

InformationNow News 25 September 2026

NEWS

People's Budget

How would YOU spend £400 million? Tell us here!

Newcastle's People's Budget is back, but this time we're asking residents where they would invest council funding, not where they would make cuts. From social care and libraries to waste collection and council tax levels, you'll be faced with the same decisions our councillors have to make.

[Click here to take part.](#)

Read more on InformationNow about [Managing your money.](#)

Renew Your Parking Permit Online

If you live in a residents' parking zone in Newcastle, you can now apply for and renew your parking permit online. It's much quicker and easier to do and it helps to reduce the amount of paper we use.

Newcastle City Council will contact you before your permit expires to explain how to renew it online. If you're unable to renew online you can phone the helpline on 0191 278 7878 and ask for "Smarti" or email parkingpermits@newcastle.gov.uk.

For more information please visit www.newcastle.gov.uk/smarti

Martha's Rule (Call for Concern) to be Rolled Out in A&E Departments

This week, it was announced that [Martha's Rule](#) (also known as Call for Concern) is to be rolled out across all A&E departments in England.

Martha's rule means that people can get an urgent review if they are worried about the care that they, or a relative or friend in hospital, are receiving. Individuals who are concerned that they or their loved one are getting more unwell while they are in hospital, or that they are not being listened to, can contact a dedicated phone number to get this review. This rule has been in place across all acute hospitals since September 2025, and will be extended to all emergency departments by March 2028.

Read more on InformationNow about [your rights while you are in hospital](#).

Ostara Alarm Calls

A reminder to all users of Ostara that our alarms are now digital. If any customers receive a phone call stating that their unit is still analogue and needs an upgrade, this is not correct.

Ostara will also never ask for bank details over the phone. Any legitimate calls from Ostara will come from 0191 278 7878.

If customers are unsure about the authenticity of a call, please end the conversation and contact Ostara by using the number above or pressing your pendant.

Read more on InformationNow about [Ostara](#).

SPOTLIGHT ON

World Mental Health Day Celebration Event

10am to 2pm, including lunch, 6 October 2026, Newcastle City Library

As part of this year's World Mental Health Day theme, Real Voices, Real Change, partners from across Newcastle are coming together to celebrate how connection, purpose and place are supporting mental wellbeing in our communities.

This event will showcase the impact of the city's collective efforts to improve mental wellbeing through prevention. We will highlight initiatives such as Wellbeing Hubs, Community Wellbeing Pathfinders, Reading for Wellbeing, and the many organisations, services and community groups that contribute to wellbeing across Newcastle.

This year's theme, Real Voices, Real Change, places lived experience at the heart of the event. Together, we'll celebrate the people, partnerships and communities making a difference, while exploring how we can continue to strengthen our collective approach to mental wellbeing.

The event will also highlight Newcastle's public mental health approach, centred around three key pillars of wellbeing:

- **Connection** – relationships, belonging and community participation
- **Purpose** – opportunities to contribute, learn, create, volunteer and thrive
- **Place** – safe, supportive environments that promote wellbeing

Throughout the day we will reinforce three simple messages:

- **Mental wellbeing is created in communities**
- **Prevention works**
- **Real voices drive real change**

[To book your place click here.](#)

Read more on InformationNow about [Mental Health](#).

Pre-Raphaelites: Art and Poetry

17 October 2026 to 13 February 2027, Laing Art Gallery

This autumn and winter, visitors will have the chance to see the first large-scale exhibition to explore the connections between Pre-Raphaelite art and poetry. A range of fine and decorative art is included in the exhibition, providing visitors with the chance to see exquisite embroidery, metalwork, stained glass, tapestry, illuminated manuscripts, and books, as well as paintings and works on paper. Together, the stunning array of loans reveal the creative exchange between art and poetry seen during one of the most exciting periods of British art and literature.

[Click here to see more about the exhibit.](#)

Read more on InformationNow about [Laing Art Gallery](#).

OPPORTUNITIES

Get Online Newcastle Digital Skills Sessions

City Library

There are still spaces to take part in a number of digital support courses happening at [City Library](#) :

- **Online Basics, Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am to 12.30pm**

This course gives support to help people get online for the first time. Learn basic digital skills in an informal setting. It's a two-part course, available all year round, delivered at the City Library. You'll learn how to use a computer, send an email, search the internet, and attach photos and your CV to emails.

- [Introduction to Office](#), Tuesdays 1.30pm to 4pm, Fridays 1pm to 3pm

This course will show you how to use Microsoft Office packages including **Word**, **Excel** and **PowerPoint**. You'll learn essential tasks, such as how to cut, copy and paste, sort a spreadsheet, and insert a picture into a document.

- **Techy Tea Parties, Thursdays 2pm to 3pm**

Bring along your own device – laptop, smart phone, tablet or iPad, and find out how to use your basic settings, secure your device, download and navigate apps. These are single sessions; you can book for one session, or four consecutive sessions.

Please send all enquiries to getonline@newcastle.gov.uk.

Read more on InformationNow about [getting online and using digital equipment](#).

Beyond the Page Launch

14 October 2026, 10.30am to 12.30pm, Newcastle City Library

Over the years, many people have discovered new books, new interests, new friendships, and new confidence through Reading for Wellbeing. We know that libraries can offer so much more than people often realise, and we're excited to be launching a new programme that builds on this idea.

Beyond the Page is a new, FREE initiative from Newcastle Libraries designed to help people explore reading, wellbeing activities, local history, digital resources, learning opportunities and community groups through their local library. Kind of like the Couch to 5k, but for libraries instead of running!

