

# Northumberland news

SHOP LOCAL

AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE

VACCINE BOOSTER INFORMATION

A YEAR IN REVIEW





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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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WE MUST ALL CONTINUE TO BE SENSIBLE AND KEEP TAKING PRECAUTIONS TO STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID AND HELP PROTECT THE NHS



FOREWORD BY **GLEN SANDERSON**

## A MESSAGE FROM THE LEADER OF NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

In what seems like the blink of an eye we're reaching the end of another busy 12 months.

In a year where Covid has again impacted all our lives, we have begun to return to normal in many ways, which is a blessing for all of us.

This gradual opening up of our county meant an extremely busy summer for our tourism and hospitality industries as visitors from far and wide took advantage of everything our beautiful county has to offer.

It was so heartening to see people enjoying themselves in our towns, villages, countryside and coastline and I hope it will have acted as a springboard to our future recovery.

As a council we've also had a very busy year, with new schools opening, announcements around

huge investments and job creation, and good progress on our climate change commitments.

All this wouldn't have been possible without the efforts of every single member of council staff and I'd like to pay tribute to all their hard work over another difficult 12 months.

Of course, winter also means budget time for the council and I'd be grateful if you were able to take part in our consultation about our plans once they go live. There's more detail on this inside.

And now we're into the colder months we must all continue to be sensible and keep taking precautions to stop the spread of Covid and help protect the NHS this winter.

I hope you all have a safe, enjoyable and peaceful Christmas.

### STAY INFORMED

Please enter the link below to sign up for updates on important local news and changes to council services: [nland.uk/updates](https://nland.uk/updates)



# PROVIDING MORE AFFORDABLE HOMES REMAINS A TOP PRIORITY

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

Right: Local resident James receives the key to his new affordable home in Wooler from Councillors Colin Horncastle and Mark Mather.



The council is using a range of approaches to tackle the issue and help create more affordable housing in areas of identified housing need.

## HERE IS WHAT WE ARE DOING:

### Working with housing developers and housing associations through the planning process

- Over the last five years, around 1,300 affordable homes have been secured through the planning process. Of these, around 800 were affordable homes for rent, delivered by the council and partner housing associations. Around 180 were for shared ownership, and around 320 were available for purchase at a discount.

- In addition, there are about 120 affordable homes planned that the council will manage including sites in rural locations.

We are also working on a number of schemes with housing associations which will deliver around 530 affordable homes for rent, shared ownership and rent to buy.

- Once adopted the new Local Plan will seek to ensure that sufficient affordable homes continue to be provided to meet identified needs, with up to 30% of dwellings on most major sites being required to be affordable homes.

While a number of the sites allocated for housing in the Local Plan may support the delivery of affordable homes, additional land to meet

local needs can be identified in neighbourhood plans.

- A number of neighbourhood plans along the Northumberland coast already restrict the occupation of new dwellings, so they can only be occupied as a 'principal residence'.

A policy in the new Local Plan will extend this restriction to other parishes across the county where more than 20% of dwellings are not used as someone's main home.

### Helping local community schemes

- We're helping community led schemes to support the building of affordable housing. So far, we've provided £300k to support community organisations to develop their own housing and we have plans to help further schemes.

### Seeking grant funding

- We've secured an initial grant of over £630k through Homes England's Affordable Homes Programme to support affordable



housing developments and are in discussion with them to secure funding for future schemes.

- Officers are working hard to identify potential housing development sites, especially brownfield sites that

have had buildings on them before and we are applying for Brownfield Housing Funding to support this.

### Bringing long-term empty homes back into use

- Since 2015 we've helped the owners of over 750 properties to bring long term empty properties back to use as much needed housing, mainly in the private rented sector.

We've also brought 25 empty

properties back into use as affordable housing through Homes England funding.

### Modernising our own council housing

- We're carrying out an ongoing programme of improvements to existing council houses and spend around £10 million each year installing new kitchens, bathrooms, roofs, doors, windows, energy efficient heating systems and insulation.

Leader of Northumberland County Council, Glen Sanderson said:

"Too many people, but especially the young, are being forced to move away from the communities they grew up in because they have been priced out of the local housing market. This is a problem we are taking very seriously and working hard to redress.

"Our population is also dispersed over a large geographical area and they have varying housing needs. The new housing will reflect this with homes designed for families, the elderly, single people and our most vulnerable residents.

"Every single affordable home can change a family's life."







# NORTHUMBERLAND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER IS HERE FOR EVERYONE

Working alongside amazing volunteers, local organisations, community groups and partners, Northumberland Communities Together helps co-ordinate and connect residents with the support and activities they're interested in.

Our aim is to keep people safe and well and to support communities to be strong, resilient and to have fun together.

## CAN WE HELP?

If you need support, you're not alone, please pick up the



phone, we'll listen. Perhaps you're worried about staying warm, winter bills, feeling lonely or struggling with family pressures.

You may be concerned about a neighbour or someone you know. Or you may simply want to call and ask us a question about how we are connecting people in their communities.



