

InfoNOW News 6 January 2025

InformationNOW

2024 was a busy year for the informationNOW team with 976,133 visits to www.informationnow.org.uk. We look forward to helping people find the right information at the right time in 2025.

Watch our short [2024 InformationNOW highlights video](#) for a full over view of what information people have found useful last year. Our most popular pages, most used languages and much more! Most visited pages in 2024 include:

- [Hobbies](#)
- [Looking after someone](#)
- [Accessible and public toilets](#)
- [Free meals and cheap food](#)
- [Support for Asylum Seekers and Refugees](#)
- [Food banks and free emergency food](#)
- [When someone dies: a practical guide](#)
- [ESOL : English lessons for people who speak English as a second or other language](#)

If you are an organisation, have you checked your InfoNOW listing to see if its up to date for the new year?

Would you like to work with us more in 2025? Read more about [working with and supporting InformationNOW](#)

Want to add your events and activities to InformationNOW? Use our [quick and easy events form here](#)

Amber weather Alert

An Amber Cold Health alert has been issued for the North East by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), starting from 12pm on Monday, January 6 and running until 12pm on Sunday, January 12 2025.

The UKHSA provide guidance on actions that can be taken for a range of professional groups supporting others during an Amber alert:

[Cold-Health Alert summary action card for voluntary and community sector](#)

[Cold-Health Alert summary action card for providers: care homes](#)

[Cold-Health Alert Summary action card: people in their homes](#)

Newcastle City Council's [Severe Weather Emergency Protocol \(SWEP\)](#) has been activated. SWEP includes an offer of a safe place to stay for people sleeping rough and is an extension of Newcastle's year-round routine response. SWEP is how rough sleepers can be protected when the temperature is forecast to be particularly extreme.

GOV.UK also has useful guides on how stay safe and warm in cold weather that can be shared:

[An easy read guide to keeping safe and well in cold weather](#)

[A British sign language \(BSL\) video on keeping safe and well in cold weather](#)

Read more on InformationNOW about [Keeping warm and well in Winter](#)

Adult Social care users information leaflet

Over December and January residents who've received support from adult social care in the past year may receive a letter by post, Email or text

The letter includes:

- a letter addressed to them with useful Adult Social Care contact details and signposting to support to get online.
- a leaflet with information about local services and support in Newcastle.

We hope this will be useful to people receiving it, their friends, family or others.

[You can view the local services and support leaflet here](#)

If you, someone you know or support has any questions about this, please contact [Adult Social CarePoint at Newcastle City Council](#) by email at ASCP@newcastle.gov.uk or [0191 278 8377](tel:01912788377) (8am and 5pm, Monday to Friday).

Read more on InformationNOW about [care and support for adults](#)

Metro POP card scams

Nexus and Northumbria Police [have been made aware of a Facebook page 'Public Transport Newcastle' that is falsely claiming to sell Pop Pay As You Go \(PAYG\) cards.](#) People should be advised that this links to a fraudulent/scam website and should not engage with it. This is not connected in any way or endorsed by Tyne and Wear Metro or Nexus.

For any information or queries about the Tyne and Wear Metro and ticket fares people should visit nexus.org.uk

Read more on InformationNOW about [travel and transport](#)

Community Swap Shop

26 January, 9am to 12pm, Galafield Family Hub, Newbiggin Lane, NE5 1LZ.

Join a Community Swap Shop where you can trade items you no longer need—clothes, books, toys, electrical items—and swap them for pre-loved finds from your neighbours. It's a fun and eco-friendly way to refresh your belongings and reduce waste.

No need to book to attend but if you have lots of items to bring then please register for a table via this [link](#). You can also enjoy refreshments and entertainment for all ages while connecting with your community.

If you are unable to attend the swap shop and have items at home that you no longer want or need (toys, clothes, electrical items) please consider donating them.

You can donate items at Condercum Road Depot Admin Office, NE4 8XN on 14 January 2025 and The Civic Centre reception, NE1 8QH on 16 January 2025

Read more on InformationNOW about [reusing items](#)

Newcastle City Learning Drop ins

6 to 8 January 2025, 10am to 4pm, Eldon Square community quarter

Join [Newcastle City Learning](#) for daily drop-in events 10am to 4pm at Eldon Square's Community Quarter until the 8 January 2025 Whether you want to learn something new, or improve your job prospects, staff are available to tell you all about their courses, answer any questions you may have and there are fun activities for all ages

Whether you're looking to learn a new skill, get creative, or just have some fun, you can drop in and discover what's possible—no booking needed.

