

Northumberland news

Winter 2018

Stay well this winter

Crackdown on roadside litter

A review of the year

What's On?



Northumberland
County Council

www.northumberland.gov.uk

NEWS *in Brief*

ADOPT NORTH EAST

Adoption services from Northumberland, North Tyneside, Gateshead, Newcastle and South Tyneside councils are now being delivered by Adopt North East, the new regional adoption agency.

Adopt North East brings together the best practices from each local authority and will provide excellent adoption services and support to transform children's and families' lives for the better.

For further information go to www.adoptnortheast.org.uk



COMMUNITY GRANT DEADLINE

Community groups, charities and young people in the county can apply for funding from our much valued community grant scheme.

Grants of up to £5,000 are available to help deliver activities that benefit residents and communities. The next funding deadline is January 11th.



HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT DOING SOMETHING NEW AND WORTHWHILE IN 2019?

There is a fostering recruitment event in January for various paid and professional care roles.

These key roles help school age children through different types of foster care. All carers receive full training and support, as well as pay and allowances for the care of the children. Come along to see the difference you could make and find out about the new paid scheme which helps teenagers with life skills, education and jobs - right through into independence.

The event will take place at Age UK Northumberland, The Round House, Lintonville Parkway, Ashington, NE63 9JZ on Wednesday 23 January at 5pm.

Contact Caroline Matthews on 01670 623 987 caroline.matthews@northumberland.gov.uk

MORPETH WEDDING FAIR

A wedding fair held in Morpeth Town Hall was a great success with dozens of couples turning up to meet wedding suppliers who were showcasing their goods and services to those planning their big day.

The event was organised by Northumberland registrars to help the local wedding industry which brings up to £30m into the county each year and supports many local businesses and jobs.



LOCAL PLAN LATEST

The next version of the Northumberland Local Plan is due to be published in the new year, subject to council approval. This will be the Publication Draft Local Plan, and comments on its 'soundness' will be invited during a six week consultation. It is then set to be submitted to Government in May 2019.

SAVE TIME DO IT ONLINE

Visit our website to use online services 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK

www.northumberland.gov.uk



JOIN YOUR LOCAL AREA FACEBOOK PAGE

You can keep up-to-date with council activities in your area by joining new Local Area Council Facebook pages. To join, go to: www.northumberland.gov.uk/LAC



INSIDE *this issue*



Available online, by email or in print.

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

Published quarterly, it is distributed free of charge by Northumberland County Council. Every effort is made to ensure that all information is accurate at the time of publication.

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

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2018 YEAR

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

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

JANUARY

Following a £500,000 investment by the council, the doors to the newly refurbished Queen's Hall in Hexham re-opened to the public, marking the beginning of a new era for the historic building which now houses the town's library, customer and visitor information centre all under one roof.



FEBRUARY

During the winter storm dubbed The Beast from the East, council teams worked with emergency services around the clock to keep the county's 3,000 mile road network moving, footpaths clear, essential services up and running and providing extra support for the elderly and vulnerable in our communities.



MARCH

The authority placed a purge on potholes as one of its top priorities and committed an extra £3m specifically to help repair the county's road network which was damaged by the severe winter weather.



APRIL

Bespoke action plans were developed to improve car parking in Hexham, Berwick, Alnwick and Morpeth following detailed parking studies in these towns. The council has allocated £10m to fund these parking improvements.



MAY

The Green Dog Walkers Scheme which encourages responsible dog ownership in Northumberland signed up its 1,000th member. The scheme is a community-led programme to reduce dog fouling across the county.



JUNE

Some of the finest locally produced food and drink took centre stage in a special showcase event in the Houses of Parliament. Produced in Northumberland, run by the council, highlights and promotes local businesses that make, sell or serve food and drink produced within the county.



IN REVIEW



JULY

Great Northumberland put the spotlight on the county with 56 days of exhibitions and live performances, offering free, family-friendly days out. It was inspired by the Great Exhibition of the North and sought to take advantage of the focus on the region.



AUGUST

Pupils across Northumberland were celebrating as they received their GCSE and A level results. This year has seen an increase in the percentage of students in the county achieving a good pass at GCSE (Grades 9 to 5) and more A level students have achieved higher grades.



SEPTEMBER

A multi-million pound investment in a new leisure centre for Berwick was announced.

The council approved £20m for the new build at the Swan Centre to provide a first class centre with a state of the art pool and sports facilities for residents and tourists.



OCTOBER

The Education Minister made a visit to a newly built £5.8m Darras Hall Primary School meeting pupils, teachers and politicians - and unveiled a plaque to declare the school officially open.



NOVEMBER

The new North of Tyne Authority Cabinet met for the first time, after the £600m devolution deal was approved by Government. It will benefit people, communities and businesses across the region.