## DO YOU WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

There's lots going on in our communities from holiday activities, coffee mornings, health walks, community theatre and learning workshops. You may want to tell us about where you live and what matters in your community. Do you have ideas that could connect people and bring them together? If you run a support or community group, or you'd like to volunteer we'd love to hear from you.



Email [nct@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:nct@northumberland.gov.uk) or call **01670 620 015** between 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** or Sign video: [northumberlandcc-cs.signvideo.net](http://northumberlandcc-cs.signvideo.net)

## POP ALONG TO CRAMLINGTON COMMUNITY HUB

If you live in or near Cramlington, why not pop along to the Community Building next door to Concordia Leisure Centre.

It's a new space where locals can enjoy a coffee with friends in the Learning Café, meet others, take part in activities, or visit the library.

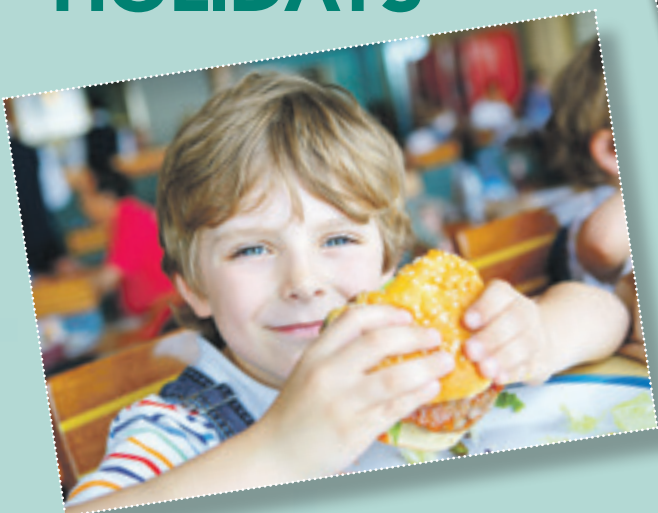
Officially opened in July, the hub offers a programme of events in partnership with the community.

It's a vibrant and welcoming space for people with wide ranging activities and workshops. This fantastic new community space is open to everyone, so come along, say hello and get involved.





# FAMILIES SUPPORTED DURING THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS



**Families will continue to be supported during the Christmas break thanks to funding made available to help with food, fuel or school uniforms.**

Parents or carers of children and young people who receive free school meals during term time are eligible to receive vouchers. These will be distributed electronically via their school, either through the local authority's Huggg scheme or their school's alternative voucher schemes.

Those who receive Huggg vouchers will be able to use them at local supermarkets.

Over 9,000 children and young people will benefit from the support and those eligible will have been communicated with via their school.

Families that are currently not eligible for the vouchers who would like to find out more about other support available to them and their children this Christmas or beyond should contact Northumberland Communities Together to find out more.



## FESTIVE HOLIDAY ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

We know the school holidays can sometimes be hard.

We're running activities for children, young people and families to meet friends, learn new skills, eat some delicious meals and make memories to cherish forever.

There will be some fantastic experiences on offer including visits to Northumberland Zoo, Alnwick Gardens, ice skating, clip and climb, swimming and movie days, all making for an action-packed holiday.

If you think your children might benefit from the holiday activities and you would like

to find out what is running in your area over the winter holidays, please contact the Northumberland Communities Together Response Hub on:

**01670 620 015** 9am-6pm,  
7 days a week or email  
**[nct@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:nct@northumberland.gov.uk)**  
to find out more.





## WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES THIS CHRISTMAS...

- Explore what is on your doorstep, you'll be surprised at what you find.
- Shop early so you have time to find out what is on offer locally and if they deliver.
- Ask friends and family for vouchers for Christmas for your favourite local shop, restaurant, bookshop or hotel.
- Support local businesses on social media. Share, Like and Follow their posts and recommend them to others.
- Instead of using an online giant retailer, look around and see if any local businesses also offer online shops and deliveries.
- Support your local farmer or farm shop when planning your Christmas meal.

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

## SHOP LOCAL THIS CHRISTMAS

Are you looking for something special this Christmas for your loved ones? Save on the fuel and hassle of driving into the giant retailers and shopping centres and Shop Local, Shop Northumberland this festive season.

With hundreds of independent retailers in Northumberland you'll be sure to find everything you need and more.

Or why not get in the Christmas spirit at one of the many Christmas markets and Farmers' markets held across the county selling everything from delicious homemade delights like cheese and jams to Northumberland-

inspired crafts and gifts.

Our Shop Local campaign has been highlighting some of the amazing businesses in Northumberland throughout the year from butchers to clothing brands and bakers to jewellers, as they need our support more than ever to ensure our high streets and market towns continue to prosper.

### 6 WAYS TO SUPPORT SMALL BUSINESSES

WRITE A POSITIVE REVIEW	£0.00
TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY	£0.00
FOLLOW THEM ON SOCIAL MEDIA	£0.00
ENGAGE WITH THEIR POSTS	£0.00
GIVE THEM A SHOUTOUT	£0.00
SIGN UP FOR THEIR NEWSLETTER	£0.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£0.00</b>



## JOIN THE FOLLOWING FACEBOOK GROUPS...

Search for "Northumberland, let's support" to join the Facebook group \*Northumberland, UK\*, Let's keep supporting local businesses!  
[www.facebook.com/FoodandDrinkNE](http://www.facebook.com/FoodandDrinkNE)





## AMBITIOUS NEW RAIL SCHEME GATHERS PACE

Progress is racing ahead on the county's newest rail service – The Northumberland Line which will connect the south-east of the county to central Newcastle.

