

COVID-19 COMMUNITY RESOURCE

MARCH 2021



Northumberland
County Council



As we approach the one-year anniversary of the UK going into national lockdown, we want to reflect on all the amazing work that has gone on in our communities. We want to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has given their time to help others during this lockdown and the past year.

Whether you have given your time to a voluntary group, helped in your community or reached out to a neighbour we want to thank you for all your hard work.

THANK YOU

Last week we celebrated International Women's Day 2021 (8 March) with a whole host of online activities.

The theme for this year's day was 'Choose to Challenge' – calling out gender bias and inequality and seeking out and celebrating women's achievements. As part of this, we created a virtual service to mark the day with contributions from many of our partners. You can catch up on all the great activities here:

<https://padlet.com/Northumberland/IWD21>

Working in partnership with voluntary and community groups means we can reach out to residents across Northumberland and provide essential support especially during the winter months.

We are constantly striving to improve, please give us a ring or an email We want to support you. Please give us a ring and tell us what works so we can continue to move forward together.

With best wishes,

The Northumberland Communities Together Team

This is the seventh edition of the online community pack, our previous editions can be found [here](#).

If you can't find the information you're looking for here, please contact us. You can speak to us on 01670 620015 between 9am - 6pm, seven days a week. You can also find information on our [website](#).

INTRODUCTION

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In 2021 we want to grow strong and sustainable partnerships, with voluntary groups, charities and volunteers. Together we will make our communities safer and more resilient. With your help we want to encourage any resident needing a bit of extra support, to pick up the phone and get in touch.

NCT UPDATE

We've been working collaboratively with partners such as Northumberland CVA who have a great bank of resources to support the voluntary sector, click here to see their newsletters for more information: <https://bit.ly/2LDdHHe>

We have an exciting project on the horizon with the opening of our new Community Link Building in Cramlington. We'll invite Cramlington based groups, residents and organisations to get in touch so we can collaborate and develop activities for the community. We'll share more news on this project very soon.

Northumberland COVID Community Champions

With the health service working hard to meet the demands of winter on the NHS, we want to help communities understand the rules around COVID-19 so they can stay well through the COVID-19 crisis. We're creating a network of COVID Community Champions to help spread trusted messages for us virtually. If you know anyone who would like to volunteer to receive regular updates please visit this website: www.northumberland.gov.uk/champions

Northumberland Communities Together (NCT) has been working alongside fantastic volunteers, community groups and other partners across Northumberland. Here is how together, we've supported communities through this crisis...



20,000+ Calls made and received

Out of those calls approximately...



2,813 unique households helped



57 key partners connected with eg. community groups



14,400+ COVID winter support grants



543 self isolation grants



15,500+ business grants



175+ COVID secure pop-up enrichment events



50+ partners worked alongside us at our events



12,000+ attendees across our events



23+ COVID Community Champions to help spread trusted messages virtually



24,515+ Clinically Extremely Vulnerable residents continue to be supported with access to priority shopping slots and assistance with prescriptions

Contact us:
(01670) 620015
9am-6pm,
7 days a week
or email:
NCT@northumberland.gov.uk

The government has published the 'COVID-19 Response - Spring 2021' setting out the roadmap out of the current lockdown for England. This explains how the restrictions included in this guidance will be lifted over time.

England is still in a national lockdown. You must stay at home, leaving only where permitted by law, and follow the rules in this guidance.

LOCKDOWN & ROADMAP

Some of the rules on what you can and cannot do changed on 8 March:

- you can spend time in outdoor public spaces for recreation on your own, with your household or support bubble, or with one other person. This means you can sit down for a drink or picnic. You must continue to maintain social distance from those outside your household.
- pupils and students in all schools and Further Education settings should return to face-to-face education
- wrap around childcare can reopen and other children's activities can restart only where it is needed to enable parents to work, attend education, seek medical care or attend a support group. Vulnerable children can attend childcare and other children's activities in all circumstances
- students on practical Higher Education courses at English universities who have not already returned and would be unable to complete their courses if they did not return to take part in practical teaching, access specialist facilities or complete assessments will be able to return
- there will continue to be restrictions on international travel. Holidays will not be a permitted reason to travel

- those seeking to leave the UK must complete an outbound declaration of travel form ahead of departure
- the rules on visiting care homes have changed to allow regular indoor visits for a single named visitor

LOCKDOWN & ROADMAP

No further significant changes were made on 8 March and restrictions requiring you to stay at home will remain in place.

