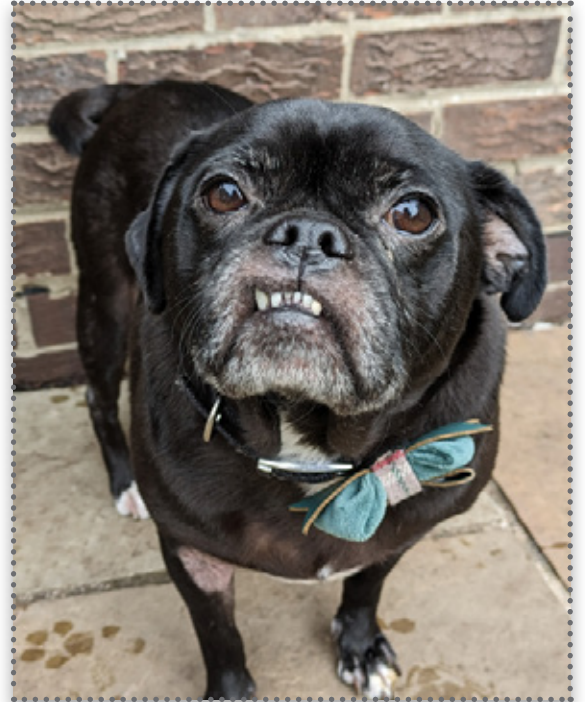
Led by the County Council, the Lottery is celebrating its third anniversary.

- More than 130 groups have signed up
- 275,200 tickets have been sold
- £28,600 has been paid out in cash prizes
- Proceeds go to local good causes including those chosen by the player

Are you part of a local not-for profit organisation?

Your organisation can sign up to the lottery and start raising funds. Just 20 ticket sales a week can raise £500 annually.

For more information go to www.northumberlandlottery.co.uk
Players must be 18+.



Above: Franklin is a rescue dog with Dogs First



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

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

Share your home and shape their future.



**Our children come from a variety of backgrounds,
needing 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 team – Foster With North East –
on 0800 917 7771 or find out more, including dates for local and online events at
www.FosterWithNorthEast.org.uk