Read more about [Lifelong Learning](#) on InformationNOW

Jean Cartman Wilder Communities Award

[Northumberland Wildlife Trust](#) has launched the brand-new Jean Cartman Wilder Communities Award!

This annual award supports and champions the work of local groups that connect people with nature and wildlife. This could be activities enjoying the outdoors, Art projects related to nature and climate change or improving, creating or advocating for wildlife areas.

It is open to all groups in Newcastle, Northumberland and North Tyneside and the winning group will win a £500 wish list of items to support their activities, and two runners-up will win a £250 wish list of items.

All winners will also receive:

- ongoing support from Northumberland Wildlife Trust with their work
- the opportunity to be promoted and championed through our media channels

- a certificate
- and a celebratory roundel

Visit www.nwt.org.uk/Jean-Cartman to find out more.

[You can apply using the online application form here](#)

If you have questions or need support with your application you can call [0191 284 6884](tel:01912846884) or email mail@northwt.org.uk

Deadline for applications is 5pm, 31 January 2025. Winners to be announced on 28 February 2025.

Read more about [Parks, gardens, forests and woodlands](#)

Procurement Act webinars

The rules of public procurement are changing – The Procurement Act 2023 will go live on 24 February 2025. The act is designed to make procurement more accessible, efficient, transparent, simpler and beneficial for both local councils and suppliers

To support this, the Transforming Public Procurement team will be running two webinars for suppliers and other external organisations in January. These sessions will focus primarily on what the key changes are, how the central digital platform will work (featuring a live demonstration) and will be an opportunity to ask questions on your own preparations for go live.

They will record the sessions and make a recording available via our webpages on GOV.UK for those unable to attend.

You can book your place using the links below:

[Thursday, 23 January 2025 \(10.30am -11.30am\)](#)

[Friday, 24 January 2025 \(11am-12pm\)](#)

To make it easy for suppliers to find this information, they have created a [dedicated supplier information page](#) on GOV.UK. They will continue to add information as they get closer to go-live, including our 'how to' videos, so please do bookmark and check back for further updates.

Read more about [Services commissioned by Newcastle City Council](#)

SPOTLIGHT ON

Green Street Wednesday Workshops

15, 29 January and 5 February, Cobalt Coworking, 10-16 Boyd Street, Shieldfield, NE2 1AP

[Green Street](#) are holding a series of free workshops during Wednesdays in the New Year, designed to help local independent businesses reduce waste, improve sustainability, and save costs.

15 January 2025, 9am to 10:30 am – Flip the Switch on Energy Waste

Register [here](#)

29 January 2025, 9am – 10am Trash Talk: How to Keep Your Money Out of the Bin

Register [here](#)

5 February 2025, 9am to 10:30 am – Food Waste: Avoid it, Embrace Compost, and Comply **Register [here](#)**

Read more on InformationNOW about [Recycle and reuse](#)

Fawdon Kinship carer coffee morning

There are new 2025 dates for a [Kinship Carer Coffee Morning and Support Group](#) at [Fawdon Childrens Centre](#) starting from 8 January 2025.

Kinship carers can come along for a friendly chat, enjoy free refreshments, meet other Kinship carers, develop peer support networks and seek support and advice from a kinship resource worker and social worker.

[Read more about Family, friend and kinship carers on Information NOW](#)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

Cervical screening intervention design-workshop

10 February 2025, 10am to 4pm

[Healthworks](#) are running a hands-on co-design workshop focused on designing interventions to improve cervical screening rates within socioeconomically deprived women living within North East England

This workshop is aimed at healthcare professionals, people working in the voluntary and community sector, and anyone passionate about women's health. The workshop is being ran as part of an ongoing research project conducted at Northumbria University. Lunch will be provided.

[Read more and book a place on InformationNOW](#)

North East Autism Society (NEAS) paid work placements

[The North East Autism Society \(NEAS\)](#) have a number of paid work placements and they are looking for host employers to support this. The key details of this offer are as follows:

- NEAS will be the employer for these placements and will deal with all paperwork involved.
- The business agreeing to the placement will be the host.
- All placements will be paid the Real Living Wage of £12.60 per hour. This will be paid by NEAS.
- Placement hours will be worked over a 6-week period up to a maximum of 14 hours per week.
- Exact hours will be discussed and agreed with the host prior to start date.
- Ideally placements would commence from 2nd week in the new year, and need to be completed before the end of March.
- NEAS will introduce any potential participant to the host to make sure everyone is happy and it is a good fit prior to the start date.
- NEAS will make sure the participant has support needed in the workplace during the placement.