The Clinically Extremely Vulnerable are advised not to attend work, school or education until 31 March.

Later changes, including from 29 March, are set out in the roadmap

- Read the complete roadmap document here: <https://bit.ly/3eOlwok>

29 MARCH

BUSINESS / ACTIVITIES

Organised outdoor sport
(children and adults)

Outdoor sport and leisure facilities

All outdoor children's activities

Outdoor parent & child groups
(up to 15 people, excluding under 5s)

SOCIAL CONTACT

Rule of 6 or two households outdoors

Household only indoors

TRAVEL

Minimise travel

No domestic or international holidays

Vaccination programme

Both the Pfizer and the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccines are now in wide circulation, and nationally over two million people have now been vaccinated, with a third vaccine Moderna approved on Friday 8 January for roll-out in the Spring.

VACCINATIONS

Local Vaccination Services (Primary Care Networks)

Vaccinations in Northumberland are being delivered through 10 Primary Care Networks identified across the county. As of 4 March, our Primary Care Networks had vaccinated approximately 117,126 people. This is a positive step forward with the final group on the Government's priority list, the 50-54 age group is invited to make appointments as of 17 March.

Vaccination Centre – Centre for Life

You may know that the Government announced last week that the Centre for Life in Newcastle would be one of the seven mass vaccination centres across England, and the site has now been transformed into a mass vaccination site. This is being managed by Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals Trust, and vaccinations have now started there, with some social care workers receiving the vaccine over the weekend. We understand that letters have been sent to people living within a 45-minute drive of the Centre for Life, and appointments are being arranged through a national booking website.

For some residents, travelling to the Centre for Life is not practical or possible. You will still receive your vaccine if you do not wish to make an appointment at the Centre for Life. You can wait to be invited for an appointment by your GP at your local doctor's surgery or pharmacy.

Vaccine Fraud

Please remain vigilant as criminals begin to take advantage of the roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine to commit fraud.

VACCINATIONS

In the UK, coronavirus vaccines will only be available via the National Health Services of England, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. You can be contacted by the NHS, your employer, a GP surgery or pharmacy local to you, to receive your vaccine. Remember, the vaccine is free of charge. At no point will you be asked to pay.

- The NHS will never ask you for your bank account or card details
- The NHS will never ask you for your PIN or banking passwords
- The NHS will never arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine
- The NHS will never ask you to prove your identity by sending copies of personal documents eg passport, driving license, bills or payslips.

If you receive a call you believe to be fraudulent, hang up. If you are suspicious about an email you have received, forward it to report@phishing.gov.uk. Suspicious text messages should be forwarded to the number 7726 which is free of charge.

If you believe you are the victim of fraud, please report this to Action Fraud as soon as possible by calling 0300 123 2040 or visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk.



KEEPING SAFE

Keeping yourself and others safe

The Government guidance is clear - stay home, protect the NHS, save lives.

You must only attend your workplace when it is absolutely necessary, and where you cannot do your job from home – work from home if you are able to do so and when out in your community volunteering please be extra vigilant and prioritise your own health.

Given positive cases both in the county and in neighbouring authorities, it's more important than ever to adhere to the national guidance by:

- ✓ Washing your hands regularly
- ✓ Keeping your distance
- ✓ Wearing a face covering - this is now mandatory (by law) in the workplace in communal areas
- ✓ Getting tested if you feel unwell

This is particularly important as we continue to see significant community transmission, which will inevitably have an impact on our ability to support our communities.



SELF-ISOLATING

If you have COVID-19 symptoms or have received a positive test result
Stay at home and begin to self-isolate for 10 days from when your symptoms start. Arrange to have a test for COVID-19 if you have not already had one. The result of the test will determine how long you must stay at home and self-isolate.

Please remember:

- Stay at home while you are waiting for a home test kit or a test site appointment.
- A positive test result means you must complete a 10-day isolation period.
- If your test is negative, you can stop self-isolating as long as you are well.
- If you do not have symptoms but have tested positive for COVID-19, stay at home and self-isolate for 10 days from the day the test was taken.
- If you develop symptoms after your test, restart your 10-day isolation period from the day the symptoms start.