DECEMBER

Five new state-of-the-art gritters have joined the council's fleet of salt spreaders as the council's winter operations get into full swing. The new machines will play a key role in keeping the county's 3,000 miles of roads safe for drivers.



STAY WELL THIS WINTER



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



PROTECT AGAINST FLU

Don't put off getting the flu vaccination. If you're eligible get it now from your GP or local pharmacy offering the service.

Recommended for:

- ☒ Pregnant women
- ☒ Anyone over 65
- ☒ For your children if they're aged two to four. This is not an injection, just a quick nasal spray
- ☒ If you're the main carer of an older or disabled person
- ☒ If you have a long term health condition such as bronchitis, diabetes, heart, kidney or liver disease.



FLU AND FIRST SIGNS

If you start to feel unwell, at the first sign of a winter illness, even if it is just a cough or cold, get expert confidential advice from your pharmacist before it gets more serious.

PICK UP A PRESCRIPTION

Pick up any prescription medicines before your GP or Pharmacy close for Christmas and keep stocked up with medication such as paracetamol or ibuprofen so you can deal with common winter illnesses.

KEEP WARM AND WELL




It's important to keep warm in winter - both indoors and outdoors as it can help prevent colds, flu and more serious health problems.



BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

Keep an eye on elderly or frail friends, neighbours and relatives. Make sure they are warm enough, have plenty of food and medication to see them through the winter period.

If you do need help over the holiday period:

-  GP surgeries offer extended opening hours into the evenings and weekends
-  If you need urgent medical help fast, call NHS 111 at any time
-  If it is life-threatening or an emergency, call 999

CATCH COUGHS OR SNEEZES IN A TISSUE AND THEN BIN THE USED TISSUES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
WASH YOUR HANDS REGULARLY TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INFECTION.



SIGN UP NOW AND GET READY TO GO DRY

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

Last year people told us they enjoyed the challenge; some people lost weight, some slept better, almost everyone saved cash and many said they naturally reduced their drinking for the rest of the year.

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

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

**GO ON -
SIGN UP, JOIN
US AND GET
READY TO
GO DRY**



**CAN YOU STAY
OFF THE
BOOZE FOR
31 DAYS?**

DRY JANUARY

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
VISIT: www.dryjanuary.org.uk**

Taking ANTIBIOTICS when you don't need them puts you and your family at risk



TAKE YOUR DOCTOR'S ADVICE

Keep **Antibiotics** Working

AVOID CHRISTMAS DEBT

A stocking full of debt is not something anyone wants to be left with after Christmas!

Here are a few top tips to help you keep your spending in check:

1. SET CHRISTMAS SPENDING EXPECTATIONS FOR YOUR KIDS

A child's Christmas wish list can go on forever – they have pretty good imaginations! So educate your children from the start that Christmas is not only about presents. Make them understand that most kids do not have the things they have, and it's important to spend time with family and friends.

2. BUDGET FOR CHRISTMAS

Set a written Christmas budget and whatever you do, don't exceed it. Without a plan it is easy to fall into the impulse buying trap during this tempting season. Set a maximum spend and include gifts, decorations, parties, holidays and clothes in this budget.

3. HOMEMADE CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Be creative and make your own handmade gifts. There's no doubt these will show the amount of effort you're willing to put in, and in the end, will add quite a personal touch. Everybody loves food – gingerbread cookies or rum balls are the perfect treats this festive season. There are many simple and inspiring tutorials on the internet, so log on, and have a go!

4. RUN A SECRET SANTA

Running a Secret Santa with family and friends, rather than everyone buying a gift for everyone else, will considerably reduce the number of gifts you need to buy.

5. PAY FOR CHRISTMAS WITH CASH

A great way to stay out of Christmas debt is to avoid relying on credit cards. Try to pay in cash and avoid using your credit card too much over the festive season.

Last but not least... it is important to remember you can have a great deal of fun over Christmas irrespective of how much you spend. And saving money doesn't mean you have to stay at home either. There are lots of free things families can enjoy – do a little bit of research – you might be surprised with what you find!

BORROW WISELY WITH NORTHUMBERLAND COMMUNITY BANK

If you do need to borrow money this Christmas, or would like to start saving for next year's festivities, why not use Northumberland Community Bank.

The bank provides structured and affordable repayment plans to help local people to manage their money wisely.

THE MATHS... An illustration of what a £500 loan could look like is:-

£50 per month repayment which will be made up of £44.43 to repay the loan in 12 monthly instalments and £5.57 to put into a savings account.

APR 12.7 Terms and Conditions Apply.



FIND OUR MORE by visiting:
www.northumberlandcommunitybank.co.uk

Northumberland
Community Bank

WHEN WILL MY BINS AND RECYCLING BE COLLECTED THIS CHRISTMAS?






CHRISTMAS BIN COLLECTIONS

Collections week commencing 18 December will be as usual.

Collections due on Monday 24 December will be carried out on that day as normal.