Four new stations on the rail line have now been given the green light – at Ashington, Bedlington, Seaton Delaval and Northumberland Park. Two further stations are planned at Bebside and Newsham in Blyth and will be considered by planners in due course.

At the start of the year The Department of Transport announced £34m of funding to reintroduce a half-hourly rail passenger service. Over the summer Morgan Sindall was confirmed as the contractor to build the six new stations and has already started recruiting staff locally.

The project is set to transform the economy of the area, as well as providing much-improved transport links and opportunities for better education and jobs.

The reopening of the Northumberland Line will deliver 18 miles of upgraded track and six new stations. The whole scheme is expected to deliver economic benefits of up to £470m and is due to be open by winter 2023.

As the year draws to a close the project is currently engaged in an inquiry for the Transport and Works Act Order (TWAo), which is needed for authorising all new rail or tram schemes. The inquiry is expected to last four weeks.

[www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk)

## HAVE YOUR SAY ON OUR BUDGET PLANS

This winter we want you to have your say on our budget proposals for next year.

Each year the council must set a balanced budget, which sets out funding for our services to you as well as our plans for investing in communities across the county. The budget must also take account of new cost-pressures as well as making sure all our services are as efficient as possible.

This year, our budget proposals focus strongly on helping Northumberland recover socially and economically from the impact of Covid and supporting our most vulnerable residents. Delivering a green and sustainable future for the county is a key theme throughout our spending and investment plans.

From Friday, December 10 until January 21 next year, people can go to:  
[www.haveyoursay.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.haveyoursay.northumberland.gov.uk)  
and give their views on a wide range of issues.

Alongside your thoughts on our spending plans, we also want to hear your views on the impacts of Covid and what are the most important things the council can do to help recovery.

**Council Leader Glen Sanderson said: "The Budget is hugely important for us - we want to provide the best possible services we can within the finances we have."**

**"So that is why your voice is so important in this process. As part of the consultation we intend to have an online event where you can ask me questions around our services and the budget."**

The council's budget consultation runs for six weeks until January 21 2022 and is due to go before Full Council in February 2022.



# NORTHUMBERLAND VACCINE UPTAKE THE BEST IN ENGLAND

Northumberland has had the highest rate of uptake for both doses of the vaccine in England at 81.4% (12+ population). Uptake amongst those aged 16 to 24 has also been higher in Northumberland than anywhere else.

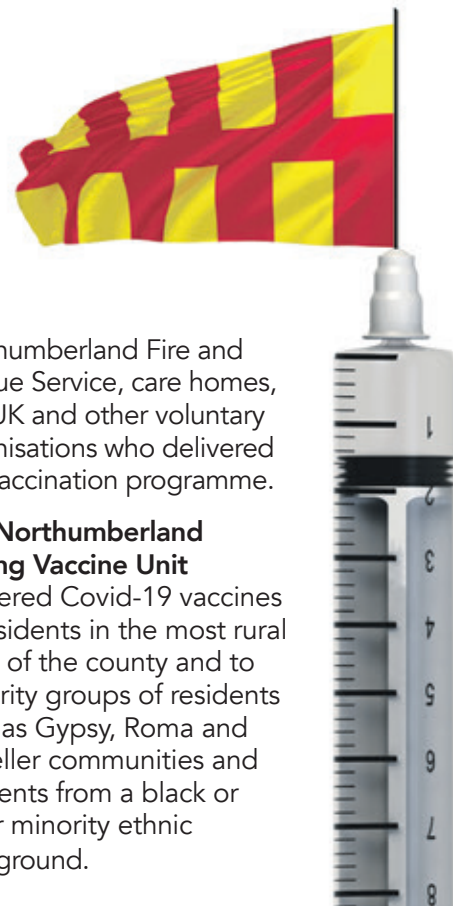
The vaccine rollout focused on helping all our residents to access information about, and opportunities for, vaccination easily and fairly across the county.

This was the approach:

- **Vaccination sites** – a network of over 20 vaccination sites were set up in local communities where the biggest impact could be made.
- **Clear and effective communication** from trusted community voices have played a crucial role in getting information to residents.
- **A great partnership approach** with staff and volunteers, from GPs, hospitals, the Local Authority,

Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service, care homes, AgeUK and other voluntary organisations who delivered the vaccination programme.

- **The Northumberland Roving Vaccine Unit** delivered Covid-19 vaccines to residents in the most rural parts of the county and to minority groups of residents such as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and residents from a black or other minority ethnic background.



## HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF FROM WINTER BUGS?



There are some simple things we can all keep doing that aren't going to interfere with your life but help to stop the spread of winter illnesses:

- Regular hand washing
- Adopting the 'catch it, bin it, kill it' approach to stopping the spread of germs
- Wearing a face covering in busy areas and on public transport
- Letting fresh air in
- Meeting outdoors when you can
- Having the Covid and flu vaccines if you are eligible
- If you feel unwell with respiratory symptoms, it's best to stay at home to avoid passing it on

There is lots of evidence that shows that taking these simple measures can reduce the number of deaths and infections caused by Covid and many other winter infections like flu.

