

InfoNOWNews 8 April 2022

News

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It's free to register as a member. Did you know that you can...

- **save your favourite and frequently used pages, so you revisit and share them quickly.** They're colour coded to help you see at a glance if you're looking at an information page, organisation or events.
- **create a personal calendar of events you're interested in or what's going on in your neighbourhood week by week.**

As more activities open up, we will be adding them to InformationNOW. You can share your calendar easily by email or print it out and put it on the wall in your community venue

See more on [About Us](#)

Equity release borrowers draw more than 7 x income from their homes in 2021

By the end of last year, the equity release market saw customers withdraw £125,000 on average as a single lump sum or in incremental drawdowns.

Overall, equity release lending activity for 2021 was six times greater than in 2011 (£4.8bn vs. £789m) with product choice having more than trebled in the last three years alone .

The equity release market's return to growth is part of a wider pick-up in later life lending activity and the flexible design of modern lifetime mortgages which gives customers more ways to manage their finances and access life-changing sums of money at a lower cost. There are processes in place to ensure that the most vulnerable are supported to make their choices, though many still struggle to talk to their families about finances.

At the same time, factors such as high house prices (10%), as well as the hassle and cost that the moving process can involve (31%) are major influences on the decision of people over 50 years old to stay put.

[Read more on InformationNOW about equity release](#)

Guided Heritage Walks, May to July

[Newcastle City Guides](#) has published its schedule of [guided walks for Spring/Summer](#). The walks include: Fenham Features, A bed for the Night, Quayside and Whitley Bay Wander. Booking is essential.

[Read more on InformationNOW about art galleries, museums and attractions.](#)

NHS Mental Health Support line

If you need a helping hand with your mental health, there's a range of services locally to support you. A new option is the NHS support line offering listening, practical and emotional help for anyone aged 16 and over. The support line is run by the charity [Tyneside and Northumberland Mind](#), with support from NHS Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The service supports people with daily mental health challenges as well as helping anyone who feels they may be heading towards a crisis point. Dr David Jones, a local GP and the CCG's Assistant Clinical Chair, said:

"The new support line means there is a caring and supportive person available by phone every day. If you need a different kind of support, the support line team can put you in touch with the service that's best for your needs."

Tyneside and Northumberland Mind's support line offers listening, practical and emotional support seven days a week from 8am to 10pm (age 16+) on 0191 477 4545 or 0330 174 3174 (calls charged at local rate) for people living in Newcastle and Gateshead.

It's one of a range of services offering support with your mental health.

[Read more on InformationNOW about mental health and organisations that can help you including a texting service](#)

Opportunities for action

Rainbow Call companion Service

[ReEngage](#), a charity dedicated to combating loneliness and social isolation in those aged 75 and over, hopes its new *Rainbow call companions* will create a safe environment where people feel comfortable having open conversations. The service is specifically for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender + people aged 75 and over who would like to speak to someone who's also LGBT+.[?]The same volunteer will phone each week to provide much needed friendship and conversation.

With the charity's commitment to reaching a more diverse population of older people, it conducted interviews and an online survey to better understand how it could provide services to older LGBT + people based on their specific needs.

Research shows that as an older LGBT+ person, you are more likely to live alone, be single and less likely to see your biological family regularly. You are also less likely to have intergenerational relationships and children which can lead to dwindling contacts.

If you would like to be matched with one of their friendly rainbow call companions, or know someone aged 75 and over from the LGBT+ community who could benefit from a weekly chat, contact them on their freephone number.

They are always looking for volunteers too.

[Read more on InformationNOW about volunteering and feeling lonely](#)

GoodGym gardening missions

Now that Spring is here, you may be needing help with the garden. [GoodGym](#) are always happy to help, but professionals who are referring should remember the following information when asking for a gardening mission for member, charity, church or community space.

- you can only request a gardening mission if there is a wellbeing or safety issue
- gardening missions should be listed at least one week in advance to ensure they can find enough runners
- try and include evening and weekend time slots for a higher chance of success
- runners cannot bring tools with them, so the appropriate tools should be available at the property

You might also wish to consider listing the referral for more than one runner if it's a particularly big task. Their runners love the chance to garden with their friends

Why not volunteer as a runner. They are also looking for people to do simple household tasks for people who need a little help.

[Read more on InformationNOW about gardening and health and Help with gardening](#)

Vindolanda Excavations 2022

Starting from April to September, you can watch the archaeologists reveal the many layers of Vindolanda in Hexham. The current excavation area is the South West quadrant of the 3rd Century fort. The archaeology extends from AD85, pre Hadrian's Wall through to the post Roman period.

More on the [1900 Hadrian's Wall Country events](#) including: Militaria Exhibition at the Roman Army Museum, Greenhead and Epiacum: A fort for all Seasons until September 20th (photography competition) at Alston and a guided walk by the Ouseburn Trust.

Want to get involved by delivering events and activities? [Get involved.](#)

[Read more on InformationNOW about things to do in Newcastle and the North East](#)

Spotlight On

Parkinson's Month

[Parkinson's disease](#) is a progressive neurological condition affecting movements such as, walking, talking and writing. About 120,000 people in the UK are affected; usually people over the age of 50 years old.

World Parkinson's Day belongs to the Parkinson's community. This year, on 11 April, [Parkinson's UK](#) is supporting 2 activities, chosen and led by a group of dedicated and passionate volunteers: Poems for Parkinson's and Light Up Blue for Parkinson's. Whether you have Parkinson's, are close to someone with the condition, or just want to spread awareness, it's really easy to take part.