Collections later in Christmas week will be two days late:

-  Tuesday 25 December bins will be collected on Thursday 27
-  Wednesday 26 December bins will be collected Friday 28
-  Thursday 27 December bins will be collected Saturday 29

NEW YEAR BIN COLLECTIONS

Collections due on Monday 31st December will be carried out on that day as usual.

Collections due later in the week of New Year will be one day late:

-  Tuesday 1 January bins will be collected Wednesday 2
-  Wednesday 2 January bins will be collected Thursday 3
-  Thursday 3 January bins will be collected Friday 4



FOR EXACT OPENING TIMES of your local household waste recovery centre over the festive period log on to www.northumberland.gov.uk

CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING

Real Christmas trees can be recycled into good quality compost or soil conditioner, or into chippings. You can take them to your local household waste recovery centre during normal site opening times where they are collected and recycled along with other items of garden waste.



After Christmas, to make it easier to recycle your tree, we have arranged over 30 additional collection points across the county where you can take your tree to be collected and recycled.



TO FIND YOUR NEAREST COLLECTION POINT

and the date the tree needs to be deposited by, log on to www.northumberland.gov.uk

HEPSCOTT PARK HORTICULTURAL SKILLS UNIT



Christmas trees ORDER YOURS NOW!



Nordmann Fir (cut)

5ft - £28.00 6ft - £34.00

**Norway Spruce
(living - pot grown)**

4ft - £26.00

**Nordmann Fir
(living - pot grown)**

4ft - £32.00

We can deliver within 5 miles of HSU

Horticultural Skills Unit, Hepscoth Park, Morpeth NE61 6NF Tel: 01670 623911

Universal Credit

Universal Credit is being rolled out across Northumberland affecting new claims for the following benefits:

- **Income Support**
- **Working Tax Credit**
- **Child Tax Credit**
- **Housing Benefit**
- **Income Based Job Seekers Allowance**
- **Income Related Employment Support Allowance**

What's different?

- **It's online - so you'll need an email address**
- **You'll need to verify your identity and manage your claim online**
- **You'll receive your payment on a monthly basis straight into your bank, building society or Post Office account**

We're here to help!

Contact:

- **Customer Services on 0345 600 6400**
- **Citizen's Advice on 01670 339 781**

Or find out more online:

- **northumberland.gov.uk/UC**



Northumberland
County Council

www.northumberland.gov.uk

Be prepared for UC Universal Credit



Universal Credit is now being introduced across Northumberland so you need to get prepared now. Here's how!

- 1. Open a bank account:** even if you have a poor credit rating, you can open a 'Basic Bank Account'. Go to a local bank and they will help you. You will need to take proof of identity (such as your driving licence) and proof of address (such as your heating bill).
- 2. Get on the internet:** You will have to make your application for Universal Credit benefits on the internet. There are lots of places in Northumberland where you can use a computer for free, such as your local job centre and library and learn how to get online. Call us on 0345 600 6400 to find out about free courses.
- 3. Set up a standing order or direct debit:** this means you won't have to remember to pay your rent on time as it will be taken from your account automatically. Your bank can help you do this.

4. Come and talk to us: Residents who need digital support when applying for Universal Credit, or are struggling with payment changes should:

- Contact their landlord if they are in council or social housing.
- Visit their local Northumberland County Council Customer Information Centre or call the Customer Service helpline: **0345 600 6400**.
- Contact Citizens Advice Northumberland: **01670 339 781**.
- Visit their local Job Centre.
- Visit **www.northumberland.gov.uk/UC** for more information.

Adapt (NE) - providing community services across Northumberland

Adapt (NE) is a community-based organisation providing services to people in Northumberland and beyond, with the aim of promoting an inclusive society. As well as providing community transport services, the county-wide Getabout Scheme helps people get to medical and other appointments, either via public transport or with the help of a volunteer car driver.

A new community cafe opened at the Hexham site this year, which houses a Changing Places accessible toilet. Changing Places toilets have more space and equipment, including a height adjustable changing bench and a hoist. One of just three in Northumberland, the toilet is available for anyone who needs it, whilst visiting, or travelling through the town.

Adapt (NE) also provides the Independent NHS Complaints Advocacy Service for Northumberland and delivers Healthwatch Northumberland (see across), plus a wheelchair loan and DBS checking service.

The newly launched Personal Assistant Register held by Adapt (NE) enables people looking to work as a personal assistant or carer to be matched with local people looking for help. Call for details.

Adapt (NE), Burn Lane, Hexham,
Northumberland NE46 3HN.
E: generaloffice@adapt-tyndale.org.uk.
T: 01434 600599. Web: adapt-ne.org.uk.