### REMEMBER:

If you have a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste, it could be Covid-19 so book a PCR test as soon as possible.

## COVID-19 BOOSTERS

Boosters are being offered to all people over 18 who have had a second dose of a vaccine at least three months ago, to provide the best possible protection this winter.

A booster dose of the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine helps improve the protection you have from your first two doses of the vaccine.

### MOST PEOPLE CAN:

Book a vaccination appointment online for an appointment at a vaccination centre or pharmacy. Although walk-ins may also be available, booking an appointment is highly recommended.

Wait to be contacted by a local NHS service such as a GP surgery and book an appointment with them.

People who work for an NHS trust will usually get their booster dose through their employer.





## PROTECT AGAINST FLU

The flu vaccine is a safe and effective vaccine. It's offered every year on the NHS to help protect people at risk of getting seriously ill from flu.

This year's flu vaccination programme has been extended to include all secondary school children from Years 7 to 11 and will continue to be available to those aged 50 to 64 as it was last winter.

The best time to have the flu vaccine is in the autumn or early winter before flu starts spreading. But you can get the vaccine later.

You can find out if you are eligible on the NHS website [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk). If you are, your GP will contact you to arrange an appointment.

If you are eligible, you can have the NHS flu vaccine at:

- Your GP surgery
- A pharmacy offering the service
- Your midwifery service if you're pregnant
- A hospital appointment

If you've had Covid-19, it's safe to have the flu vaccine. It will still be effective at helping to prevent flu. Some people may be eligible for both the flu vaccination and a Covid-19 booster. If you are offered both vaccines, it's safe to have them at the same time.



Covid Support Officer, Riaz

## COULD YOU BE A COVID COMMUNITY CHAMPION?

Northumberland County Council has a team of Covid Support Officers to help people across the county, especially if they're isolated.

Riaz has been a Covid Support Officer in Cramlington and Seaton Delaval for the council for five months. In his role Riaz does all sorts of things, including visiting people in their homes, helping with food parcels, being an interpreter and supporting people to get tested.

"I became a Covid Officer to make a difference in my community and I really feel I have. One day I'll be checking in on people who have tested positive for Covid, offering them advice and support whilst they are isolating and another, I'll be helping out at one of the mobile testing units. I enjoy the diversity."

Riaz also supports Northumberland's Covid Community Champions, volunteers who play an important role in de-bunking myths and de-mystifying all things Covid. For Riaz, educating people is key to stopping the spread of Covid. He says: "I'm

looking forward to supporting more Covid Community Champions because reliable information plays a big part in this."

**Do you know anyone who would make a good Covid Community Champion volunteer?**

Champions are provided with accurate and timely Covid-related news and information, from trusted sources, every week to pass on within their own and local networks. They also get feedback on what people are asking about Covid, listening to communities so we can be sure the information we offer is relevant and useful for them and their networks.

Being a Covid Community Champion, supported by Riaz and others in the team, is a great way to help your community stay safe in the coming winter months.

Visit [www.northumberland.gov.uk/champions](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/champions) to find out more and sign up



# Active Northumberland CHRISTMAS VOUCHERS



Stuck for the perfect present?  
Pop in to one of our centres and  
purchase an Active Northumberland  
Christmas voucher! We have a range of  
fantastic experiences and products on  
offer including...



Fitness Memberships



Tranquillity Spa



Clip 'n Climb



Swimming



Any of our other activities!

For more information and t's and c's please visit:  
[www.activenorthumberland.org.uk](http://www.activenorthumberland.org.uk)





**HIVE CAFE  
VOUCHER**

**BUY 1  
GET 1  
FREE**

*Treat a friend!*

On all hot drinks in our  
HIVE cafes during  
December 2021

# MAMS ON THE MOVE<sup>®</sup>

Our Mams on the Move programme is especially designed to help support pregnant women and new mams become more active in a relaxed environment. We offer a range of sessions which are fun, sociable and are led by our pre and postnatal qualified instructors. Babies are welcome too meaning no childcare is required!



**GET IN TOUCH:**

 [www.activenorthumberland.org.uk/mamsonthemove](http://www.activenorthumberland.org.uk/mamsonthemove)

 [MOTM@activenorthumberland.org.uk](mailto:MOTM@activenorthumberland.org.uk)

 Find us @mamsonthemove

**active**  
Northumberland

# A YEAR IN BRIEF 2021

Some of the fantastic developments, projects and achievements within our county throughout the past year.

## JANUARY



The government confirmed £34m of funding to reinstate the Northumberland Line rail link between Northumberland and Newcastle. It will see six new stations being opened in the south east of the county.

## FEBRUARY



The council's budget focused on boosting the economy, including a three year £747m capital programme with investment in rail and transport links, town centres, school improvements and climate change schemes.

## MAY



The Northumberland Lottery celebrated its first anniversary this month having raised almost £40k for local good causes.

