

14 April 2025 InfoNOW News

InformationNOW



Did You Know

On www.informationNOW.org.uk
we have information on...

- Help with health costs**
- Useful equipment to help you manage at home**
- Home adaptations, equipment and aids**
- Telecare, telehealth and personal alarm systems**

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P.S. Dont forget if you want to add your own events and activities to InformationNOW, use our [quick and easy events form here](#)

Renew your postal vote

There have been some changes to postal voting. The maximum length of time you can hold a postal vote is 3 years.

If you are a postal voter you need to renew as soon as possible. Please do this now to avoid your postal vote being cancelled. To do this you can:

- [Submit your renewal Online](#)
- Contact elections@newcastle.gov.uk
- call 01912115137

[Download the poster with a QR code](#) to display in your community venues as a reminder

Read more on InformationNOW about [Voting](#)

Newcastle Safe Haven now open 7 days a week

[Newcastle Safe Haven at George Street Social](#) offers free mental health crisis support for adults. Now open 7 days a week, 2pm to 10pm every day, including weekends, 365 days a year. Anyone can just drop in. No referral or appointment needed. They can help with emotional, practical and social support.

Read more on InformationNOW about [Mental health emergency or crisis services](#)

Carers Allowance increase

The national government has announced that Carer's Allowance will rise by 1.7% in line with inflation, increasing from £81.90 to £83.30 per week (£4,331 a year)

The threshold for Carer's Allowance will increase from £151 to £196 per week. People who may have been just over the earnings threshold may now be able to apply for carers allowance.

The changes mean:

- Working carers can earn up to £196 per week after certain deductions, up from £151, while keeping the allowance
- An extra estimated 60,000 carers will receive the money by 2029

Read more on InformationNOW about [Carer's Allowance](#)

Digital Inclusion at WERS

17 April 2025 (and every Thursday), 10am to 11am, WERS, St Phillips vicarage, NE4 5JE

[West End Refugee Service \(WERS\)](#) are running new digital inclusion sessions on Thursdays.

They can support people to improve their digital skills and help with:

- registering or contacting the GP
- renewing a HC2 health certificate
- raising an issue with Migrant Help
- creating a council housing account and bidding online

- using online banking and shopping online

bus and travel tickets to the sessions can be reimbursed

Read more on InformationNOW about [Digital support](#)

DWP Easter period dates

[Department for Work and Pensions – DWP](#) (including Jobcentre Plus) arrangements are different over Easter for England, Scotland and Wales:

- On **Friday 18 April** offices and phone lines are **closed**.
- On **Monday 21 April** offices and phone lines are **closed**.

From **Tuesday 22 April** offices and phone lines are **open** as usual.

To make sure people get their payment on a day when our offices are open, arrangements have been made to make some payments early.

If the expected payment date is **Friday 18 April** or **Monday 21 April** then benefits will be paid early on **Thursday 17 April**.

If the expected payment date is not shown above then you will get your money on your usual payment date.

You can read more about [how and when your benefits are paid here on GOV.UK](#)

Read more on InformationNOW about

Newcastle Community Bridgebuilders

Connected Voice, Newcastle City Council, The Relationships Project and The Centre for Creative Conversation are inviting you to be part of Newcastle Community Bridgebuilders. A new initiative to strengthen relationships, bridge divides and create a more connected Newcastle. Can you help turn Newcastle into a stronger and more connected city?

Over six workshops, starting in May, the programme will train over 160 community leaders, professionals and volunteers to develop new relationships, strengthen existing ones, and repair those that have been neglected or damaged.

You will:

- Celebrate the connections that make Newcastle the friendliest city in the UK
- Develop your meaningful conversation skills to strengthen community ties

- Become part of a network to foster understanding and collaboration

Workshop 1 (+ Launch Event) – The foundations of good relationships – and what undermines them

In this workshop, we will explore the psychology behind why people form “groups” and how relationships are built based on perceptions of similarity and difference. We will explore how prejudice can build and escalate and how better communication can help us to build a more peaceful city.

Workshop 2 – Create Connection

In this workshop we will learn how to establish the habits of understanding first and being understood and use them to forge stronger connections.