SELF-ISOLATING

If you live in the same household as someone with COVID-19

Stay at home for 10 days. The 10-day period starts from the day the first person in your house developed symptoms or, if they do not have symptoms, from the day their test was taken.

If you do not have symptoms of COVID-19 yourself you do not need a test. Only arrange a test if you develop COVID-19 symptoms.

If you develop symptoms and your test result is positive, follow the same advice for people with COVID-19 to stay at home and self-isolate for 10 days from when your symptoms started.

You could be fined if you are identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 and you are notified by NHS Test and Trace that you need to self-isolate and do not to stay at home and self-isolate.



HELP & SUPPORT

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV or previously known as shielded)

The advice to the CEV to shield ceases from Thursday 1 April, as virus infection rates continue to fall. People on the shielded patient list will receive letters from 18 March with updated guidance on steps people can take to reduce their risk.

More than 9 in 10 clinically extremely vulnerable people have been vaccinated with the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

If you are clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19, please follow the advice on the council's website until 1 April:

<https://bit.ly/396eOYV>

Help & Advice for volunteers

Across the UK people are playing their part and providing essential support to their friends and family who are in isolation. It's so important while you're helping others to keep yourself safe and well too.

Find out more about staying safe while volunteering:

<https://bit.ly/309fZl9>



HELP & SUPPORT

Financial Wellbeing

We are working in partnership with Citizens Advice Northumberland to support residents with their financial wellbeing.

Citizens Advice are able to respond quickly to emergency hardship with fuel vouchers and are able to give preventative support, such as information on debt reduction. If a resident does require help and advice, please contact your Community Connector who will refer them to Citizens Advice.

Residents who need advice on energy and fuel poverty can call **01670 339960** or email **energy@citizensadvicenorthumberland.org.uk**.

For more information about energy supply:
www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/energy/energy-supply/

Citizens Advice Northumberland has also compiled a list of helpful contact information, find out more on the next page.

Some of our face to face offices are temporarily closed at the moment but we are still here for you.

Telephone **0800 144 8848**

Mon to Fri 9.00am - 4.30pm

Email advice via our online form at
www.citizensadvicenorthumberland.org.uk

Online advice www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Universal Credit Help to Claim service

Telephone **0800 144 8444**

Mon to Fri 8.00am - 6.00pm

Or **01670 339985**

Email uc@citizensadvicenorthumberland.org.uk

Debt and money advice

Telephone **01670 339960**

text "DEBT" to 81400 for a call back

Email debt@citizensadvicenorthumberland.org.uk

Energy advice

Telephone **01670 339960**

Email energy@citizensadvicenorthumberland.org.uk

Macmillan benefits advice

Telephone **01670 339985**

If you are interested in volunteering for us, email
volunteer@citizensadvicenorthumberland.org.uk



**citizens
advice**

Northumberland



HELP & SUPPORT

Rape Crisis Tyneside and Northumberland

Rape Crisis Northumberland and Tyneside (RCTN) have noted referrals from Northumberland are low at the moment. There are numerous barriers stopping women reporting sexual violence, but this pandemic shouldn't be one of them. RCTN have spoken to Northumbria Police who have assured them that lockdown breaches will not be their focus if somebody come forwards to report sexual violence.

It's always an individual's choice as to whether to report sexual violence or not, but services like Rape Crisis are there to offer practical, emotional and/or criminal justice support for women and girls aged 13+, who have experienced sexual violence.

For more information visit <https://rctn.org.uk/get-help/practical-emotional-support/> or speak to their helpline team 0800 035 2794 Mon - Thur 6pm until 8:30pm Friday 11am until 2pm.

Domestic Abuse

What is domestic abuse? Domestic abuse is used by someone to control or obtain power over another person. It can include physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, emotional and financial abuse.

Home isn't always a safe place. During this difficult time, it is important to remember that domestic abuse and controlling behaviour doesn't stop whether we're in lockdown or national restrictions.

HELP & SUPPORT

For victims of domestic abuse, lockdown means they are now having to isolate themselves with their perpetrators.