This is a fantastic opportunity to benefit Newcastle residents facing barriers to employment by providing meaningful paid work experience. Candidates will be chosen as much as possible to match your business need, and it's an ideal opportunity to increase your social impact whilst bringing new skills and talent to your workplace.

If any of you are interested in benefiting from this offer, or have any questions, please contact Jude Smith, Employer Engagement Officer at NEAS on Jude.smith@ne-as.org.uk, or ring her on 07767606980.

Read more about [Autism and local support services](#) on InformationNOW

Asylum Seeker Mental Health and Wellbeing Therapeutic Support grant

The UK government is offering funding for projects that support the mental health and wellbeing of vulnerable asylum-seeking adults. As they wait for decisions on their applications and move through the asylum process, the grant will support projects that:

- Help better mental health and wellbeing
- Make access to regular mental health services easier
- Improve access to useful information and resources
- Build stronger connections with local communities
- Increase feelings of safety
- Help asylum seekers to engage with their asylum applications

A wide variety of groups are encouraged to apply, including Voluntary, Community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations, non-profits, , religious groups, and more.

You can read more about the [Asylum Seeker Mental Health and Wellbeing Therapeutic Support grant on GOV-UK here](#)

Applications for this grant must be submitted by **11:59 pm on 10 January 2025**, and the funding will cover a 12-month period starting in April 2025.

Read more on InformationNOW about [How you can help refugees and asylum seekers](#)

Housing, health and care programme webinar

14 January 2025, 10am to 12pm, Online

the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) have established a Housing, Health, and Care Programme focused on delivering better, more integrated housing, care, and support so that people can be healthy, live well, and stay independent in their own home.

A new 'community of practice' – an open forum for knowledge-sharing and collaboration – will support the programme, bringing together council, NHS, housing providers and people with lived experience to learn from each other. If you are interested in getting involved you can email – sean.cocking@nhs.net using the subject "Community Housing Programme".

A baseline review of housing needs in the region has been completed and this has shaped 3 priorities for the next 5 years.

- Ensuring those who live in rented properties have a warm and dry home
- Housing options and the use of technology to support older people to live independently
- High quality homes with wraparound support for people with complex health needs

[Learn more about the housing, health and care programme here](#)

[Read the five-year roadmap here](#)

[Read the housing programme summary](#)

As part of this programme, a webinar Hosted by the Northern Housing Consortium on 14 January will explore the critical role of data in tackling health inequalities and improving housing services. Join the session to:

- Discuss innovative approaches
- Share experiences and best practices
- Design actionable strategies to drive change

This event is for anyone working in health, housing and social care – particularly those working in data and housing services.

You can reserve a place by emailing: events@northern-consortium.org.uk

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

CONSULTATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

NHS 10 year plan discussion group

NHS England have launched [Change NHS.uk](#) to hear your views, experiences, and ideas which will shape a new 10 Year Health Plan for England. This will run until spring 2025.

[Find out more about NHS England's new 10-Year Health Plan here](#)

The plan will set out how we create a truly modern health service designed to meet the changing needs of our changing population. 3 key areas or '3 shifts' have been identified:

- moving care from hospitals to communities
- making better use of technology
- focussing on preventing sickness, not just treating it

[Read more about the three shifts here](#)

[Healthwatch Newcastle](#) are hosting a public discussion group at One Strawberry Lane at 1pm on 17 January 2025 where you can take part in the biggest public conversation about the future of the NHS, and have your say.

This is a free event and anyone can attend to share their views.

[If you would like to have your say, you can book a free place on InformationNOW](#)

Read more on InformationNOW about [Having your say about health and care services](#)

Reablement Service budget proposals

As part of Newcastle City Council's draft budget plan, they are looking at restructuring the Reablement Service within Adult Social care & Prevention

The Reablement Service is a preventative service which aims to address people's immediate care and support needs and prevent crises. It involves occupational therapists and other support to help people maintain or increase their independence in managing day-to-day tasks such as personal care, cleaning and cooking.

New proposals include:

- Implementing a preventative approach at every point at which people come into contact with this service.
- Increasing service capacity and providing an enhanced therapy service.
- Looking at how equipment and technology can support people to stay independent at home.
- Improving short-term response to crisis and hospital admissions to reduce people's need for additional support by helping them to recover from crises, and remain independent at home.
- Supporting people who need two care workers to help them move about through the work of Moving and Handling Co-ordinators to see if hoists, equipment and other support can improve

their independence.

- Reviewing care packages in a timely manner to ensure that people are receiving appropriate support.

