

8 January 2021

NEWS

Online information
Covid 19 updates
Last chance to claim Power of Attorney fee refund

FEATURES

Dry January
Your weight and wellbeing
Veganuary

Get involved

Public Consultation on North East Transport – 15 year plan
Internet use across different age demographics
Volunteers with digital skills needed

InformationNOW

Events and activities
Articles and organisation new and updated

NEWS

Online information

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.

The InformationNOW team are responsible for [Your Equipment Newcastle](#) where you can review your equipment and aids 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? You will receive a report with information tailored to you.

Covid 19 updates

Latest Government advice – [stay at home](#)

[Latest figures for Newcastle and the North East.](#)

[Answers to Frequently asked questions](#)

Public Health has issued a new campaign to inform us about the new variant of Covid-19. In particular, they highlight the fact that [1 in 3 of us has no symptoms](#) but does carry the virus. Please stay at home and remember hands, face, space.

The latest version of the Council's booklet 'Where to get benefit and debt advice in Newcastle' is now available on this [Council webpage](#): It includes the latest changes to services due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

InformationNOW has a section on [benefits](#) that are available and eligibility criteria. There may be a number of benefits that you are not aware of – from [bereavement benefit](#) to [attendance allowance](#).

[CityLife line](#) is still available call 0800 170 7001 or complete the online form if you are self-isolating and you need some support.

Cyber scams during coronavirus

Fraudsters are claiming to be officers from Northumbria Police and the National Crime Agency asking them to buy Google Play cards. This divulges personal account information.

Scammers are calling as law enforcement and claiming there are issues with their would-be victims' National Insurance number.

If you receive any calls like this, do not transfer any money, give any personal details, or purchase any type of vouchers.

Ask for an incident number and hang up. When you are sure the line is clear you can check this with [Northumbria Police](#) by calling 101 or using their online reporting tool.

There is also a scam offering the vaccine if you pay for it. The NHS will not offer this online and will contact you through your GP surgery. This is the [vaccine priority poster](#).

Remember your bank, the police, will never:

- Ask you to transfer money out of your account
- Ask you to withdraw money to hand over to them for safe-keeping
- Send someone to your home to collect cash, PINs, cards, vouchers or cheque books
- Phone and ask you for your full PIN or full banking password

You can report suspected fraudsters to [Action Fraud](#) on 0300 123 2040

More on [cyber scams](#).

Last chance to claim Power of Attorney fee refund

If you registered a Power of Attorney between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2017 you can claim a refund of part of your application fee. Claims must be made by 1 February 2021. This applies to lasting powers of attorney (LPA) and enduring powers of attorney (EPA). [Find out more](#)

Have you thought about putting your [Power of Attorney](#) in place? It's something worth thinking about to get your affairs in order.

FEATURES

Dry January 2021

You may already have begun your Dry January [alcohol](#) plan or you may be on day 8. Either way, [people who sign up](#) are twice as likely to stay dry throughout the month and to enjoy all the benefits, compared to those who try to do it alone. [The idea of Dry January](#) is to reset your relationship with alcohol so that in the future you may drink less frequently and avoid binge drinking. Remember to eat healthy meals and keep hydrated with water. Ideally, you are aiming to reduce your alcohol consumption every week, not just for the month, and to keep a few days a week when you don't drink at all.

Benefits you may notice

Your sleeping pattern will improve and you will notice an increase in your energy levels. While many people find that alcohol can help them fall into a deeper sleep faster, this sleep is less restful and less time is spent in [REM sleep](#)

A reduced intake means that more calories are entering the body from food, rather than drink, which means that you have a potentially higher vitamin intake which will help combat illness. It can also help your skin look healthier and youthful.

Alcohol has the potential to suppress your immune system, which could make you more susceptible to the cold and flu and reduce your ability to fight off illness.

There are lots of organisations listed in this [article](#) that can help you cope with making these changes. Locally there is the [Newcastle Treatment and Recovery Service](#). If you are affected by someone who drinks then contact local support through [PROPS](#).

Your weight and wellbeing

Christmas and the lockdowns may well have changed your eating habits and you may be aware that you have put weight on. If you have been shielding and doing less activity, that may also have led to [weight gain](#). Why not see the New Year as a chance to focus on getting fit and healthy – ready to get out and about and feel good when we are able to do so again.

[Take the Wellness Reboot Quiz](#) to find out how well you're doing now. Then get personalised tips, tools, offers and advice to help your wellbeing. From Boots and [Public Health England](#).

Being over weight can really affect your health and wellbeing. It can create or worsen other health conditions including;

- Heart attacks
- High Blood Pressure
- Type 2 Diabetes
- Depression
- Stroke
- Heart Disease

There are articles about all these conditions on InformationNOW.

Public Health Newcastle has a strategy that is out for consultation. Have your say at [Let's Talk obesity – a whole systems approach](#)

Veganuary

2021 is the year for positive change to our health and planet and Veganuary is urging everyone to take up this opportunity to reshape the future and sign up to try vegan this month. Their message is echoed by Brian May, Ricky Gervais, Paul McCartney, John Bishop, Sara Pascoe, Chris Packham, Chrissie and other celebrities and politicians who want to help fight climate chaos and prevent future pandemics by changing our diets

[The Vegan Society](#) has an app you can download and .you will need to ensure that you are still eating a [balanced diet with nutrients](#) across the food groups. Here is a [useful list](#) of vegan trademark products.

Public consultation on North East Transport – 15 year plan

North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) has launched a public consultation into a 15-year Transport Plan that will seek to transform the region's transport network and help move to a green, healthy, dynamic and thriving North East. To ensure that the Plan will deliver big and lasting improvements that will shape the North East it must reflect the identities and interests of local communities across the entire region and beyond. As such the JTC group has launched an eight-week consultation to hear from as many people as possible, who live, work and learn in this region.

You can find out more by reading the document or watching a video which explains the proposed changes.

The consultation runs until 14th January 2021 and you can [have your say online](#) or [email](#) or ring 0191 433 2973, Monday to Friday, 9 to 4.30pm.

GET INVOLVED

Internet use across different age demographics

Rhian Lukins is a final year student at Northumbria University and the co-ordinator of Project ICE (see events and activities). Rhian is looking for participants to take part in this internet use study using weekly questionnaires, lasting approximately 5 minutes each week, followed up by an optional interview. You must be aged over 55, and you must be able to access your emails every week to receive the website link hosting the questionnaire. The study will commence during January 2021 so [email](#) for further details. You will receive an acknowledgement.

Volunteers with digital skills needed

[Elders Council](#) with Mental Health Concern and other voluntary organisations are recruiting tech buddies to provide regular, friendly one to one individual support to people who have no knowledge of, or find it difficult to use the internet and are unsure where to start and how to use it safely. If you are a confident IT user and have a few hours to spare, why not help someone else? You will be given full training and support. For further information please contact [Barbara](#) or phone: 0191 208 2701

Events and activities

[Beccy Owen's pop up choirs](#)

[Digital Art course](#)

[Grief, Loss and bereavement training](#) for managers and employers

[Project ICE](#) – finding out what IT help you need

[Big garden birdwatch](#) with the RSPB

Updated articles and new and updated organisations

[Home care](#)

[The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds RSPB](#)

[Difference North East](#)

[Lymphoma Action](#)

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