

24th March 2023 InfoNOW News

Record visits to InformationNOW

January to March 2023

2023 has been a busy time for us all. Since January more people have visited InformationNOW than ever before. With well over 200,000 visitors in the last 3 months!. Heres what people in Newcastle are looking for information about:

- [Food banks and free emergency food in Newcastle](#)
- [Free meals and cheap food in Newcastle](#)
- [Donating your body to science](#)
- [Grandparent issues](#)
- [Driving as you get older](#)

You or someone you know may find this information helpful. Why not take a look and see what other information is available on the website?

Organisations, please take the time to check your service is listed on www.InformationNOW.org.uk so we can make sure we're signposting people to your service. You can always update your details at any time. Email InformationNOW@Newcastle.gov.uk for help.

InformationNOW is part of Newcastle City Council and jointly funded by the NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board Group so there's no cost for this service.

The new emergency alert service is now live

Test is expected to take place 23 April

The new Emergency Alerts service is now live. The system will enable people to be contacted via their mobile phone if their lives are at risk in an emergency. The service will be used to warn you about life-threatening emergencies such as severe flooding.

Emergency Alerts are messages sent to all compatible 4G and 5G mobile phones when there's a danger to your life, health or property in the area you're located. They don't need your location or phone number. Only the government and the emergency services can send them. If you don't have a mobile, you'll still be kept informed through other channels.

If you get an Emergency Alert on your phone, you'll hear a loud, siren-like sound. A message on your screen will tell you about the emergency and how best to respond. You'll be able to check an alert is genuine at [gov.uk/alerts](https://www.gov.uk/alerts)

The test is expected to take place in the early evening of Sunday 23 April.

[Read the frequently asked questions about the emergency alerts here](#)

Secret or silent phones are often a lifeline for survivors of abuse and it is important that they are aware of the test and how they can opt out of the service. **[Read more on Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board Website](#)**

Easter Holiday Activities

Looking for activities for children and young people over the Easter holidays? **[Holiday activities](#)** run the 'Newcastle Best Spring Ever' scheme. The free school holiday activity scheme in Newcastle for 4 to 16 year olds. This support is for families who receive free school meals. Community organisations across Newcastle provide free activity sessions and a meal for your child. You can choose from a range of fun, educational and sociable activities such as:

- sport
- art
- culture

[For more information visit the Newcastle Support Directory the website for children's, families and young people's activities](#)

Newcastle Community Pantry

Opens 4th April

[The Newcastle community Pantry](#) is coming soon! They are a small social supermarket set up to help people on a low income save money on food shopping bills. They are part of the Newcastle West End Foodbank charity, but unlike a foodbank members pay a subscription of £5 when they visit one of our pop-up pantries. In return they can choose a minimum of 10 items from a choice of fresh fruit and vegetables, dairy items, tinned items plus other essential household items. The pantry will accept Healthy Start vouchers allowing eligible households to pay for half of their membership (£2.50) this way.

The first pop-up pantry will be launching at Blakelaw Community Centre in April. If you support people living in Blakelaw who could benefit from the pantry could you help to promote this new service?

If you would like to find out more and be added to the the pantry mailing list email **clare.fish@newcastle.gov.uk**

[Read the frequently asked questions](#)

Read more on InformationNOW about [Cheap food in Newcastle](#)

English Learner Reading Groups

Newcastle Libraries have reading groups for English learner or those who wish to improve their literacy skills. In these groups you read aloud to help improve confidence, pronunciation, and to enjoy a good story. No booking is required.

- Wednesday 29 Mar 2023 [City Library](#)
- Friday 31 Mar 2023 [West End Library](#)
- Tuesday 4 Apr 2023 [Gosforth Library](#)
- Friday 7 Apr 2023 [East End Library](#)
- Wednesday 12 Apr 2023 [City Library](#)
- Friday 14 Apr 2023 [West End Library](#)
- Tuesday 18 Apr 2023 [Gosforth Library](#)
- Friday 21 Apr 2023 [East End Library](#)

Read more on InformationNOW about [English lessons for people who speak English as a second or other language](#)

Advice and Support for Private Landlords

The cost of living crisis can be challenging for tenants but also for private landlords too. Are you (or is someone you know) a private landlord? Did you know there is free advice and support available from Newcastle City Council?