Workshop 3 – Take Ownership

In this workshop we will help us to extend our unique network of relationships by developing the power of connection. Looking at how we can develop more agency and more ownership.

Workshop 4 – Stay Open, Meet Needs

In this workshop we work on how to understand and – wherever possible – meet needs, as the quickest way to get to the heart of things and forge stronger connections.

Workshop 5 – Be Prepared

In this workshop we will become more skilled at challenging and being challenged and put our learning into a series of creative conversations on the issues that matter to you right now.

Workshop 6 (+ Finale Event) – Shaping the Keystone

In this workshop we will learn about how to shape our shared keystone, the thing that completes a bridge, and gives it strength. We will create action plans so we can continue to create connections in Newcastle together.

To express your interest, please submit a response via this form.

Sign up through this form <https://forms.office.com/e/8um7FaLTTL>

Alternatively, send an email to josh.foster@connectedvoice.org.uk if you have any questions.

Read more on InformationNOW about [Getting involved in your community](#)

Drawn Together dementia friendly arts project

Newcastle city council is strengthening its commitment to being a dementia friendly city with a new arts programme designed for people living with dementia and those who care for them.

[Dementia Friendly Newcastle's Drawn Together](#) is offering a range of relaxed art sessions such as painting, ceramics, bookmaking and animation at drop-in sessions across the city. People living with dementia, their friends, family and carers are invited to explore their creativity while finding out about services available in the city and building connections in their local community.

The sessions, which are free to attend, will run from April to June 2025. You don't need to book. Just come along on the day and join in the fun.

For more information about Drawn Together or to find details of an event near you visit www.informationnow.org.uk/DFNwhatson

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

The Late Shows returns for 2025

16 to 17 May 2025

[The Late Shows](#) is an award-winning free late-night culture crawl – where museums, galleries, studio collectives and heritage venues come together to offer one-off events including activities, behind-the-scenes tours, performances and parties. The event is organised by [North East Museums](#), sponsored by [Creative Central NCL](#) and usually features over 40 cultural venues staged across Newcastle and Gateshead.

You can keep up to date with [The Late Shows 2025 and find information on events on their website here](#)

Read more on InformationNOW about [museums and cultural attractions](#)

Penguin: community little book stops

1 May 2025

Little Book Stops are book exchange spots in your neighbourhood.

To have a Little Book Stop in your area, Penguin wants you to answer four key questions:

- Why is access to books important at this location?
- What impact do you think a Little Book Stop will have on this community?
- Does this Little Book Stop aim to celebrate a local individual or organisation that champions reading?
- How do you plan to look after the Little Book Stop as a steward?

You'll also have to provide a proposed location of the Little Book Stop and information about other book-sharing initiatives in the area. You have until 1.59pm on 1 May to complete the application, with a panel of judges to decide on the 90 locations by the end of June.

[Read more about the little book stop campaign on Penguin books website here](#)

Read more on InformationNOW about [Libraries, Reading and Audio Books](#)

Connected Voice Digital Inclusion – The Great North Care Record

6 May, 12pm to 1pm Online (via Teams)

[Connected Voice](#) are running monthly lunch and learn session on digital inclusion in Newcastle and Gateshead.

In the May session you will hear from Bethany Taylor, Training and Benefits Lead for the The Great North Care Record (GNCR). The GNCR is a regional shared care record (ShCR) that securely shares and displays patient information from multiple health and care providers across the across the North East and North Cumbria – including GPs, hospitals, mental health, and social care services.

The session will cover:

- An introduction to GNCR and the resources available to make the most out of the platform.
- A short demo.
- An update on recent projects and what's coming up this year.

Please contact Alessandra alessandra.mondin@connectedvoice.org.uk or Stella: stella.simbo@connectedvoice.org.uk if you have any questions

[Read more about this event here](#)

Read more on InformationNOW about [Integrated Care Systems \(ICS\)](#)

Online workshop on the local green economy

13 May 2025 10am to 11:30am

Work and Thrive Newcastle and the Net Zero team at Newcastle city council are offering a free online workshop on the local 'green' economy for employment partners and local organisations.