[Full event details can be found here.](#)

Read more on InformationNow about [libraries, reading, and audiobooks](#).

Recruitment Call for Nutrition Research Study

Dame Margaret Babour Building, Newcastle University

Researchers at Newcastle University are looking for participants to help them investigate gut hormone and appetite responses to fat, protein and carbohydrates, to understand the causes of appetite loss in older adults.

They are looking for adults over 65 to take part in five visits, with a commitment time of around 20 hours.

For further information and to express interest, please contact m.barrett3@newcastle.ac.uk.

Read more on InformationNow about [getting involved in health research](#).

CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Newcastle Domestic Abuse Services Review 2026

We would like to hear about people's experience of using domestic abuse services in Newcastle, working with these services, or being a family member or friend of someone who has used them.

We want to understand whether people affected by domestic abuse in Newcastle are able to get the help and support they need. We would like to hear your views on this, to help us understand what is working well and where services may need to improve. Your feedback will help us understand what works well, what could be improved, and how services can better support people affected by domestic abuse.

You are in control.

Please only share what you feel comfortable sharing:

- You do not need to tell us about the abuse you experienced.
- You do not have to answer every question.
- You can skip any question you do not wish to answer.
- Some questions include "Prefer not to say" or "Not applicable" options.
- Your responses will be treated confidentially and will only be used to help improve services.

If you find any questions upsetting, you can take a break or stop the survey at any time.

[Click here for the survey.](#)

Read more on InformationNow about [domestic abuse support services](#).

Help Develop New Guidance on Good Dementia Care

Closing 30 October 2026

The Care Quality Commission are developing new guidance on what good dementia care should look like. They're looking for guidance from a broad range of organisations and individuals who have knowledge, experience or interest in this area.

This work aims to improve people's experience of dementia care and their outcomes from care, including people who are living with dementia, their carers and families.

[Take the survey here.](#)

Read more on InformationNow about [dementia](#).

Healthwatch Annual Joint Meeting: Newcastle and Gateshead

Wednesday 30 September 2026, 4pm to 6pm, Gateshead College

The Annual Joint Meeting of Healthwatch Gateshead and Healthwatch Newcastle is fast approaching. This public meeting is an opportunity to have your voice heard and help shape the

future of the public voice in Gateshead and Newcastle.

If you haven't registered yet, there's still time to secure your place! Registration closes on 28 September, so please register at your earliest convenience.

[Find out more here.](#)

Read more on InformationNow about [Healthwatch](#).

Physiotherapy Survey

Closing 14 October 2026

Healthwatch are looking for anyone who has had physiotherapy treatment (either private or NHS, or any other kind) to complete a survey and share their experiences. The survey aims to help understand the reasons people choose one route over another, as well tracking performance and identifying areas for improvement. Findings and recommendations will be passed on to service providers, to help those services improve.

[Take the survey here.](#)

Read more on InformationNow about [having your say about health services](#).

REPORTS AND RESOURCES

Healthwatch Newcastle Annual Report 2025-2026

Healthwatch Newcastle is your local health and social care champion. In the last 12 months, they've involved 557 people in their research projects and heard from 9,131 people about their experiences of health and social care services.

Their latest annual report provides more information about the work they've done to support local communities and ensure people's voices are heard.

[Read the report here.](#)

Read more on InformationNow about [Healthwatch](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

Understanding Your Baby

Thursdays, from 1 October 2026, 10am to 11.30am, Byker Sands Family Centre

New group for parents and carers of a new baby. Come along, meet other parents and carers and get loads of support from our friendly team. Bring your baby along with you.

If someone would like to come but transport or anything else is a barrier to attending, please get in touch as help may be available.

[Further information can be found here.](#)

Read more on InformationNow about [babies, children, and young people's health](#).

Dementia Voice Group

First Thursday of each month, 11am to 1pm, Cruddas Park Surgery

A small, friendly group for people living with a dementia diagnosis and their carers. Open to people living with dementia and their carers who reside in the Newcastle area.

You will discuss a wide variety of local and national topics, provide feedback to influence change in organisations and dementia friendly communities. If you would like to make an impact for changes now and in the future for anyone affected by dementia please get in touch.

Contact enquiries@alzheimers.org.uk to join. [Further details available here.](#)

Read more on InformationNow about [dementia](#).

The Lost Flowers and Urban Flora Art Workshop

21 October 2026, 1.30pm to 3.00pm, Bewick Hall, Newcastle City Library

An Equal Arts creative session on the theme of wildflowers, based on the Lost Flowers Exhibition and Project.

No previous experience necessary to enjoy this inclusive, dementia-friendly session. This workshop is part of the Lost Flowers project and Exhibition, based on an exploration of the Collinson watercolours – a collection of 19th-century illustrations of wildflowers from across the North East.

[Click here for further details.](#)

Read more on InformationNow about [Equal Arts](#).

NEW AND UPDATED ON INFONOW

Kingston Park Community Centre

Kingston Park Community Centre welcome all residents from the surrounding area to the centre. They host a variety of organisations and their activities, [full details of which can be found here](#).

Coram Family Lives

Coram Family Lives understand how family life and parenting can be challenging. They offer a comprehensive suite of recourses, including a national helpline, online chat, WhatsApp support service, free online parenting sources, and lots of resources on their website.

Read more on InformationNow about [Coram Family Lives](#).

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