Healthwatch Northumberland

Health & social care champion



Healthwatch Northumberland is the independent champion for people in Northumberland who use health and social care services, e.g. GPs, pharmacists, hospitals and care homes. By sharing your experience of these services, care can be improved for everyone. There is also a free signposting service, helping you find support and services local to you. Find out more at the website: healthwatchnorthumberland.co.uk.

healthwatch
Northumberland



The Gift of Fitness

#NoMoreSocks

Struggling to find the perfect present?
We have a range of gift cards available with FREE goodies!

Full membership gift cards



3

3 month membership

Access to all Active Northumberland gyms,
fitness classes and swimming pools.
PLUS - FREE Goodie bag
£96 or £78 concession*



6

6 month membership

Access to all Active Northumberland gyms,
fitness classes and swimming pools.
PLUS - FREE Headphones and a goodie bag.
£192 or £156 concession*



10

10 swims

10 swims at any
of Active Northumberland's swimming pools.
PLUS - FREE goggles and a goodie bag.
£40



1

Clip 'n Climb gift card

1 session at Clip'n Climb, Cramlington

Explore the dizzy heights of our fun climbing walls!
The perfect present for adventurous kids!
£10

*Concessionary prices include all full time students and over 65's.
They are only applicable to the recipient of the voucher.

Gift vouchers on sale until 24th December 2018

Need extra inspiration?
**Follow Barbara's
Christmas present hacks!**



Active Northumberland



ActiveNland

**NEW and
improved
online
Clip 'n Climb
bookings**



Don't be a turkey with your health

Take care when preparing your family's Christmas meals, or you could be drowning your sorrows rather than toasting the festive season.

One of the seasonal highlights of Christmas is the lunch, with poultry being the most popular choice of meat. However, all types of meat carry potentially harmful bacteria capable of causing food poisoning.

Avoiding sloppy hygiene and by taking a few minutes extra care you could prevent days of stomach upsets and suffering.



HERE ARE OUR TOP FOOD SAFETY TIPS:

1. Always wash your hands with soap and hot water before and after handling the raw bird. All work surfaces, equipment and food contact surfaces should be washed and disinfected again before re-use.
2. Always keep raw poultry separate from ready to eat foods.
3. If you buy a frozen bird, ensure that it has thawed completely. An 8kg turkey will take approximately four days to thaw in the fridge. Make sure the raw poultry doesn't touch other foods.
4. Remove the giblets and take great care when disposing of the defrosted juices.
5. There is no need to rinse poultry under the tap – this can splash harmful bacteria around the kitchen.
6. Cook the bird as soon as possible after it has completely thawed. Never part cook the poultry the night before.
7. Ensure the turkey is thoroughly cooked. Check there are no pink bits in the middle and between the legs, that the juices run clear and that it is piping hot throughout (always follow the instructions on the packaging).
8. Cook the stuffing separately, as it allows heat to fully penetrate the carcass.
9. Eat the bird as soon as possible after cooking. Cool leftovers quickly and avoid reheating food more than once.
10. If you do reheat leftovers, make sure they are piping hot throughout.



FOLLOW THE CHRISTMAS CODE

CLEANING

Sanitise work surfaces and chopping boards

COOKING

Cook thoroughly

CHILLING

Cool quickly and keep in the refrigerator

SERVICE MARKS 100 YEARS TO THE DAY WOMEN COULD VOTE

On Friday 14th December Northumberland County Council is hosting a celebration and thanksgiving **"100 years to the day"** when some women could, for the first time, vote in a General Election.

The event will be held in St Mary's Church, Morpeth and will link this anniversary with the crucial importance of the roles played by women in WW1.

Everyone is welcome to join this celebration and thanksgiving.

THE
SERVICE WILL
RUN FROM
12 NOON
UNTIL 12.45



MAKE SURE YOU ARE REGISTERED TO VOTE

Our electoral service team is currently producing the county's register of electors for the coming year. They have recently delivered over 150,000 household enquiry forms across the county and are currently following up with reminder activity where a response has yet to be received. If you were unable to respond to the first form you received, please be certain to respond to your reminder form.

HOME MOVERS - HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN SOMETHING?

One of the biggest reasons that people fall off the electoral register is by simply moving house. When people move house they usually remember to contact their banks and utilities providers with new address details but they often forget to update their electoral registration details.

If you've moved house in recent months and haven't taken steps to re-register with your new address you can register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote.

The "hidden" benefits to registering - Lenders use the electoral register to help confirm your identity before they will consider offering credit. Being on the register could help you get a loan, mortgage and credit cards.

COULD YOU BE A DIGITAL CHAMPION?



The online and digital world can be tricky to negotiate for large numbers of Northumberland residents - and especially so for those with no online access at all.

That's why we're calling for volunteers to help local people to get to grips with computers and take their first steps online.

You don't need to be an IT wizard - although if you are that would be great - you just need a bit of patience and IT know-how, to help them build their confidence to get online.

Participants range from the elderly to younger manual workers who have never had call to use computers.