The session will look at a green careers toolkit, information on local green jobs and chances to hear from green employers about employment and local economies that help or maintain the environment.

The session will include:

- increasing your knowledge of job opportunities, current and emerging in a few specialist 'green' areas with a growing footprint in Newcastle/North East.
- chances to develop closer links with some employers in these areas, and highlight the support we can offer them in big recruitment drives, jobs fairs, promoting and raising awareness of their vacancies.

If you are interested please contact Chris Ord: chris.ord@newcastle.gov.uk for details and the online session link.

Read more on InformationNOW about [Recycling and reusing](#)

Newcastle Apprenticeship event

29 April 2025, 3pm to 6:30pm, Civic centre, Newcastle, NE1 8QH

Newcastle City Council are hosting an Apprenticeship recruitment event at Newcastle Civic Centre this April.

This event is for apprenticeships with Newcastle City Council, with a range of vacancies such as joinery, plastering, plumbing/gas engineering, motor vehicle technicians, civil engineers, highways operatives, plus various customer service and administration roles.

Apprenticeship vacancies will go live on North East Jobs in the coming weeks, but the event will provide the opportunity to speak to recruiting managers who can provide more information about the role, the training involved, and the application process, and they can answer any questions

Apprenticeships are open to anyone aged 16 and over of all backgrounds.

[You can register for a free place at the apprenticeship event using the online form here](#)

If you have any questions, please email employability@newcastle.gov.uk

Read more on InformationNOW about [Looking for work and apprenticeships](#)

Grasmere days

2pm to 4pm, Bewick hall, level 2 City library,

Join Equal Arts and Newcastle Libraries for the launch of their next dementia-friendly publication, Dorothy Wordsworth's Grasmere Days. There will also be an exploration of the reading for dementia approach.

The event will be an opportunity to hear about the ideas behind the book and find out more about the work being done to promote reading for pleasure for people living with dementia.

You can book your place by emailing information@equalarts.org.uk before 28 April.

[Read more about this event](#)

[Read more about dementia on informationNOW](#)

Help shape the regional Medicines campaign

Deadline: 18 April 2025

The NHS North East and North Cumbria integrated care board wants to hear from you! Their work includes looking after the budget for medicines that are prescribed in this area.

They want to make sure people get clear and useful information about how to order repeat prescriptions and prevent over-ordering of medicines. This is especially important for people who take more than one medicine regularly. They will be creating leaflets and other information to support this.

They would love to hear from people aged 40 to 80 who live in North East or North Cumbria and take medicine for long-term health conditions (such as diabetes, arthritis, high blood pressure and

others).

Please complete their online survey at [SurveyMonkey here](#) to share your views about the leaflet that is being developed.

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

Sustainable transport proposal for Gosforth

27 April 2025

Newcastle City Council want to hear your views on their proposals to improve walking, wheeling (travelling using a wheelchair or walking frame with wheels), cycling and bus journeys in Gosforth across five locations between Moorfield and Regents Centre.

You can read the proposal details on Lets Talk here: [Gosforth High Street and Great North Road – BSIP and ATF proposal](#)

- [Visiting Lets Talk](#), reading the proposals and sharing your views online
- Emailing your comments to transport@newcastle.gov.uk,
- Writing and mailing your comments to this address: Transport Engagement Team, Newcastle City Council, Floor 10, Newcastle Civic Centre, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8QH
- Calling the message line on **0191 278 2767**

[Read more on this proposal at Let's Talk Newcastle](#)

Read more on InformationNOW about [public transport](#)

Newcastle General Hospital Community History Project

30 April, 2pm to 4pm, Great Gable Seminar Room, Campus for Ageing and Vitality, NE4 6BE

Silvie Fisch, Associate Researcher at the Oral History Collective at Newcastle University and Director of Northern Cultural Projects, started a community history project with former nurses of the Newcastle General Hospital. The nurses are sharing their stories, photographs, artefacts, and more. Rosie Serdiville will give a fascinating talk about the history of the site and this will be accompanied by a small exhibition.

Come along and have a look at some photographs and other artefacts.