## JUNE



The council and Visit Northumberland launched a major new campaign - Love it Like it's Yours starring local businesses. It is aimed at welcoming people to the county while reminding them to act responsibly.

## SEPTEMBER



The doors opened on two new schools in Hexham. Over £37m has been invested in the project which includes a new Middle and High school, and sporting facilities.

## OCTOBER



Eleven Northumberland parks were given Green Flag Awards by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, which recognises them as some of the very best in the country.





## MARCH

A new Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal was signed which will bring up to £452million of investment to Northumberland and the wider region.



## APRIL

The council launched its Shop Local, Shop Northumberland campaign to help shine a light on independent businesses in the county and help boost the local economy.



## JULY

Planning permission was granted to Britishvolt, the electric vehicle battery manufacturer, for a gigaplant in Cambois, creating 3,000 highly skilled jobs and up to 5,000 more in the wider supply chain.



## AUGUST

Up to 15,000 free saplings are being offered to families, schools and other community groups to help plant more trees in the county and hit our ambitious climate change targets.



## NOVEMBER

Eleven new homes, bought by the council, became available for affordable rent on the new Kingsmead Development in Wooler and the first local residents moved in.



## DECEMBER

The first phase of Berwick's new sports and leisure centre is weeks away from completion. Residents will soon enjoy the swimming pools, spa and fitness suite, café, indoor bowling and a sensory room among other facilities.





# THE COUNTDOWN IS ON FOR NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK 2022

MONDAY  
FEBRUARY 7TH  
TO FRIDAY  
FEBRUARY 11TH  
2022

Northumberland County Council will be celebrating National Apprenticeship Week in a few short months with a whole host of virtual and in-person events and activities.

## THINKING OF WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE?

Our children's homes have lots of great opportunities whether you are looking for a job change or to kick start a career in children's social care. Apprenticeships, trainee and starter residential support worker roles are now available across our homes in Alnwick, Bedlington, Cramlington, and Morpeth.

For further details:  
[www.northeastjobs.org.uk](http://www.northeastjobs.org.uk)



National Apprenticeship Week is a chance for prospective apprentices to find out more about upcoming roles, hear from current apprentices and speak with the team.

The apprenticeship programme offers apprenticeships from entry to degree level and provides the opportunity to develop skills and experience while working towards achieving nationally recognised qualifications.

**Sign up to find out more about our upcoming roles and events:**  
[nland.uk/apprenticeshipform](http://nland.uk/apprenticeshipform)

The council has welcomed over 1,000 apprentices with its most recent cohort starting in September 2021. One of these apprentices is Niamh Macintyre who is a Level 3 Health and Wellbeing Apprentice.

She said: "I've really enjoyed my first few months, it's a lovely place to work and the support from managers has been amazing.

"I can't wait to take on more responsibility once I've found my feet, I've always been interested in healthy lifestyles and helping others."

Apprenticeships aren't just a way to earn a living whilst gaining a qualification, they are a great way to kick-start your career.

Recent apprentice Jonathan Hall went from apprentice to employed within four months after starting as a level 2 Highways Maintenance Skilled apprentice at the council.

He said: "Having an apprenticeship with Northumberland County Council has given me many opportunities and I've learnt many skills.

"I started my apprenticeship last autumn and thanks to a lot of hard work and commitment I was successful in getting a full-time position in February."



**APPRENTICESHIPS AREN'T JUST A WAY TO EARN A LIVING WHILST GAINING A QUALIFICATION, THEY ARE A GREAT WAY TO KICK-START YOUR CAREER.**



For further information on Northumberland County Council apprenticeships please email:  
[apprenticeshipenquiries@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:apprenticeshipenquiries@northumberland.gov.uk)



# FESTIVE FUN THROUGHOUT OUR NORTHUMBERLAND LIBRARIES

Join in the festive fun at Northumberland libraries this December with a host of family friendly and author events.

Children aged 5-10 are invited to join a very special Christmas event at Hexham Library on **Saturday, December 11**. Local author Sarah Fae will be telling the story of *Ghost the Christmas Stag*. Children will also be able to write their own letters to Father Christmas as well as taking part in some special festive activities.

If you're looking for the perfect book to

read over Christmas why not join authors Suzanne Snow; Kitty Wilson and Donna Ashcroft, as they talk about their brand-new titles for Christmas, at a virtual event on **Wednesday, December 8**.

On **Tuesday, December 14**, author Elaine Everest will be hosting a virtual event when she will be talking about her new book, *The Patchwork Girls*. One lucky person at the event will receive a signed paperback of the books as well as one of Elaine's homemade patchwork bookmarks.



FOR MORE INFO GO TO [WWW.EVENTBRITE.CO.UK](http://WWW.EVENTBRITE.CO.UK) AND SEARCH FOR NORTHUMBERLAND LIBRARIES

# EXCITING EVENTS PLANNED FOR 2022



## Next year looks set to be an exciting year for Northumberland!

2022 marks 1,900 years since the building of Hadrian's Wall. To mark the anniversary hundreds of community events and activities will be taking place, as part of the year-long celebration.