[You can watch a video about the Reablement proposals on Youtube here](#)

[View the budget proposal consultation and share your views on Lets Talk here](#)

[View the full reablement proposals and impact assessment document here](#)

[Read more about Rehabilitation, Reablement and Recovery on Newcastle.gov.uk](#)

North East Combined Authority draft budget consultation

A public consultation on the proposals is open until 10 January 2025. If you have any comments or questions about the proposals you can email communications@northeast-ca.gov.uk, fill in their online [contact form](#) or call on [0191 211 5695](tel:01912115695) (9.30am and 4.30pm Monday – Friday).

Any questions or comments will be anonymised to protect your privacy, published and where possible answered, The NEMCA will also inform both Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny of your views, ahead of Cabinet setting the 2025 budgets.

You can read the Report to Cabinet [here](#).

You can read our Corporate Plan [here](#).

You can read about the budget proposals for each of the budgets in the Cabinet papers [here](#).

These proposals will now be scrutinised by the North East Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee before going back to Cabinet to be finalised before the new financial year begins on 1 April 2025.

[Read more about the North East Combined Authority draft budget proposals for 2025/26 on their website here](#)

Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment consultation

What do you think of your local chemist? Why do you visit? Who for? And when?

By answering a few simple questions you can help inform pharmacy services in Newcastle, so that everyone can access the support they need. Your views will help inform the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) for the next 3 years. This will help develop how these services are delivered in the future. A Needs Assessment is when we gather information to help us:

- Understand what the health needs are for people living in Newcastle
- The level and accessibility of services in Newcastle

- How services can be maintained and developed in the future to make sure they meet people's needs

[You can share your views in the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment Public Survey 2025-28 here](#)

Read more about [Pharmacy \(or Chemists\)](#)

RESEARCH & REPORTS

Home care dementia study

Homecare providers can take part in a study by Teesside University to explore the experiences of homecare managers who support homecare workers in providing person-centred care to people living with dementia.

Participants feedback and shared experiences will be used to design an intervention to meet the needs of those working in homecare. This study aims to improve the experiences of clients, carers, and homecare managers.

Online interviews will cover broad areas such as organisational factors including training, pay and benefits, emotional distress and support, and social support.

If you are work for or are a homecare provider, and would like to take part you can sign up using the [Homecare Manager Interview Contact Form here](#).

You can also contact the research project lead L.Kane@tees.ac.uk

Read more about [Dementia](#) on InformationNOW

Literacy, Numeracy, and Homelessness: What Do We Know?

A recent report from the Centre for Homelessness Impact explores the connection between literacy, numeracy, and homelessness. It examines how low literacy and numeracy contribute to the root causes of homelessness and directly impact individuals experiencing it. The report also looks into how homelessness itself creates barriers to accessing education and skills training, and it reviews current knowledge on strategies to address these challenges.

[You can read the overview of Literacy, Numeracy, and Homelessness: What Do We Know? here](#)

[You can read the full report here](#)

Read more about [Homeless or worried about becoming homeless](#)

TRAINING & RESOURCES

Adult Safe 4 Life Course

Safe for Life Course Beginning **February 12th 2025 every Wednesday 12.30pm-2.30pm at West End Women and Girls Centre**, crèche spaces are available for children. A referral can be made for anyone who identifies as a woman who has experienced Domestic Abuse. This 10 week course covers:

- Understanding the dynamics of domestic abuse and the 5 different types.
- How we effectively keep ourselves and families safe
- The effect of domestic abuse on children
- Trauma responses
- Coercive control
- Why domestic abuse still happens, sexism and gender inequality
- The negative and positive cycle of self-esteem
- Owning our emotions
- Healthy relationships

Contact [West End Women and Girls Centre](#) for more information

Read more about [Domestic abuse](#) on InformationNOW

Free SPEAK – Suicide Prevention Explore, Ask, Keep-Safe. An introduction to suicide prevention skills

[Papyrus](#) has fully funded Suicide Prevention training available in February 2025 for those based in Newcastle upon Tyne and the surrounding areas. The training will cover how to:

- consider the attitudes, myths, and stigma that surround suicide
- recognise and explore the 'signs' that may indicate someone is having thoughts of suicide
- encourage an open, safe and sensitive conversation about suicide with a person having thoughts of suicide
- support a safety plan with someone thinking of suicide.

[See the dates and book your place here](#)

Read more on InformationNOW about [Suicide prevention](#)

Lightning Reach

[Lightning Reach](#) is a free online portal that connects you to lots of options for support, quickly and securely. It can connect you to

- Charitable grants
- Local authority schemes

- help with bills
- benefits checks
- other support

You create an account, get matched to support in your area and can apply online using the Lightning Reach portal.