Whilst viewing the project works you can also find out more about the new plans to develop the site into a [Health Innovation Neighbourhood](#)

[Find out more about this event on Information Now](#)

Fostering information sessions

Join an online session to find out more about fostering in Newcastle. Upcoming sessions are:

- 12 May 2025 5pm to 6pm
- 11 June 5pm to 6pm

At these sessions you can learn more about:

- benefits of fostering
- the assessment process
- what foster carers say about their experience
- support for foster carers

To attend a session, please contact fosteringcommunication@newcastle.gov.uk

Read more on InformationNOW about [Newcastle Fostering Service](#)

Connection Lost report

This report from the Money and Mental Health Policy Institute looks at the psychological harms caused by utilities debt collection and disconnection. It shows that 7 million people are in some form of water, energy, or telecommunications debt. Nearly 1 million are in debt to all three.

Being behind on essential bills can have an outsized impact on our mental health. The psychological toll of struggling to pay for essential services like heating or internet may come with an increased sense of stigma, while common debt collection processes can force customers in arrears to forgo critical usage, exacerbating poor health outcomes.

To read the key recommendations and access the full report, please click [here](#)

Read more on InformationNOW about [Help with energy problems and how to pay for them](#)

Volunteer Passport Scheme Newcastle – Update April 2025

[Volunteer Passport Scheme Newcastle](#) is a program of recruitment and training that allows you to volunteer in a wide range of roles across many organisations. Since 2021 41 organisations have been involved in the partnership, and 266 volunteers recruited to date.

Recent survey feedback shows that

- 100% of partners are willing to host Passport Scheme volunteers in the future
- 100% are happy to recommend Volunteer Passport Scheme to other organisations
- 95% have found Passport Scheme volunteers to be committed and reliable
- 94% gave a positive rating around the quality and readiness of Passport Scheme volunteers

If your organisation is actively looking for volunteers and you would like more information around Volunteer Passport Scheme Newcastle, you can take part in their next online open session,

15 May, 11am

[Zoom link to join the session here](#)

Meeting ID: 849 5254 3273

Passcode: 326214

To find out more about **Volunteering Matters-Volunteering in Newcastle** for information around Volunteer Passport Scheme Newcastle, Volunteer Centre Newcastle, Home from Hospital and Community Support and our new Good Neighbours Scheme

11 June, 10:30am

[Zoom link to join the session here](#)

Meeting ID: 821 4662 5843

Passcode: 285641

Read more on InformationNOW about [Volunteering](#)

Take 5 to age well

The Open University (OU) is launching a UK-wide month-long national challenge for ageing well this May: [Take Five to Age Well](#). 5 easy habits for a longer, healthier, happier life

The five 'take 5' areas are:

- **Eat:** healthy eating is good for your health.
- **Drink:** stay well hydrated for healthy ageing.
- **Move:** exercise boosts body and mind.
- **Connect and Engage:** make and maintain social connections for your health.
- **Think:** use your brain to stay sharp.

Older adults can pledge to complete some of the take 5 challenges and optionally follow up by sharing their thoughts and experience in a survey. The steps to do this are:

1. **Make your pledge:** During sign-up they will collect baseline data (March 2025 – 15th May 2025).
2. **Short survey:** After the challenge has finished, you will be invited to complete a short survey (31st May 2025 – 30 June 2025).
3. **Short follow-up survey:** Three months after you finish, you will be invited to complete a short follow-up survey (1st – 30th September 2025).
4. **Interview (optional):** For those who agree, you may be contacted after 31st May 2025 via email to arrange a short interview (1st June 2025 – 30th September 2025).

Participation is entirely voluntary. If you do not wish to participate, you close your browser and do not click the 'submit' button. If you have already submitted your responses and change your mind, you can request your data to be withdrawn up to two weeks from submitting your responses by emailing jitka.vseteckova@open.ac.uk.

Read more on InformationNOW about [Age discrimination and ageing well](#)

Help when a care home closes

Social care experts at the University of Birmingham have launched a series of guides and a training video to improve support for older people, families and care staff when care homes close. The guides provide advice to help improve outcomes for care home managers, staff members and care home residents and their families when their care home is going through a closure process

The guides and video were produced as part of a research project called 'Achieving Closure', funded by the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR).