The Private Rented Service is for landlords and tenants of private landlords in Newcastle. Their fully trained, professional staff can provide training, advice, and support to help you manage your property – including advertising properties, tenant referencing, a sign-in service and much more.

- Need help finding a tenant or resolving an issue? they can advertise, tenant match and reference check tenants. Tenants struggling with rent – don't evict, get in touch for advice on best ways to resolve things.
- Need help understanding legislation and how it affects you? They can provide advice and support. For example there is an updated version (24th March 2023) of the 'How to rent guide' which must be given to tenants.

[Access their free landlord toolkit](#)

[Access their free tenants toolkit](#)

Read more on InformationNOW about [Private Rented Service](#)

Private Rented Service can be contacted by phone on 0191 277 1438 or Email privaterentedservice@newcastle.gov.uk

Delays to Blue Badge applications

There is currently a delay to Blue Badge applications being made in Newcastle. The [Blue Badge Scheme](#) team are working to reduce the waiting time. If you need to renew your Blue Badge please submit your application as soon as possible.

Anyone given a fixed penalty notice (parking ticket) as a result of an expired blue badge should appeal the notice. When making an appeal include your application for renewal and the reference number you have been given.

Read more on InformationNOW about [Blue Badge Scheme](#)

Predictive genetic tests for cancer risk genes

Cancer is not usually inherited. Some types, mainly breast, ovarian, colorectal and prostate cancer, can run in families. We all carry certain genes that protect against cancer. Inheriting faulty versions or “variants” of these genes can raise your risk of developing cancer.

Speak to a GP if there is a strong family history of cancer and you’re worried you may get it too. They may refer you for an NHS genetic test. This will tell you if you’ve inherited one of the cancer risk genes. You may be eligible for this NHS test if the faulty gene has already been identified in one of your relatives.

This type of testing is known as ‘predictive’ genetic testing because a positive result means you have a greatly increased risk of developing cancer. It does not mean you have cancer or are definitely going to develop it. [Read more on NHS about Predictive genetic tests for cancer risk genes](#)

[Read more on InformationNOW about cancer](#)

Bowel Cancer Home Testing

As part of a new [campaign to increase the uptake of home testing](#) millions of people have been sent a FIT (faecal immunochemical test) home testing kit that can detect early signs of bowel cancer.

The FIT kit is easy to use and detects small amounts of [blood in poo](#) – that would not be visible or noticeable. People who are diagnosed with bowel cancer at the earliest stage are nine times more likely to survive

Community Hubs and Libraries Service Survey

Newcastle Libraries would like to know what you think of their library service, how you use their buildings and what ideas you have to improve what they do.

Give them your feedback and [complete the survey here](#)

North East Migration Partnership VCS event

31st March

The North East Migration Partnership is hosting an event for Voluntary and Community Sector Partners in Sunderland on 31st March from 10am-2.30pm. This event will enable partners from across the region to meet, network and find out more about migration, services and support.

Register to attend the free event by emailing: nemp@middlesbrough.gov.uk

[Read more about the event](#)

Welfare rights job opportunity

4th April deadline

An exciting opportunity is available to join Newcastle Councils Welfare rights service as a Welfare rights officer. They are looking for 2 experienced Welfare rights officers who are committed to preventing homelessness, promoting financial inclusion and improving the wellbeing and health of Newcastle residents.

They provide specialist advice to help Newcastle residents to maximise their income by securing their full welfare benefits entitlement.

If you are interested in making a difference you can apply online at [Northeastjobs](#) or email jobs@newcastle.gov.uk for a form.

For further discussions please contact Gary Webb on 07505401623 or Andrew Young 07970626437

The Carers Conference: The Carer Promise

The Carers Conference. The Carer Promise: it's not rocket science, is being held on the 20th April, at St James Park, Newcastle Upon Tyne. The aim for the day is Shared Learning and Partnership Working.

The day will commence at 10am with refreshments available from 9.30am.

Presentations and stalls will include;

- Carer Promise
- Triangle of Care
- Carers Trust

- Carers
- Carer Champions
- Carer Leads
- Family Ambassadors

Seats at the venue will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

St James Park have recently updated their parking information, and those wishing to park at the venue are now required to register their vehicle at reception on the day. Please be aware only Level 1 is free parking.

If you need any help email Events-Involvement@cntw.nhs.uk or call Involvement Team on 01670 501816.