[You can create a Lightning Reach portal here](#)

If you are an organisation that would like to be registered to give support on Lightning Reach, you can find out more here

Read more on InformationNOW about [Cost of living support](#)

Newcastle City Council Procurement Portal

Newcastle City Council moved to the Open e-tendering platform on 28th October last year. All Suppliers wishing to bid for public sector opportunities issued by Newcastle City Council will be required to register on the Open platform. Open is free to register an account and use.

[Register here](#) For support, contact open.support@nepo.org

Community Foundation grants for organisations and individuals

[Community Foundation](#) have a variety of grants available to apply for. [You can use their online grant finder](#) to see the grants that are available at the moment. To submit an application for a community foundation grant you need to be registered on their grantee portal.

Read more about [Community Foundation](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Steps and Stories – Newburn Library

14 January 2025, 10.30 am to 12pm, Newburn Library, NE15 8LN

Take an easy hour-long walk by the River Tyne starting at [Newburn library](#). You can enjoy nature and listen to an audiobook, with support and device available from the [Reading for wellbeing team](#). At the end, you can chat about the book you listened to and share your thoughts.

Read more and book a free space at [Steps and Stories on Information Now](#)

Northumbria Police drop in at Jesmond Library

10 January, 7 February, 7 March and 4 April 2025, 10:30am to 11:30 am, Jesmond library, NE2 2DL

The Northumbria Police Neighbourhood Policing Team which covers Jesmond and neighbouring areas is collecting children's books to donate to families who do not have books in the home

Members of the Neighbourhood Policing Team will be dropping into Jesmond library once a month, on a Friday morning, to collect donated children's books and to answer any queries from Jesmond residents who drop in at the same time.

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

Walking basketball

9 January 2025, Sports@Gosforth, Great North Road, NE3 2JH

[The Walking Basketball Newcastle](#) group for people over the age of 35. They meet weekly, on Thursday evenings in Gosforth. The sessions are designed for all levels of fitness and abilities. You don't have to run to ball. The sessions are suitable for people of all levels of fitness and experience. You don't need to have played basketball before to take part.

The sessions are ran by a level 2 basketball coach and qualified personal trainer. Sessions cost £6, or £20 per month. For more information and to book a place contact the coach using the details below.

Read more about [Fitness Activities](#)

Lunch Club at St Martin's Centre

8, 15, 22 January 2025, St Martins Centre, Byker, NE6 2RJ

A light lunch for people over the age of 55. People can come along and join in activities such as a quiz or bingo for £3.50. Every Wednesday

[Lunch Club at St Martin's Centre on Information Now](#)

UPDATED & NEW ORGANISATIONS

Action Foundation

[Action Foundation](#) support refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants to integrate into the community and lead more independent and resilient lives. They offer a range of support such as:

Young Lives: specialised practical, emotional and social support for asylum seeking and refugee children, families and young people. Email: bridgetstratford@actionfoundation.org.uk or call [07845 642246](tel:07845642246).

Read more on InformationNOW about [Support for Asylum Seekers and Refugees](#)

The Wardrobe

[The Wardrobe](#) is a clothing resource for trans, non-binary and genderqueer people. They collect quality second-hand clothes and provide a safe space to try them on. Previously based at The Newbridge Project, they have moved to Orbis Community 9 West Street, Gateshead

Read more on InformationNOW about [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning + \(LGBTQIA+\) support and groups in Newcastle](#)

Church of the Holy Nativity, Chapel House

[Holy Nativity](#) welcomes people and families of all ages and backgrounds. They offer a range of activities and services for people who live, work and pass through the local community, such as:

- Little Fishes – Baby and Toddler Group (check availability)
 - Chapel house men's group
 - Women's fellowship
 - Mothers union meetings
 - Memory Tea with [Search Newcastle](#)
 - Recovery Drop-In (Peer-Support only – call to know more)
-

Winnovation Training

Updated organisation

[Winnovation Training](#) are a Health, Social, and Early Years training provider. They support employed and unemployed people with free government funded training. They can have a range of support available including

- pre employment support
- skills, learning, development
- qualifications such as apprenticeship opportunities

Read more about [Support to prepare for work or a job](#)

UPDATED AND NEW ARTICLES

Help with clothing

Updated article

This article aims to give you information on where you can get support and help to get free, cheap and second hand clothes at an affordable cost.

Read more about [Help with clothing on Information Now](#)

Last updated: January 24, 2025

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NEWS InformationNOW Hello! I'm Helen McIntosh, the new Prevention, Information and Advice Lead. I'm delighted to be joining the InformationNow team and excited to be part of a service that plays su...