Starting on January 24th (Hadrian's birthday!) and running through until December the festival will celebrate the communities along the wall with a series of community-led events as well as high profile art commissions.

To get involved or to find out more: [www.hadrianswallcountry.co.uk/hadrianswall1900](http://www.hadrianswallcountry.co.uk/hadrianswall1900)

Next year will also see the much-anticipated return of the Lindisfarne Gospels to the region. The Gospels are said to be the most spectacular surviving manuscript from Anglo-Saxon England.

They will go on display in a special exhibition at the Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle, with a supporting exhibition at Newcastle City Library.

The Gospels are on loan from The British Library and will be on display from September 2022.

To find out more: [www.laingartgallery.org.uk/whats-on/lindisfarne-gospels](http://www.laingartgallery.org.uk/whats-on/lindisfarne-gospels)

# LIBRARIES BEGIN NEW CHAPTER

Northumberland Libraries has launched a new campaign to encourage members, new and old, to discover what the service has to offer.

The 'Turn the Page on a new chapter' initiative aims to promote the positive impact libraries have on local communities following

a huge resurgence during the worst of the pandemic.

Joining the library is **FREE** and your membership gives you access, not only, to thousands of books but also IT facilities, groups and events for both adults and children, a welcoming space to meet as well as access to digital libraries

where you can read eBooks, eMagazines and Newspapers.

Libraries are once again open and operating in a Covid-safe environment, offering fresh new stock and a programme of virtual events and events in libraries to further support our communities.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION VISIT [WWW.MYLIBRARY.CO.UK](http://WWW.MYLIBRARY.CO.UK)





# ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS INTRODUCED IN NORTHUMBERLAND

Work has begun to install 15 electric vehicle charging points in seven locations across Northumberland.

The introduction of the charging points is part of a pilot scheme to overcome barriers that are preventing residents in the county from using electric vehicles as a greener alternative to diesel or petrol.

The charging points are being installed at:

## **ALNWICK**

Two points on Clayport Street outside Westgate House.

## **ASHINGTON**

Two points on the corner of Poplar Street and First Avenue.

## **BELLINGHAM**

Two points on the High Street next to the public toilets.

## **BERWICK-UPON-TWEED**

Two points in Parade Car Park.

## **CORBRIDGE**

Three points on Main Street parking bays, on the left when entering the village.

## **FELTON**

Two points on Main Street outside the surgery.

## **HALTWHISTLE**

Two points on Westgate opposite the Co-op Funeral Care.

The council is working with electric vehicle charging solutions expert Connected Kerb to install the on-street charge points which are expected to be up and running by January 2022.

Road transport is the single biggest contributor to emissions in the county, accounting for 36% of CO<sub>2</sub>.



The Office of Zero Emission Vehicles has granted the council £115k worth of funding which will cover 75% of the project costs. The council will pay the remaining costs.







# WASTE LESS THIS CHRISTMAS

At Christmas, we generate 30% more waste than at other times of the year. Here are some top Christmas tips on how we can all recycle or compost more.

## USE RECYCLABLE PAPER

The council recycle all plain wrapping paper, but we cannot recycle any paper made with glitter or foil. Please remove all sticky tape from your used wrapping or opt for reusable alternatives such as fabric or gift bags. Don't forget to clean residual dirt from your cardboard boxes before placing them in your recycling bin.

will be turned into cards for next Christmas!

Please continue to place paper, magazines, card, well-rinsed food and drinks cans, plastic bottles and aerosols in your recycling bin. All other types of waste should be placed in your general waste bin.

## DON'T DUMP YOUR BATTERIES!

Unsafe battery disposal in general waste bins can cause fires. Recycle your batteries at your local Household Waste Recovery Centres (HWRC).

## SHOP SUSTAINABLY

Shop local this festival season and contribute to your local economy. If you want to be super sustainable why not buy second hand or give homemade gifts.

## RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS CARDS

Christmas cards can be recycled too! So long as they don't have glitter or any other 'bling' they

## USE YOUR LEFTOVERS

Visit [LoveFoodHateWaste.com](http://LoveFoodHateWaste.com) to make your leftovers go further. Or compost – don't forget to compost your fruit and vegetable peelings over the festive season.

## RECYCLE YOUR CHRISTMAS TREE AND DON'T FORGET TO PUT YOUR BIN OUT!

We recycle real Christmas trees at our HWRC's into good quality compost, soil conditioner and wood chippings to be reused in the county. We've even extended collections across the county this year. Also, bin collection dates will be a bit different from 24 December until 7 January.

### NORMAL COLLECTION DAY

- Mon 27 December 2021
- Tue 28 December 2021
- Wed 29 December 2021
- Thur 30 December 2021
- Mon 3 January 2022
- Tue 4 January 2022
- Wed 5 January 2022
- Thur 6 January 2022

### NEW COLLECTION DAY

- Fri 24 December 2021
- Wed 29 December 2021
- Thur 30 December 2021
- Fri 31 December 2021
- Tues 4 January 2022
- Wed 5 January 2022
- Thur 6 January 2022
- Fri 7 January 2022

FOR MORE INFO GO TO [WWW.NORTHUMBERLAND.GOV.UK/WASTE](http://WWW.NORTHUMBERLAND.GOV.UK/WASTE)



# COULD YOU BE A MALE FOSTER CARER?

Northumberland is calling for more men to come forward to be foster carers.

