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NEWS

InformationNOW

Wishing you a safe and merry Christmas and happy and peaceful New Year.

You can use InformationNOW 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Log in any time to [access your personal account](#) on InformationNOW or to [update your organisation's information](#).

Looking for our archive newsletters ? just go to [news](#) and they are available in date order.

Updated organisations: [The Byker Pantry](#) and [Friends against Scams](#)

Updated articles : [food banks and free emergency food in Newcastle](#)

The InformationNOW team are responsible for [Your Equipment Newcastle](#) where you can review your needs by answering some questions and get a personal report - perhaps you need something to help you pick things up, open a jar, special cutlery or a higher toilet seat? Read information tailored to you.

Kate and Carol will be out of the office from Tuesday 23 December and will return on Monday 4th January 2020.

Vaccine priorities

The NHS will contact you to offer you the vaccine. Please don't turn up at A&E, urgent treatment centres or your GP. Here is a link to the [poster](#) and more about the [vaccine](#).

Is the NHS confident the vaccine is safe??

Yes. The NHS will not offer any Covid-19 vaccinations to the public until experts have signed off that it is safe to do so.??The MHRA, the official UK regulator, has said this vaccine is very safe and highly effective, and they have full confidence in their expert judgement and processes.

As with any medicine, vaccines are highly regulated products. There are checks at every stage in the development and manufacturing process, and continued monitoring once it has been authorised and is being used in the wider population.

Coronavirus and Christmas information

- [How to access your GP during coronavirus](#)
- Visit your local [pharmacy](#) for help with cough, colds, viruses and eye/ear problems. There are now three main [Urgent Care Treatment Centres](#) (these have replaced the former Walk in Centres, but only [Ponteland Road](#) is open during coronavirus. Call [NHS 111](#) for immediate advice.
- The [CityLife line](#) service has been set up with partners in the voluntary and community sector for people wanting to volunteer their time while also providing a service for people to register their need for assistance. There are changed opening hours over Christmas.
- [Meals at Home](#) will be delivering hot meals every day of the Christmas period.

- Surrey and Borders NHS Trust has shared a video on [Christmas Bubbles](#) for people with a Learning Disability.
 - If you plan to travel during the 23 to 27 December you can find out all about [Stagecoach](#) bus services, timetable changes and travelling safely.
 - If you are living with dementia or think you may have it, this [Dementia Tip Share website](#) may help you. It is compiled by others who are living with dementia and have therefore experienced what you may be going through.
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Grief over Christmas

Last week we ran a feature on [coping over Christmas](#) if you are bereaved. Here is contact information to share and pass on for help and support locally and nationally.

- Marie Curie Information and Support Line is open every day apart from 27th December and 3rd January Tel 0800 090 2309. For details of opening hours each day please see their website
- [Marie Curie Hospice Newcastle](#) COVID Bereavement Support fully reopens 4th January for responses to referrals and enquiries made after 23rd December. Call Louise Bowen on Tel 07754 747982 or see the referral link on the organisation entry
- You can call [Mental Health Crisis Team](#), at CNTW; Tel: 0191 814 8899 or 0800 6522863 or Tel 0303 123 1146
- [Samaritans](#): 24-hour telephone helpline offer emotional support to people experiencing distress or despair. Tel 116 123 If you would prefer to text, support is available from [SHOUT](#), the 24/7 UK text service for people in crisis, on 85258.
- [Cruse Bereavement Care](#) will be open as usual over the holiday period, offering a listening ear and emotional support to anyone who has lost someone they love, or been affected by a bereavement. The freephone number is 0808 808 1677. Lines are open Christmas day and Boxing day.

Read our [Urgent Medical Advice](#) information and [Mental Health Crisis](#) information.

Feeling lonely?

Over half a million older people will spend Christmas alone this year and many people

will find themselves isolated. If you have friends, relatives or neighbours who may be lonely this Christmas can you give them a call, connect using What's App or Facebook or Zoom/Skype or send them a card?

[Getting online and digital equipment](#)

[Staying connected during the coronavirus](#)

[Social Networking](#)

[What you can do online](#)

One of the best ways of coping with loneliness is to volunteer, meet new people and get connected with a community or place. This year, this has been much harder to do unless you are volunteering with the voluntary sector or a food bank. So, why not keep in touch with someone in a care home this Christmas? [Kirkwood Court Care home](#) is looking for pen pals for residents with similar interests. [Contact](#)

[The Silver Line](#) is the confidential, free helpline for older people across the UK open every day and night of the year and they offer befriending calls.

[Good Gym](#) are always looking for more runners ? they help people as part of their run. You can keep fit and healthy and help someone in need.

Read more about [volunteering](#).

Christmas recycling tips

Christmas always creates additional waste such as, wrapping paper, toy boxes or food waste, so please recycle as much as possible. Top tips include:

- scrunch aluminium kitchen foil, tub and pot lids and wrappers together to form a ball ? the bigger the ball, the easier it is to recycle
- empty plastic sweet and chocolate tubs can be recycled
- excess cardboard, wrapping paper and glass can be taken to your nearest Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC)
- if wrapping paper holds its shape when crunched, then it is recyclable; if it springs back it is not
- Christmas cards and wrapping paper with glitter cannot be recycled
- polystyrene and bubble wrap cannot be recycled

Did you get a real Christmas tree this year? [St Oswald's Hospice](#) are running a Christmas tree-cycle scheme. For £10 they will come and collect your tree and Greentech services will turn it into compost. All monies go to St Oswald's. Book here. Alternatively take it to an HWRC.

Local shopping at the Laing

The [Laing Art Gallery shop](#) is open until Christmas Eve. Shop local this Christmas and browse homewares, fashion, jewellery, prints and books. Don't miss their sale across 2021 calendars and Christmas decorations. All profit made from sales in the shop goes directly into funding the Laing, its collections, exhibitions and events. Please note only the shop will be open, not the gallery.

Christmas events and activities to book or online

Silverline Memories Christmas Party online for people with dementia Contact [Sandra](#)

Great North Museum Christmas activities online

[Glasgow Science Centre Christmas Extravaganza for families with young children](#)

Make snowflakes or a wreath, look for reindeer and make gingerbread.

[The Centre for Life](#) has teamed up with a Great British Bake Off contestant to create a gingerbread house. Follow the video. Too late to enter the competition though.

Unfolding Theatre is performing Winter Tales in Byker and Walker. Book

[Healthworks](#) Christmas activities pack

A weekend of festive markets

Along with Quayside and Grainger Markets, which are open this weekend there is also the first ever Ouseburn Christmas Outdoor Market, Saturday 19 to Sunday 20 December, 10am - 4pm. Arranged by Ouseburn Valley organisations you can find local artists and gifts of glass, wood, headwear and more,

The Jesmond Food Market will be taking place on Armstrong Bridge this Saturday, between 10am and 3pm. Food and gin - what more do we need?

When visiting any market, please follow the guidance, and remember to keep safe ? hands, face, space

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