InformationNOW
Information for people in Newcastle upon Tyne

11 September 2020

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NEWS

The Massive Get Together 17 September

Ten leading charities are coming together to create an online event through which they can entertain the nation and raise much needed funds. Charities involved include: RVS, Crisis, Volunteering Matters, Marie Curie and St John Ambulance, all of which operate in our City. They have secured some top acts including: Mylene Klass, Nadine Boyle, Chesney Hawkes, Basil Brush and the cast of Only Fools and Horses performing a new sketch. Hosted by Gaby Roslin. Why not buy a ticket and spread the word for this crowd funder.

Proposed changes to the highway code – opportunity to contribute; Closing date 22 November

A consultation has been launched seeking your views on proposed changes to the Highway Code. The review is being held by the Department for Transport, to improve safety on pavements for:

- wheelchair users
- people with visual impairments
- prams or buggies

The main changes being proposed are to:

- extend the London-style ban on pavement parking
- make it easier for councils to pass laws to prevent pavement parking
- give councils the power to fine offenders

You can read and respond to the consultation online, complete a form or send an email to share your views.

Emergency Central Heating Offer

The Emergency Central Heating Offer (ECHO) scheme reopens on 7 September 2020. ECHO can offer replacement central heating boilers to residents if the following applies:

- they are a home owner;
- they have a gas boiler which is not working and beyond economical repair;
- they receive an eligible benefit www.gov.uk/energy-company-obligation or have a household income less than £26,000 per year

Please contact Energy Services for more information by email at energy@newcastle.gov.uk

Read our InformationNOW articles on gas and electricity and help with heating problems

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Changes to care home visits

Due to the increase in infection rates the Council is now asking that Care Homes across Newcastle temporarily suspend non-essential visits; this is in line with other local authorities in the region. They appreciate that this will be difficult for families who are unable to visit their loved ones, but it is an essential step to protect the most vulnerable residents in our communities and to prevent further infections. The Adult Social Care service will continue to monitor the situation closely and will revisit these temporary measures as soon as possible. Full guidance on care home visiting arrangements can be accessed from the Government's website.

Read InformationNOW articles on care homes in Newcastle and choosing a care home and leaving hospital for a care home.

FEATURES

Passive smoking – second hand smoke is poison

Both children and adults are at risk from second hand smoke, but for adults, at a time when people are being encouraged to stay fit and healthy to reduce their risk from COVID-19, there is evidence that second-hand smoke can have the following effects on health:

- trigger and worsen asthma, leading to more symptoms and needing more medicines to manage asthma. (Source: Asthma UK)
- cause lung cancer (Source: Cancer Research UK)
- cause heart disease and stroke (Source: Ash)
- increase the risk of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease or COPD (Source: PubMed.gov)

Many people are spending much more time at home during the coronavirus and some may not easily be able to get out into a garden or outside space to smoke without affecting others. Please try and cut back if you can. There are services to help you stop smoking even during this difficult time of the pandemic.

More on cancer and screening. causes and symptoms of asthma, heart disease, heart attacks, causes and symptoms of stroke and causes and symptoms of COPD.

Artists in residency – get involved

Newcastle Arts Team encourages, supports and facilitates participation in high-quality creative activities by people who, for a variety of reasons, might not otherwise have that opportunity. They are currently looking for groups or individuals 50+ to engage in two new artist residencies both starting in October 2020.

Residency 1: Ageing Residency working with a Film Maker, October 2020 – June 2021

Newcastle Arts Team, in partnership with the National Innovation Centre for Ageing, has commissioned a film maker to engage local community participants of all ages living in the city, in the creation of several short films based on the theme of ageing through the pandemic – the challenges, the benefits and the discrimination.

They will explore the power of language, cultural differences, online engagement, community support, health and wellbeing; on our journey together through this pandemic.

The final film/s will be showcased and screened in local and city centre venues in June 2021 (if Covid guidelines allow) as well as online; and participants involved along with academics, will be invited to discuss and share their involvement.

Residency 2: Intergenerational Words & Worlds working with two artists/writers.

Many people of all ages have struggled, some feeling lonely and isolated from all around them during the pandemic. Many have not been able to connect with family and friends for various reasons; maybe they have been shielding or working on the front line. This residency will explore intergenerational experiences of what lockdown has meant to individuals and what changes, good or bad, they have had to make. Participants will be engaged in creative writing sessions, to support them to express their feelings and share their life experiences of lockdown.

If you think you would like to get involved in one of the above residencies, please contact:

Email Alison Flanagan Wood, Arts Development Officer by the end of September 2020.

National Rheumatoid Arthritis awareness week

This week is Rheumatoid Arthritis Awareness Week. Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) is an inflammatory arthritis which affects approximately 400,000 people in the UK; it can occur at any age although the common age of onset is between 40 and 60, the disease usually presents initially in the hands and feet. It's a disease that affects three times more women than men under the age of 65. Women tend to develop it younger than men, with symptoms typically appearing between the ages of 30 and 50 – some can even start to develop it in their teens. An early diagnosis can help. It means you will get appropriate treatment, such as immuno-suppressives, that help you carry on with daily living. Ask your GP for a referral to a rheumatologist if you think there is something serious, as this is a long term condition.

These are the alert signs for Rheumatoid Arthritis and Psoriatic Arthritis:

- swelling of the small joints or hands or feet
- stiffness in joints for at least 30 minutes in the morning
- squeeze test – pain on squeezing across hands or feet

See a video from the National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society which helps you think about your symptoms.

Read the InformationNOW articles on: preventing arthritis and symptoms of arthritis and Local support groups for Long Term conditions

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InformationNOW Updates

New and updated organisations
Happiest at Home
Elswick Community Leisure
Northern Learning TrustExtra Care housing
Conaty House
Allerdale House

Updated articlesHousing for older people
Arthritis
Looking for Work

Newcastle Allotments and Garden Show goes online

Celebrate the annual show online with Urban Green this year. You can submit and share your photos on their Facebook page now. They want:

- photographs and videos of produce grown this year
- blogs and vlogs of growing your plants, vegetables and ?owers
- video tutorials for jam making, beekeeping, hot bins, ?ower arranging
- how to guides on re-purposing and environmental sustainability
- family recipes with produce grown in your allotment

On 19th September there will be a celebration with prizes:

- quirkiest shed internal
- allotmenteering in Lockdown (text/photos/video)
- strangest shaped fruit(s) or vegetable(s)
- best up-cycled scarecrow (under 500mm)
- kid's drawing of favourite fruits, vegetables – 8yrs and under / 9-16yrs
- garden in a cup

Submit your entries

Have a look at our gardening and health article on InformationNOW. We also include microgreens and windowsill growing.

Last updated: November 26, 2020

Recent Newsletters:

InformationNow News 23 October 2026
NEWS InformationNOW A lot of work is happening behind the scenes as we continue to work on the InformationNow refresh. Once again, we'd like to thank everyone who provided feedback – your ideas and ...
InformationNow News 9 October 2026
NEWS Autumn Neighbourhood Networks A big thank you to all who attended the latest round of Newcastle Neighbourhood Networks events! It was great to see so many there representing the local services and organisat...