For people experiencing domestic abuse, it is important they know they are not alone. Here are some useful resources to follow when giving support and advice:

The Domestic Abuse Support Service in Northumberland provides 24-hour specialist support and advice for women and men who are at risk of domestic abuse. Call **01670 820199** or find out more:

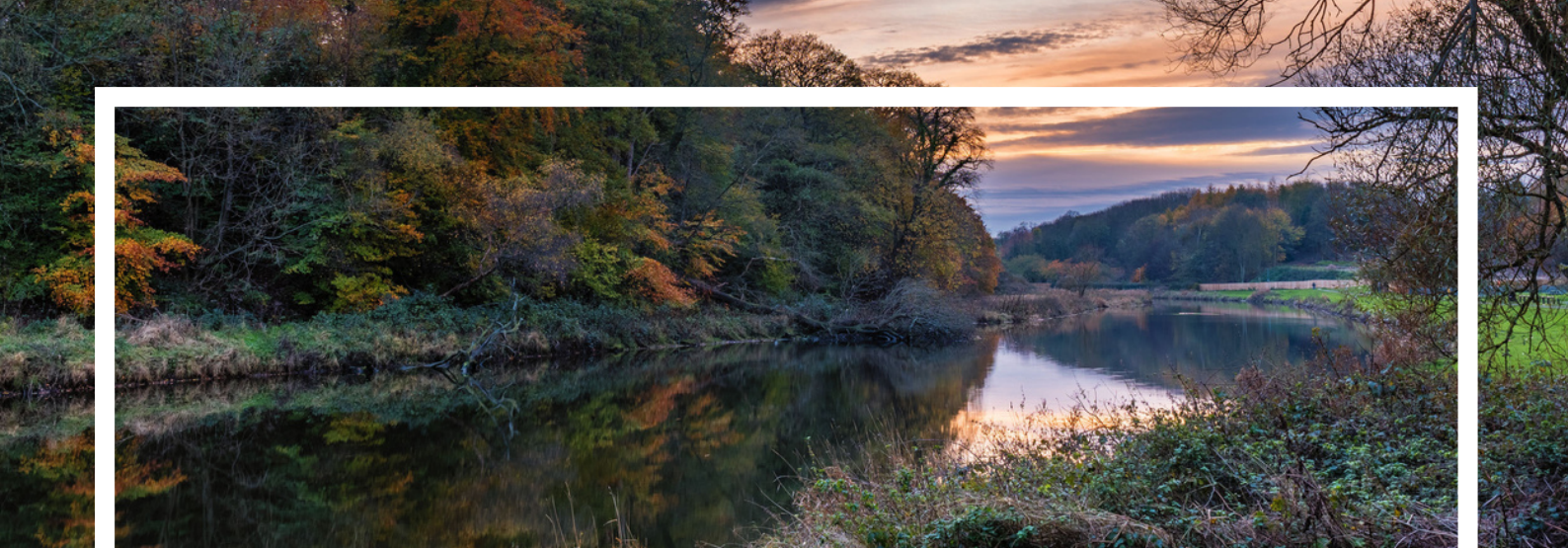
<https://bit.ly/PFPDomesticAbuse>

If you are worried about someone or are a victim yourself, please contact us for support by calling **01670 820 199**

Remember: call **999** if you are in immediate danger

Find out more about services available in Northumberland:

<https://bit.ly/2ODIsOS>



HELP & SUPPORT

Domestic Abuse Services Continued

Northumberland Domestic Abuse Service offers a free and confidential service providing emotional and practical support.

Call 01434 608030 or find out more: <https://www.nda.services/>

Safe Lives have support around domestic abuse and Covid-19. Find out more: <https://bit.ly/safelivesDA>

Women's Aid offers a confidential online chat service, find out more: <https://bit.ly/WomansAidLiveChat>

If you are worried about the immediate welfare of an adult or child, please contact Onecall on 01670 536 400



HELP & SUPPORT

Children's Mental Health

The current situation has meant that more people across all ages are experiencing mental health issues including loneliness.

We're fortunate in Northumberland to be working with lots of partners, charities and services that have excellent resources that you can signpost residents to, or use yourself, to stay well. Talk to your connector or single point of contact for more information.