Book your place on InformationNOW [here](#)

Hormone Replacement Therapy Prepayment certificate

From 1st April 2023, women who usually pay for their Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) prescriptions will be able to purchase an annual HRT Pre payment certificate (PPC) for the cost of two single prescription charges (currently £18.70). The HRT PPC is valid for 12 months and can be used against any listed HRT prescription.

Once systems are ready, the HRT PPC will be available to purchase through the [NHS Business Services Authority](#) website, by telephone or in person at a pharmacy registered to sell PPCs.

Women in possession of a HRT PPC will continue to pay for other prescribed medicines that are not on the HRT medicines list. GPs and pharmacies may find it difficult if the patient requires both free and paid for items resulting in a mixed prescription.

Read more on InformationNOW about [menopause and HRT PPC](#)

Office of National Statistics North East health report

The Office of National Statistics has published an interactive animated guide reviewing key census data for health in the North East.

The data focuses on health, disability, and unpaid care. the North East had high proportions of people with significant issues in these areas.

You can view the interactive report and compare with other regions of the U.K. here:

[The geographic divide in general health, disability and unpaid care: Census 2021 – ONS](#)

Help at home is available

This week, we celebrated World Social Work Day, a day to recognise the achievements of everyone involved in social care in your community.

If you need to talk to someone about difficulties with daily tasks or caring for someone [Community Health and Social Care Direct](#) can give you information on services and signpost you to help and support.

[Your Equipment Newcastle](#) gets you to products that help you at home. Ideas to help with standing or sitting from a chair, to chop or wash up in the kitchen, tap turners, lid and bottle openers and more are all on this website with a product catalogue too.

This week's Events and Activities

[Visit our Events & Activities section](#) to see what's happening near you this week on our calendar. Or search by location or postcode.

Ukrainian Easter celebration

Tuesday 28 March, 3pm to 6pm at Newcastle City Library

A celebration of Easter and a chance to make or buy a Ukrainian easter egg with proceeds going to Redcross UK

[Read more on InformationNOW about this event](#)

Search Volunteers Fair

Tuesday 28 Mar 2023 Time: 1.00 pm – 4.00 pm
Brunswick Methodist Church

Find out more about volunteering with [Search Newcastle](#). Drop in and talk to them. They are looking for volunteers to help with:

- Home from Hospital
- Food and medicine pick-up
- Phone and digital buddies
- Handyperson and admin
- Fundraising
- Walking groups

[Download poster](#)

[Read more on InformationNOW about the event](#)

Crafty Natter

Chain Reaction run their **Crafty Natter** community craft group on Tuesdays where you can take part in various crafts activities, chat to others and have a 'cuppa'. You can also stay on after the group to have lunch.

Suggestions for future craft activities are welcome. Next dates are:

- [Tuesday 28 Mar 2023](#)
 - [Tuesday 4 Apr 2023](#)
 - [Tuesday 11 Apr 2023](#)
 - [Tuesday 18 Apr 2023](#)
-

Carers UK free weekly online activities

Carers UK run free online events for carers across the UK. You can take part in

- [Care for a Cuppa](#) on Mondays
- [Singing Sessions](#) on Tuesdays
- [Care for a Cuppa](#) Wednesdays
- [Hatha Yoga](#) Wednesdays
- [Fitness Session](#) Thursdays
- [Wisdom to Empower](#) Thursday 30 Mar 2023

Read more on InformationNOW about [Looking after someone](#)

New and updated organisations

Poverty Solution Foundation

Poverty solution foundation provide educational support, advice, social welfare support for children and young people. They also hold a health and wellbeing hub every Friday 1:40-4:30pm.

Read more on InformationNOW about [the Poverty solution foundation](#)

Updated and new articles

Voting

You need to be registered to vote before you can vote in UK elections or referendums. There are different ways you can give your vote, and rules on how to do so

Read more on InformationNOW about [voting](#)

Home care

If you need some support at home with personal care such as bathing, dressing and making meals, there are organisations that may be able to help you.

Read more on InformationNOW about [Home care](#)

Home care agencies in Newcastle

This is the list of agencies working across Newcastle who provide general and specialised care at home services

Read more on InformationNOW about [Home care agencies](#)

Thanks for reading InfoNOW News

We hope you found it useful. Please feel free to share this information and [subscribe to InfoNOW News](#)

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Best Wishes

Richard and Lauren

Richard White and Lauren Hoy
Prevention, Information and Advice Leads at Newcastle City Council

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