You will be showing them the basics IT skills such as getting online for the first time, or teaching them how to upload digital photos, hunt for jobs, shop and bank online or keep in touch with family and friends using Facebook, email or Skype.

Volunteers would need to be able to get access to a local library where the sessions are held.

Digital Champion, Allan Wilson said:

"It's a voluntary but very rewarding role. To see someone leave with a smile on their face when they have been provided with skills and knowledge that enable them to better handle the requirements of a modern digital world make it especially satisfying and worthwhile."

INTERESTED IN GETTING INVOLVED?

To find out more about becoming a digital champion contact Fiona Corbett by emailing: fiona.corbett@northumberland.gov.uk.



Digital Champion at Hexham Library,
Allan Wilson

SPREADING THE WORD ON WINTER READINESS

A dedicated team is ready to tackle the worst the winter weather can throw at us.

With a fleet of 28 front-line gritters at their disposal, including five brand new models, winter services staff have been preparing for months to keep roads safe and clear over the colder months.

As the Beast from the East showed last winter, battling the elements during the worst weather is a 24/7 job. To keep the gritters active across Northumberland's 3,000 miles of road, the council has invested in 37,500 tonnes of rock salt, filling the depots to capacity.

Safety for the drivers is paramount, and all gritters are fitted with tracking devices so their location can be pinpointed at all times - providing an extra level of safety, especially for those working in more rural areas.

Leading the team are three experienced, specialist winter service managers and decision makers who monitor all forecast

weather and weather stations round-the-clock and co-ordinate operations across the county.

Of course, keeping the region moving is all about teamwork. The council has arrangements in place with all neighbouring authorities to ensure continuity between area boundaries.

It also now salts the entire length of the A69 from Newcastle to the M6 in Cumbria and completes the weather forecasting and decision making for Newcastle City Council's winter services operation.

And if things get really bad the council can also call on farmers and sub-contractors should they be needed.

So whatever happens weather-wise over the next few months, the council will be hitting the road to keep you safe.



FOLLOW US... ON TWITTER AND FACEBOOK FOR LIVE UPDATES ON:

• School closures • Severe weather warnings • Winter service information • Service disruptions & closures
 @northumberland f www.facebook.com/nccalerts

Drive continues to keep our roadsides clean



Leader of the Council, Peter Jackson and Councillor Glen Sanderson with members of the Neighbourhood Services Team at the launch of the roadside litter campaign

A major campaign is encouraging motorists to play their part in keeping the county clean and green.



Photo: Stephen Wardle, Neighbourhood Services Area Manager and Councillor Glen Sanderson with the bus advertising

Northumberland has a well-deserved and longstanding reputation as a clean and tidy county, home to more than 300,000 residents and attracting millions of visitors each year.

And while the vast majority of residents and drivers dispose of their rubbish properly, the actions of a small minority are costing everyone.

Litter and rubbish which is either dropped in the street or thrown from vehicles casts a real blight and clearing up litter costs the council around £2.6m each year. There are over 3,000 miles of roads in Northumberland and keeping them clean and tidy is a year-round job.

Now a roadside litter campaign is aimed at encouraging people not to drop litter and be proud of their county.

Advertising has been running on the backs of buses around the county, as well as on petrol pumps, reminding drivers and passengers not to drop rubbish from their vehicles and 'love their county'.

Clean-ups are taking place on roadsides to remove litter, while the impact of litter and rubbish, not just as an eyesore, but a danger to health of humans and animals, is also being highlighted.

Meanwhile the council will continue to take enforcement action where they have evidence of littering. This year over 100 people have been fined or prosecuted for dropping litter.

Councillor Glen Sanderson, Cabinet Member for Environment and Local Services, with Northumberland County Council, said: "Northumberland has a well-deserved reputation as a clean county and we want to keep it that way.

"It's not difficult to put litter in a bin or take it home and we hope this campaign will act as a gentle reminder to everyone to play their part in keeping the county litter-free."

Let's keep our county beautiful...