With children going back to school this could be bringing up a lot of mixed feelings. Pupils' experiences of the pandemic will be very varied. Some, despite restrictions, will feel safe and mostly enjoy their time. For others, it will be challenging or even traumatic. Schools and teachers are used to supporting their pupils through challenges that they face in life – the current situation will amplify those situations many times over.

The Mental Health Foundation has created lots of resource guides for pupils, teaches, parents and caregivers which can be found here: www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/school-guidance-for-coping-with-coronavirus

Free School Meals

Children and young people eligible for free school meals will continue to receive support during the Easter break thanks to continued funding.

Northumberland County Council has received a further £345,000 as part of the government's Winter Support Grant Scheme ensuring those who are eligible for free school meals and families facing hardship during this time can get access to support.

HELP & SUPPORT

Free school meal funding has also been bolstered by the council to increase the £15 per week allocation to a total of £45 for the two-week period per child.

Parents and carers of eligible children are advised to contact their school directly to see what is in place for them. Families that are not in receipt of free school meals already but think their child(ren) may be eligible, should apply here:

www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/Meals/Free-school-meals.aspx

Those families that are not eligible but feeling financial pressures can access further support through Northumberland Communities Together.

The Winter Support Grant Scheme continues to enable the council to help households with food, or fuel and water payments.

Those families that are not eligible but feeling financial pressures can access further support through Northumberland Communities Together.



ONLINE TRAINING

We have created a page where you can find a range of free online digital learning modules.

Including:

- Safeguarding Children
- Safeguarding Adults Recognising and Responding to Domestic Abuse
- Stress Awareness
- Alcohol and Drug Awareness
- Health and Safety Awareness
- Equality and Diversity
- Prevent Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Early Help for Children and Families
- Covid 19

Volunteers and voluntary groups can get access to online learning by creating an individual learning account, please follow the steps below:

1. Go to **ncc.learningpool.com**, click on **Create New Account**
2. Choose a username (we recommend using your email address, as this is always unique and easily remembered)
3. Choose a password (please see the on screen guidance regarding the format of your password)

4. Enter your email address (you must enter an email address, if you do not already have one, you can easily create one through Google, Hotmail, etc)
5. Please enter your first and last names
6. Please click on **Choose Organisation**, you will see a white text box with two tabs at the top
 - i. Click on the Search tab, type “**Northumberland Communities Together**” into the search box, and click **Search**
 - ii. Select “**Northumberland Communities Together**” from the result beneath
 - iii. Click OK
7. Please click on **Choose Position**, and select “**Volunteer**” from the list that appears, then OK
8. Click Request New Account

You will receive an email confirming that your account has been approved (please note, you will receive an earlier email confirming your email address, this does not mean your account is approved. Please wait for that email before logging on)

Once your account is approved, you can log in to the system at ncc.learningpool.com, using the username and password you created.

You will then be able to access the learning resources from your home page.

Should you encounter any difficulties, please email Learningandod@northumberland.gov.uk.



FRAUD

Northumbria Police are reaffirming their commitment to tackling a cruel fraud which strips pensioners of their savings - by recruiting members of the community to be their eyes and ears.

Across the region, a number of vulnerable and elderly people have sadly fallen victim to a complex scam known as 'Courier Fraud'.

So far this year, Northumbria Police have received a number of reports pensioners in Hexham, Sunderland and South Tyneside have been targeted by fraudsters purporting to be police officers.

As part of the scam, they were told their bank accounts had been compromised and were asked to cooperate with the ongoing investigation by withdrawing large sums of money and handing the cash over to a courier – who would turn up on their doorstep and pass on the 'evidence' to police.

Thankfully those contacted all reported the incidents to Northumbria Police and a number of investigations remain ongoing. A total of 14 people have been arrested in connection with the alleged frauds.

There is no shame in falling foul to this complex scam, contact Northumbria Police immediately if you think you have been a victim, you will be fully supported by their officers. Here are a few key messages to remember and share with your networks:

FRAUD

- Fraudsters are cold-calling people, typically the elderly and the vulnerable, claiming to police officers
- They are informing victims there is fraudulent activity on their bank account and asking for their help in 'gathering evidence'
- Victims are instructed to withdraw cash and hand it over to a secure courier who will visit your address to collect 'the evidence'
- Often victims are targeted repeatedly and asked for more cash, vouchers or anything of value
- Northumbria Police is working with other a range of other forces and agencies as well as ActionFraud to combat this cruel scam
- These fraudsters are unscrupulous, callous and have no regard for the harm they are causing the most vulnerable
- Police will NEVER cold call you to inform you of a crime
- Police will NEVER ask you for money or any kind of financial information
- Police will NEVER sent a courier to your home
- If you think you have been cold-called, hang up immediately and when you're sure the line is clear - dial 101 to report



TRANSLATIONS

We want as many people as possible to have access to trusted and reliable information in all languages.