Male foster carers provide an often missing yet vital positive role model for both boys and girls and can also have a restorative effect on many fostered children and young people. Three male foster carers tell us about their role.

## ALAN Foster Carer

Alan, who has fostered since 2015, told us:

"I took the opportunity to get into fostering when offered voluntary redundancy. I love being a parent, so this was a perfect job role.

"The inspiration from the children and the satisfaction of knowing that you truly are making a difference to a young person's life keeps you doing this job day after day and year after year."

**Ebony who lives with Alan and his family said:**

"Alan has helped me feel part of the family, by giving me space and trust to make my own choices. He gives me boundaries, and I just feel really settled and safe here so I can get on with my life and school."



## DEAN AND JONATHAN Foster Carers

Jonathan and Dean have fostered since January:

"With long-term fostering, you view life differently, being exposed to new and challenging situations. You learn the skills you need and use them to teach and help a child – but then they teach you too!



"We are not our fostered child's parents, we help them stay in touch with their mum and are part of the family around them.

"Fostering is the best thing you could ever do."

## JAMES Foster Carer

James tells us about his experience:

"Men often don't come forward for fostering as caring is often considered more of a woman's role. My wife and daughter both encouraged me to take the first step.

"We have two young lads who have lived with us for four years. They are like 'chalk and cheese', so we learned to care for them in different ways. It's been great to encourage them with the team sports they never had the motivation to get involved with before. They are a big part of our family.

"We have our ups and downs but it's so rewarding, and we feel like we're an active part of our community."



For further information call Caroline Matthews: **01670 626 262**

email: [foster@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:foster@northumberland.gov.uk) or visit:

[www.northumberland.gov.uk/foster](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/foster)

Watch our short film about a male foster carer called 'Out there':

[www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Looked-after/Fostering.aspx](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children/Looked-after/Fostering.aspx)

COME AND  
JOIN OUR  
**IS FOSTERING  
FOR ME?**

ONLINE EVENT ON  
**FRIDAY  
17TH DECEMBER  
AT 12.00PM**

Call, email or see our  
website for the  
booking link

## DO YOU LOOK AFTER SOMEONE?

It could be your husband, your wife, your parent, your grandparent, your child, your sibling or another relation. You might look after your partner, neighbour, or your friend. Carers can be any age, including children.

The person you look after might have a disability or physical health condition,

a mental health condition, a learning disability, addiction or substance misuse problems. The person you look after might need 24 hour support or might just need you to be there "just in case". Whoever you look after, if they couldn't manage without you then you are a carer.

**Carers Northumberland** are here to support you! Carers Northumberland offers a range of support including information and advice: help with finance and benefits, grants, lasting power of attorney, advice around social care, housing and more.

REGISTER WITH US TODAY BY VISITING [WWW.CARERSNORTHUMBERLAND.ORG.UK/REGISTER](http://WWW.CARERSNORTHUMBERLAND.ORG.UK/REGISTER)  
OR CALL US ON **01670 320 025**





## DOORS TO OPEN ON BERWICK'S FLAGSHIP NEW LEISURE CENTRE

We are just weeks away from opening the doors on the first phase of Berwick's flagship new sports and leisure centre.

The fantastic £22.6 million facility, funded by Northumberland County Council and run by Active Northumberland will provide state-of-the-art facilities and a whole new customer experience for all ages of the local community.

The centre is being built in two phases and it is the biggest phase, Phase 1, which is opening to the public in just a few weeks time.

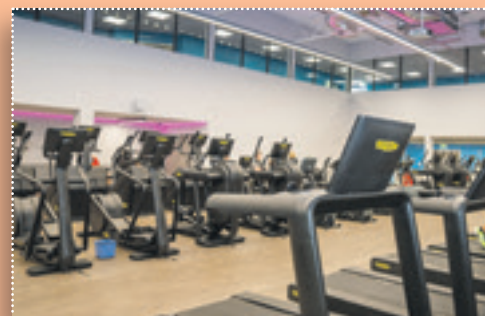
### New facilities include:

- Brand new state-of-the-art gym and fitness area
- 5-lane, 25 metre swimming pool

- 3 fitness studios including cycling studio with Technogym bikes
- Learner pool with moveable floor
- Leisure water area including race slides and aqua play experience
- Tranquillity Spa Experience with a sauna, steam room, experience shower and spa pool
- The Hive café
- Children's Softplay
- Indoor bowling green
- New changing facilities throughout

Phase 2 will see the creation of a new four court sports hall which will be ready in summer 2022. During the construction of Phase 2, customers will still be able to access the current sports hall.

## BLYTH SPORTS CENTRE £5 MILLION TRANSFORMATION COMPLETE



An exciting £5 million scheme to completely transform and modernise Blyth Sports Centre is complete, and members of the public can now enjoy the fantastic new facilities and services within it.

Funded by Northumberland County Council the work has taken place in three phases over the past two years.