**NORTH
OF TYNE**
~~~~~  
**COMBINED  
AUTHORITY**






## A new era in local decision making is underway after government approved a £600m North of Tyne devolution deal.

The new North of Tyne Combined Authority, made up of Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside Councils, has been formally brought into law by Parliament.

The deal will drive economic growth, job creation, support for people and their families, rural communities and inward investment.

As well as receiving £20m in government funding every year for the next 30 years, the Combined Authority is expected to:

-  generate £1.1bn for the local economy
-  create 10,000 new jobs
-  bring in more than £2.1bn in private sector investment.

County Council Leader Peter Jackson said:

"So much work has gone into securing the best deal for the North of Tyne and I'm delighted we're now moving forward with the real business of driving the region's economic growth.

"We're working on a number of exciting and transformative schemes which will benefit millions of people in the region now, as well as future generations, and

we are all excited by the opportunities that lie ahead."

Northern Powerhouse Minister, Jake Berry MP, added: "Thanks to the hard work of local leaders, we have delivered a historic devolution deal in the Northern Powerhouse and over half a billion pounds of investment into North Tyneside, Northumberland and Newcastle to improve services, create new jobs and drive growth.

"We're transferring funding and decision making away from Westminster and placing them directly into the hands of local people, allowing them to shape their own public services and forge their own destiny."

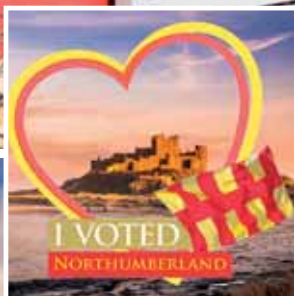


**FIND OUT MORE** about what the deal means at [www.northoftynedevolution.com](http://www.northoftynedevolution.com)





**Northumberland  
strikes gold  
at prestigious  
travel awards**



**Northumberland has won Gold at the British Travel Awards and picked up the coveted title of "Best UK Holiday County/Destination of the Year"**

The county received the prestigious accolade at an awards ceremony in London in November.

Northumberland beat off stiff competition from Cornwall, Peak District, the Scottish Highlands, Devon and others. The county has been pipped to the winners post for the last four years by Cornwall.

The win follows a social media campaign led by Northumberland County Council, and supported by Northumberland Tourism, which encouraged residents and visitors to vote and show their love for the county.

Leader of the council, Cllr Peter Jackson, said: "Northumberland has been runner-up at these awards for the last four years,

so to finally bring the Gold home is an amazing achievement for the county.

"We all know what a wonderful place Northumberland is to live, work, visit and do business and we are increasingly becoming the destination of choice with more than £10m visitors coming to the county in 2017, but this award will help put us firmly on the visitor map."



 **Northumberland**  
County Council

**WE DID IT!**

THANK YOU FOR VOTING

**In the new year we'll be asking residents, businesses and visitors to join us on a journey of discovery of our great county. We'll reveal more in January so watch this space!!**



# Investment continues in education in the county



## A NEW FIRST SCHOOL FOR MORPETH

Work is well underway on construction of a brand new £6.8m educational facility on the former fire station site in Morpeth which will replace the ageing 'Goosehill' First School.

Teachers and students from Morpeth First School recently joined county councillors to view progress on the site of the new school, which is due to open in September 2019.

The new building will provide innovative teaching and learning facilities as well as external play areas and a multi-use games area. For the first time in its history the school will have its own playing fields.

The new school will also have a community room, which will be used for events both during and outside of school hours, along with 78 parking spaces.

*Photo: Teachers, councillors and pupils at the new first school construction site*



## SCHOOLS IN WEST NORTHUMBERLAND

In July 2018 the council agreed plans to create a sustainable education system in the west of the county.