British Sign Language users can now contact Northumberland County Council using SignVideo Web Access, an online sign language interpreting service.

Find out more here:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/About/Contact/contacts.aspx#contactus>

Latest COVID-19 guidance, information in multiple languages are included at the link below.

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/covidlocal#languages>

More health advice can be found on Doctors of the World, who in partnership with the British Red Cross, Migrant Help and Clear Voice, have produced advice on Coronavirus (COVID-19) in 36 languages.

<https://www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk/coronavirus-information/>

The latest national guidance can be found online here:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> with each web page able to be translated into 36 languages.

SHARE YOUR GOOD NEWS

We love seeing the many different ways you have helped your community, so keep on sharing your good news stories so we can continue to celebrate you!

There are lots of ways to get involved across our social media and see all the fantastic work other groups are doing. Tag us in your tweets and posts, send us an email and connect with us on social media.



[@NlandTogether](https://twitter.com/NlandTogether)



[NlandTogether](https://www.facebook.com/NlandTogether)



NCT@northumberland.gov.uk



- **Covid-19:** For more information: bit.ly/healthmattersblog
- **Social Distancing:** Staying more than two metres apart from anyone who is not in your household.
- **Self Isolation:** Staying at home and not seeing anyone else in person, except for those you live with. You can find guidelines on this here: bit.ly/govstayhome

GLOSSARY

- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards that could cause illness or injury . It is now compulsory to wear face coverings in shops & on public transport in England: <https://bit.ly/PublicTransportFaceMask>
- **Support bubble:** If you live alone or are a single parent with dependent children, you can form a 'support bubble' with one other household. All those in a support bubble will be able to act as if they live in the same household - meaning they can spend time together inside each other's homes and do not need to stay 2 metres apart. Support bubbles should be exclusive - meaning you should not switch the household you are in a bubble with or connect with multiple households
- **Contact Tracing:** Government scheme to reduce coronavirus infection. If a person tests positive for coronavirus, they speak to a contact tracer or complete an online form giving details of who they have been physically close to. People who have been in close contact will be told to isolate for 10 days. This also works in conjunction with the 'NHS COVID-19' app. Find out more here: [http://bit.ly/TrackAndTraceApp](https://bit.ly/TrackAndTraceApp)



CONTACT

- The community response hub has been set up for groups, volunteers and residents to get in touch, be connected and find support **01670 620015** or email **northumberlandcommunitiestogether@northumberland.gov.uk** between 9am to 6pm, seven days a week
- Onecall **01670 536 400** - If you are worried about a child or adult's immediate welfare. For more information: bit.ly/NHSONeCall
- Business Support - we are working to support businesses through this challenging time. Our businesses are vitally important to our county. For more information: bit.ly/NCCBizHub
- NHS 111 - Only call **111** if you cannot get an answer from the online site <https://111.nhs.uk>
- In an emergency always call **999**



WEB LINKS

- Guidance on setting up a mutual aid group : www.covidmutualaid.org/resources
- Follow the latest stay at home advice at: bit.ly/NHSIsolationAdvice
- Overview of COVID-19 and up-to-date advice: bit.ly/NHSup-to-date
- NHS 111: <https://111.nhs.uk/>
- Northumberland County Council's COVID-19 information page: www.northumberland.gov.uk/coronavirus
- Government guidance on cleaning: <https://bit.ly/GOVcleaning>
- For the latest posters, videos and social media graphics you can go to the Public Health Campaign Resource Centre, for which you'll need to register: bit.ly/PHECovidResources

Northumberland Communities Together Team March 2021

Other formats: If you need this information in any other format or language please call us :
01670 620015 9am to 6pm, seven days a week or email : NCT@northumberland.gov.uk



Northumberland
County Council

Northumberland *communities together*