- A [National good practice guide](#) sent to every DASS in England
- An [accessible guide for older people/families](#) disseminated via third sector/service user involvement partners
- [Good practice guidance focused on care staff](#) (developed in conjunction with Care England)
- A free 25-min [SCIE Social Care TV video](#)

[Read more about care homes in Newcastle](#)

Upcoming events & activities

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

Cook together club Fenham

29 April 2025, 2pm, Fenham library

Free cookery classes on the last Tuesday of every month to increase your skills, knowledge and confidence to cook delicious meals from scratch with low cost ingredients and low fuel use

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

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Revolution on Tyneside at Jesmond library

29 April 2025, Jesmond Library, St. Georges Terrace, Jesmond, NE2 2DL

Keith Jewitt hosts a talk about the long history of world famous revolutionaries on Tyneside. Keith has searched through Tyneside archives to find out more about this hotbed of revolutionary fervour.

This Thursday talk in Jesmond Library forms part of the [2025 Jesmond Community Festival](#).

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

Fawdon Fellas

15 April 2025, 10am to 12pm, Fawdon community centre, Fawdon Park Road, NE3 2PJ

Fawdon Fellas is a men's mental health peer support group held every Tuesday at Fawdon community centre.

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

Steam to Green: Meet the experts

15 April to 29 July 2025, Discovery Museum, Blandford Square, NE1 4JA

Steam to Green is an exhibition at Discovery Museum showcasing how the North East is leading the way in green energy. With new hands-on displays demonstrating wind and solar power, historical science and engineering objects and even a 'cutaway' electric NISSAN Leaf car on display.

There are also free meet the expert drop in sessions for adults where you can meet and talk to experts in green energy throughout spring and summer:

Meet the Expert – Green Energy & Sustainability—

Wednesday 16 & 23, Monday 28 April

Meet the Expert – All About Electric Cars and their Batteries

[Read more on InformationNOW about North East Museums](#)

Updated and new organisations

Converge Northumbria

New organisation

[Converge Northumbria](#) works with students not patients, offers education not therapy, with the whole person. It is community-led and always in partnership. Above all, the overall aim is for every Converge student to be ordinary, extraordinary, and to be themselves.

Their purpose is guided by the following principles of a community of learners:

- Build a community where we learn from each other.
- Provide a supportive and inclusive environment that enables all learners to achieve success and progression that is meaningful to them.
- Respect others and value ourselves
- Engage and enhance the responsibility and commitment of the university and wider community.

In 2020-2022 an evaluation project looking at the benefits of the converge model across both Universities took place. For more information please follow the links below

- [Full evaluation report](#)
- [Evaluation animations](#)

Read more on InformationNOW about [Mental Health](#)

Working for carers

Updated organisation

The Working for Carers project provides specialised one-to-one support for carers in work or looking for employment, education, volunteering or training opportunities. The project is available to carers across the North of Tyne area (Newcastle, North Tyneside, and Northumberland). [Read more on InformationNOW about Working for carers](#)

Her Circle

Updated organisation

Her Circle (formerly Reform) are a community interest company that support women have experienced or are at risk of experiencing child removal.

[Read more on InformationNOW about Baby, children and young people's health](#)

Updated and new articles

Public spaces for hire

New article

You may want to hire a public space for an event, community group, activity or meeting. There are many public spaces and venues for hire in Newcastle for individual and community events.

Some public spaces are low cost or even free depending on what you use them for and if you are a local organisation, charity, or member of the public.

If you have a community space or hireable venue that can be used by individuals, VCSE organisations and others please let us know and we can add your space to this article!

Read more on InformationNOW about [public spaces for hire](#)

Laundry services

updated article

Sometimes you may need a helping hand with washing and drying your clothes. Help is available with community laundrettes and laundry services.

Read more on InformationNOW about [laundry services](#)

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 White

Prevention, Information and Advice Leads at Newcastle City Council

Last updated: May 1, 2025

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