[Download the guide to find out how you can talk about Parkinson's on 11 April \(PDF\)](#)

[Read more on InformationNOW about self care and disability](#)

Reports

Over half a million women face long waits for gynaecology care

New data shows gynaecology waiting lists have faced the biggest increase of all medical specialities. The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) has [published a report](#) revealing the devastating impact on the 570,000 women in the UK who are facing prolonged waits for gynaecology appointments, diagnoses and treatments.

- women living with debilitating symptoms say they are suffering with poor mental health as more than 1 in 20 people in England face a year long wait for treatment
- The RCOG is calling for an overhaul of the way the NHS prioritises treatment

The RCOG surveyed 2,300 women about their experiences of maternity and mental health associated problems.

The RCOG has a Women's Involvement Panel of over 700 users. They aren't seeking voices at present, but email them if you are interested. womensvoices@rcog.org.uk.

[Read more about women's health on InformationNOW](#)

Your lung health check

The [NHS Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group](#) is reminding you to get a lung health check. If you're aged 55 to 74 and have ever smoked, you may get a letter from your GP inviting you to a [lung health check](#).

Your lung health check is important. Spotting problems early can make a big difference – and just might save your life. There are a number of illness associated with the lungs including: [asthma](#), [COPD](#) and [cancer](#).

If you are worried by signs or symptoms contact your GP.

Northern Powergrid – Energy Saving App launched

[Northern Powergrid](#) has teamed up with the [Energy Saving Trust](#) to launch a new app which is packed with advice, guidance and top tips to help you be energy efficient in every room in your house. [The Powergrid – Energy Saving App](#) is free to download and provides independent advice so you can make informed decisions for your household. Download from Apple Store and Google Play.

Urgent Treatment Centres and Pharmacies

Remember [to use your GP Surgery Well](#) and order your repeat prescription/s ahead of the bank holiday/s. However, it's coming up to Easter and the GP surgeries may be closed for an extended period. Another option is to use an Urgent Treatment Centre. These are GP-led services for minor injuries and illnesses. Urgent Treatment Centres can assess and treat things like minor burns, infected wounds, sprains, cuts and possible broken bones. No appointment needed.

Urgent treatment centres in Newcastle

- [Molineux Street, Byker](#), NE6 1SG open 8am to 10pm daily
- [Ponteland Road Health Centre](#), NE5 3AE open 8am to 10pm daily
- [Newcastle Urgent Treatment Centre \(Westgate Road\)](#) NE4 6BE, 8am to 8pm every day.

Pharmacists are highly trained healthcare professionals who can diagnose and treat minor illnesses from sickness to hay fever. They have a quiet area if you need to speak in private. For many common illnesses, if the pharmacist feels you need medicine, they can provide it without you seeing your GP first. If you don't normally pay for prescriptions, this will be free and you will need to confirm that you are entitled to free prescriptions. [Read more on InformationNOW about Urgent Treatment Centres and Pharmacists](#)

Events & Activities

Please remember to send us your Queen's Jubilee events so that we can promote them to the wider public. Email: InformationNOW@Newcastle.gov.uk

Making Music Together

The Globe, 15th April to 18th April

Positive Behavioural Support Workshops with Skills for People starting 26 April

Celebrate 30 Years at Jesmond Pool for families
23 April
Anniversary Swim at Jesmond Pool
23 April

Hadrian's Huzzah
13 April 11 am to 3 pm

Adult ADHD Support Group meeting at ReCoCo
28 April 6 to 9 pm

Coming up:

Jesmond Community Festival
7 May to 5 June

Update articles

[Northumbrian Victim and Witness Service](#) is the rebranded concept from the former Victims First Northumbria.

Adult ADHD Support Groups North East
ADHD is a mental health condition that is defined through analysis of behaviour. People with ADHD show a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity–impulsivity that interferes with day-to-day functioning and/or development. The support groups meeting across the North East including in Newcastle at ReCoCo. [CNTW has a diagnosis service for ADHD](#)

[Silverline Memories](#) is a charity that provides a range of services and activities for people living with Dementia and their Carers across Newcastle. These are mainly online at present.

[The Josephine and Jack Project](#) provides courses for people with learning disabilities to help them make their own choices about life and love.

Urgent Treatment Centres

There are 3 urgent treatment centres in Newcastle. Their opening times have changed. And you can now walk in without an appointment at Westgate Road.

[Read more on InformationNOW about Urgent Treatment Centres](#)

Holiday activities – Best Ever Schemes

[Holiday activities](#) is our page that helps to keep people who receive free school meals up to date with what's available to children and families during the school holidays.

Signs of hearing loss

You may be losing your hearing if you:

- misunderstand people or need to ask them to repeat things
- think people are mumbling
- don't hear the doorbell or the telephone ringing
- need to turn the volume up on the television or radio and receive complaints
- find it difficult to hear at social gatherings or when there is some background noise, even though other people manage to have conversations.
- miss your name being called, for example at your GP's surgery.

[The Royal Institute for the Deaf \(RNID\)](#) has an online hearing checker where you can check your hearing range. It's not the same as a full hearing test carried out by an audiologist (hearing specialist), but it's a quick and reliable way to find out if you need one.

[Read the Deaf and hard of hearing article in full on InformationNOW](#)

Dementia

Dementia is a term used to describe various disorders involving a loss of brain function, such as thinking, memory, reasoning and language.

We've added the Search Newcastle profile to our [dementia](#) pages and to our events section – search for Memory Cafe and Memory tea.

[Read more on InformationNOW about Dementia Friendly Newcastle](#)

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