This is seeing significant investment in Haydon Bridge High School - in resources to support improvements to meet high standards of education, and over £3m to improve buildings on the site.

Age ranges will be extended at Greenhaugh, Bellingham, Wark, Kielder and Otterburn first schools - with the total investment of £5.1m in creating primary and secondary education provision.

Council officers are progressing with plans to replace the buildings of Hexham Middle School and Queen Elizabeth High School, which form the Hadrian Learning Trust. It is expected that between £36m and £40m will be invested in this scheme.







Photo: Artist impression of the new Ponteland School and Leisure Complex

## PONTELAND PARTNERSHIP OF SCHOOLS

Secretary of State for Education, The Rt Hon Damian Hinds MP, visited the new £5.8million Darras Hall Primary School - meeting pupils, teachers and politicians - and unveiling a plaque to declare the school officially open.

The new primary school, built by Northumberland County Council, features state of the art facilities including 15 classrooms, 'learning streets' on both the ground and first floors, two multi use studios, a hall that can be used for both school and community events and a library and reading area.

The Secretary of State was in the region to unveil a £24 million investment that will help further unlock the immense talent of young people in this region.

The investment in Darras Hall is part of a wider £57m investment by the council in education and leisure across the Ponteland partnership.

## NEWS ON THE NEW SCHOOLS AND LEISURE DEVELOPMENT:

The contract to build the landmark combined schools and leisure campus in Ponteland has been awarded to Kier Construction - and key councillors and partners dug the first turf on the site at the end of November.

The £46m development will see the existing leisure centre demolished and replaced with two brand new school buildings and a fantastic new leisure facility with swimming pool, fitness suite, community facilities, badminton courts, Clip N Climb, soft play, outdoor sports fields, a full size 3G pitch and a library. A new fire station will also be built.

The new development is scheduled for completion by September 2020 and work is underway to expand the accommodation on the existing high school, to take the additional secondary pupils that will come to the school in September 2019.

Other schools across the Ponteland Partnership have also benefited from significant investment in their buildings as part of the scheme.



Photo: Education Minister The Rt Hon Damian Hinds, Councillor Wayne Daley and headteacher Victoria Parr with pupils from the school





## December

### Coal Forest

Coal Forest will see Woodhorn transformed through a series of magical and thought-provoking art installations in the museum and colliery buildings.

Woodhorn Museum, Ashington  
December - Monday 22 April

### The Alnwick Garden Light Show

The Alnwick Garden will be transformed into a festive delight for the family.

Guide price £7.95

4.30 - 8.30pm

14-23 December

### Christmas Fayre

Traditional Christmas market with locally produced goods. Children can see Santa and his grotto and Merlin the horse pulling his special Christmas carriage.

Entry free but donations welcome.

Hay Farm Heavy Horse Centre  
Ford and Etal Estate, TD12 4TR  
01890 820601.

10am - 4pm

16 December

### Pit Yard Skating

Enjoy a fun and unique skating experience on the Pit Yard Skating Rink, right in the heart of the stunning historic colliery site. Woodhorn Museum, Ashington  
Adult £5.00 Child £4.00.

11am until 3.30pm

half hourly sessions.

Weekends throughout  
December and Christmas Eve

### Cinderella

The most enchanting fairy story of them all will whisk you away to a glittering world of ballgowns, glass slippers and magic – and some very Ugly Sisters.

The Maltings, Berwick

15-30 December

For price, and times go to  
[www.maltingsberwick.co.uk](http://www.maltingsberwick.co.uk)



### Festive Tales with Father Christmas

This magical event of festive fun is for children under 5 years.

Woodhorn Museum, Ashington  
Tickets £6.50 per child which includes a 30-minute session with Father Christmas including seasonal stories, an all important photo opportunity and a seasonal gift.

For dates, times, booking and further information go to:  