### Here's what's new:

- New state-of-the-art gym and fitness area
- Cycling studio with Technogym bikes
- New soft play and party room options
- The Hive café with access to wifi
- 2 new fitness studios
- Refurbished swimming pool hall and changing rooms
- New pool spectator area
- Tranquillity Spa with a sauna, steam room, and spa pool
- New changing rooms
- Modern reception and retail area

## MORPETH DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Work is progressing on Morpeth's new £21 million leisure centre and community hub on Gas House Lane and this is still on schedule to complete in spring 2023.

The centre will incorporate fantastic new sporting facilities, the town's library, a customer service centre and an adult learning facility.



Morpeth Amateur Swimming Club burying a time capsule with County Councillor and Morpeth Mayor David Bawn, at the site of the new leisure centre.

### NEWBIGGIN

Work has started on a £1.5 million pound scheme to refurbish and revitalise Newbiggin Sports and Community Centre with work expected to be complete in summer 2022.



# COMMUNITIES PREPARE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

## WHAT IS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING?

Neighbourhood planning gives communities the opportunity to shape how their area should grow and change in the future.

In Northumberland, the process must be led by town and parish councils. This community-led approach is grounded in the idea that local people are best placed to decide how their area should grow and change over time, and they should be given every opportunity to plan positively for the changes they want to see happen.

The process ends with a local referendum where everyone entitled to vote in the local area gets to cast their vote.

Neighbourhood planning cannot be used as a way of blocking development

completely, but it can be used as a way for local people to give greater protection to those things they cherish most such as important buildings, community facilities and open spaces.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING IN NORTHUMBERLAND

Northumberland County Council has a dedicated Neighbourhood Planning Team to advise, support and help guide town and parish councils through the process.

Northumberland now has 17 neighbourhood plans which have formally been brought into force in many areas across the county and guide decision making.

This is done through 'plans' which set out policies to guide decisions on planning applications; and by

directly granting permission through 'orders' which allow new buildings and changes to existing buildings that communities want to support.

The plans we now have in Northumberland cover a wide range of topics from allocating land for housing development to protecting special open spaces and buildings and managing the expansion of second homes and holiday accommodation in our popular coastal areas.

The team is continuing to support new projects and is now looking forward to helping our town and parish councils begin to review the existing older plans.

We are here to help and would love to hear from town and parish councils who are interested in taking up or expanding their use of neighbourhood planning powers.

For further information on Neighbourhood Plans in Northumberland visit:

[WWW.NORTHUMBERLAND.GOV.UK/OURPLAN](http://WWW.NORTHUMBERLAND.GOV.UK/OURPLAN)

Email the Neighbourhood Planning Team [neighbourhoodplanning@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodplanning@northumberland.gov.uk)



# COVID BUSINESS FUNDING STILL AVAILABLE

Grant funding to support county-based businesses recover from Covid-19 is still available.

The £1 million Northumberland Covid Recovery Grant fund supports businesses with their plans for projects to help them to recover from the impacts of the pandemic.

Grants which are awarded will cover 40% of eligible project costs, with a minimum grant of £6,000 and a maximum of £20,000. This means that projects of values between £15,000 and £50,000 can be supported.

So far more than 40 business have applied for funding but the scheme is open until

January 31, 2022, pending availability of funds - grants will be considered on a first come first served basis.

To be eligible for the Northumberland Covid Recovery Grant businesses must have a significant operational base in Northumberland, employ fewer than 250 people, and have been established prior to April 2021.



For more details and how to apply go to [NLAND.UK/RECOVERY-GRANT](https://www.nland.uk/recovery-grant)

## HELPFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

It is really important that you know where to go for the help and advice you need, to support you and your family.

### ONECALL

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

### NORTHUMBERLAND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

Helping everyone connect. Are you or someone you know worried about staying warm, winter bills, feeling lonely or struggling with family pressures.

Email [nct@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:nct@northumberland.gov.uk) or call **01670 620 015** between 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** or

Sign video: [northumberlandcc-cs.signvideo.net](https://www.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 **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 use the council's website [www.northumberland.gov.uk](https://www.northumberland.gov.uk), alternatively call **0345 600 6400**

### NORTHUMBERLAND BUSINESS HUB

If you have a business or are self-employed in Northumberland  
[www.northumberland.gov.uk/businesshub](https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/businesshub)

### CITIZENS ADVICE

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

### RELATE

Free relationship advice and support  
[www.relate.org.uk/relationships-matter](https://www.relate.org.uk/relationships-matter)

### DEBT

Don't ignore a debt problem - doing nothing could make things worse. Go to [www.northumberland.gov.uk/debt](https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/debt) for advice and support.



*We*  
**ARE  
FAMILY**



**Are you looking to make a real difference in a child's life?**

If you have room in your life, you could help children and young people through one or more types of foster care.

Your skills and experience with children is what counts to start fostering - we provide you with a strong network of support, resources, training, plus a regular income.

**Visit [www.northumberland.gov.uk/foster](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/foster) to find out more**

Contact the Northumberland Foster Care Team on 01670 62 62 62 for an informal chat or email [foster@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:foster@northumberland.gov.uk) to request a call back