[museumsnorthumberland.org.uk](http://museumsnorthumberland.org.uk)

### Winter Wonderland at Whitehouse Farm

It's the most magical time of year at Whitehouse Farm Centre, Morpeth. Join in and make some festive memories at Winter Wonderland. Enrol in elf school, write a letter to Santa, visit Mrs Claus's bakery, meet the farm elves and the animals in their Christmas stables.

For full dates and details go to  
[www.whitehousefarmcentre.co.uk](http://www.whitehousefarmcentre.co.uk)





### Manor Walks Santa's Grotto

Santa and his little helpers will be meeting and greeting children at Manor Walks Cramlington this festive season to find out what's at the top of their list this Christmas!

Pop in centre for fun festivities and fab activities every weekend until Monday 24th December and have a one to one chat with Santa Claus, between 11am and 3pm.

### Christmas at Wallington

Celebrate Christmas at Wallington. On Friday evenings and weekends throughout December. Admire the beautiful decorations across the house and gardens and soak up the special Christmas atmosphere. In the house there'll be Christmas music, festive crafts and stories with Mrs Christmas. Be sure to book a slot for children to see

Father Christmas by calling 01670 773606

For full details and prices go to [www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)

### Santa Specials at Heatherslaw Light Railway

Passengers are invited to travel from Heatherslaw to Etal Station and back on a Christmas decorated train. Fun for all the family.

Cost £12 per person.

Ticket includes train journey, light refreshments and family visit to Santa with a quality gift for each child.

Pre-booking essential via the website, email or by calling 01890 820244.

Trains run 11am - 2pm  
Heatherslaw Light Railway,  
Ford and Etal Estate, TD12 4TJ  
15, 16 and 22 December



### Enchanted Belsay

Explore the grounds of Belsay Hall after dark. Wrap up warm and head out on an adventure through a wonderland of light and colour. Join in the atmosphere of the Stable Yard near the hall for mulled wine and marshmallows, enjoy a fairground ride and browse for Christmas gifts.

Belsay Hall Castle & Gardens.

For prices, dates and booking online go to

[www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

### Allendale Tar Bar'l

This sizzling ceremony has been celebrated for at least 160 years. Forty-five local men carrying whiskey barrels filled with burning hot tar in a colourful procession through the town.

At 11:30pm, the torches are lit and the barrels ignited and at midnight they arrive at the Bar'l fire in the town centre where the barrels are used to ignite the ceremonial bonfire.

31 December

## January

### Judging for Northumbria in Bloom talk at Kirkley Hall

Mr and Mrs Patterson have been judging the competition for seven years. This will be a beautifully illustrated talk as you learn how the point system works and what most impresses the judges.

£3 non-members, £2 members. All welcome.

For further information email: [friendsofkirkleyhall@yahoo.com](mailto:friendsofkirkleyhall@yahoo.com)  
Wednesday 9 January

### New Hartley Memorial Concert

Special guest Billy Mitchell  
Starts 7.30 pm

Tickets £5 must be obtained in advance. For enquiries call Keith 07801 976045  
Saturday 19 January

## February

### The Zoo at Kirkley Hall

Steven, the Animal Resource Centre Manager at Kirkley Hall will be talking about how the zoo has progressed over the years and what plans there may be for the future.

£3 non-members, £2 members. All welcome.

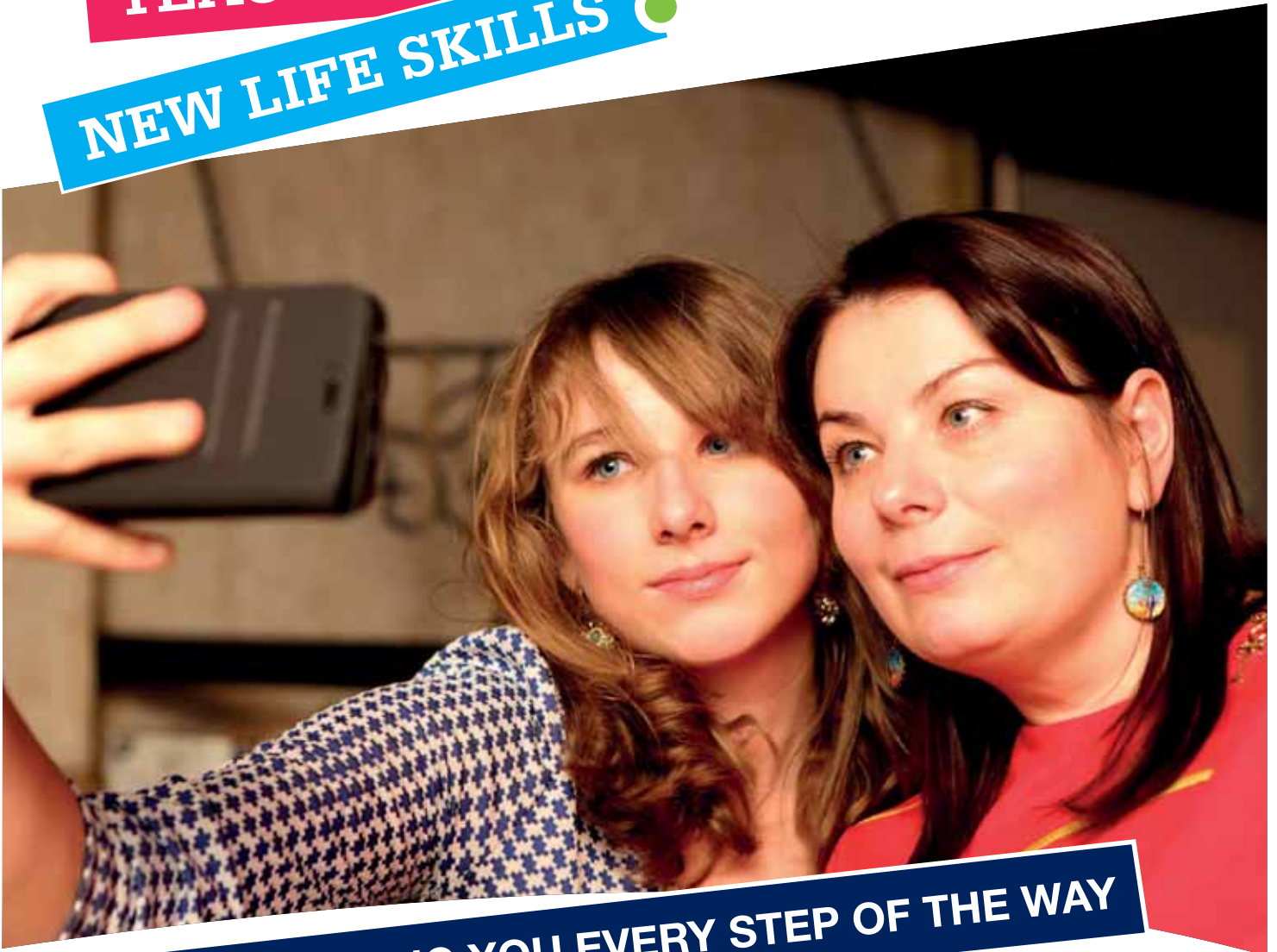
For further information email: [friendsofkirkleyhall@yahoo.com](mailto:friendsofkirkleyhall@yahoo.com)  
Wednesday 13 February

**COULD YOU  
TEACH HER  
NEW LIFE SKILLS?**

“My job helps young people get ready for adult life - to learn life skills and build their future. Sometimes they need support to get through difficult situations, just as we all do from time to time. I love it”

**Maxine**

East Northumberland



**SUPPORTING YOU EVERY STEP OF THE WAY**

**FOSTER WITH US**

Find out more online

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

Talk to Caroline: 01670 62 62 62

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



**Northumberland**  
County Council

**Recruitment Event: Paid professional foster care  
23 January at the Age UK Roundhouse, Ashington**