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Friday 15th May 2020 First Published in 1948 and still FREE

newtonnews

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www.newtonnews.co.uk - No. 1 website for local news

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VE DAY CELEBRATIONS AT ROSE LODGE HOME

Friday 8th May should have been a day to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of VE Day (Victory in Europe). Instead the whole country was on lockdown, however, some were able to celebrate this momentous event in their own way or with socially distant neighbours.

Aycliffe Radio were no exception, they set up at Rose Lodge Care Home and between 1.00pm and 4.00pm entertained the residents with music and songs from the 1940s and 1950s.

At 2.00pm Amy Harrison then sang a selection of war songs made famous by the likes of Vera Lynn and the Andrew Sisters as well as a rendition of 'God Save the Queen'.



Joining Amy were WO2 Tracy Downs and WO2 David Tomlinson from the town's REME (Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers).

Aycliffe Radio presenter Gary Avery played a selection of songs, music, adverts and Pathe news clips from the 1940s. Although the station could not publicise the event, permission was obtained from the Police and Paul Howell MP.

There were a few onlookers and Sainsbury shoppers who stayed a while (at a distance) and watched as the afternoon unfolded, with Piper Neil Thain playing two tracks at 3pm, 'Battles O'er' and 'VE Day 75'. 'Battles O'er' is the traditional tune played by pipers at the end of battle and 'VE Day 75' was specially written to commemorate the day. After the pipes was a moving poem 'Just Another Soldier'.

One onlooker commented "What a fantastic day, I haven't seen my mother in



six weeks. To be able to come along today, enjoy the nice weather, have a dance and see my mother was great".

The new Memory Lane show broadcasts Monday to Friday 1.00pm to 2.00pm on Aycliffe Radio. Gary will present a live show on a Monday playing requests and dedications - to place a request email info@ayclifferadio.co.uk or text

07512 253333.

Once we get back to some normality, Gary will be visiting the homes, talking to residents, taking requests and dedications for any upcoming celebrations.

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ORCA OFFER FREE FOGGING SERVICE



North East-based Orca Cleaning Services Ltd is making its own major contribution to the fight against Coronavirus, by offering free fogging services for communal areas in care homes across the area.

The fogging process takes effect within 10 minutes of application and remains active for up to 28 days - even in frequently touched areas. As such, it's a vital resource in controlling and reducing the spread of the virus, particularly in high risk places such as care homes and schools. Steven Holmes, director at Orca said: "We're really keen to help the people who are most vulnerable during this pandemic. In care homes, if the virus gets in then it can spread quickly with devastating effects and we want to do everything we can to prevent that."

"Our fogging service is proven to kill the virus, so could make a real difference

in protecting our older people."

Initially available to care homes in DH and DL postcodes, the free fogging service is provided directly by Orca via its team of 10 members of staff.

Offering a full range of industrial cleaning services including high level cleaning, industrial pressure washing and guano (bird muck) removal, Orca was founded in 2016 and has ambitious plans to quadruple in size over the next five years. It already works with companies including the Forestry Commission, Gestamp Tallent, AKS Precision Ball, NSK Bearings, Mission Food, JLM Global Foods, Overbury and Tolent.

Free fogging for care homes is available by contacting Hollie Holmes on hollie@orcacleaningservices.co.uk or 0800 304 7436.

For more information, see orcacleaningservices.co.uk

New Courses & Apprenticeships for Budding Engineers & Electricians

Budding engineers and electricians are being invited to apply for new full time courses and apprenticeships starting this September at a leading County Durham training provider. South West Durham Training, which has been training young engineers for more than 50 years and is graded 'outstanding' by Ofsted, is launching new electrical, engineering and mechanical training provision and is taking applications and expressions of interest now. It is one of the first in the North East to offer the new Level 4 Engineering Manufacturing Technician Higher Apprenticeship. The three year standard is aimed at engineers already with a Level 3 BTEC or equivalent, who will qualify with a Higher National Certificate (HNC) in Engineering or Manufacturing. Both school leavers and those already employed who have a GCSE in Engineering will also this autumn for the first time be able to directly enrol onto a Level 3 Extended Diploma in Engineering at SWDT, another new addition. The Newton Aycliffe engineering training provider, part of the Bishop Auckland College Group, is also launching a new Level 2 Diploma in Electrical Installation, a one year



full time course aimed at young people looking at a career as a domestic or commercial electrician who do not yet have an employer. Stuart Johnson, CEO of SWDT, said: "Whether you are a school leaver with an engineering GCSE or simply have an interest in becoming an electrician - or are already working in engineering or manufacturing and are looking for a higher education qualification - these new additions to our training offer could be the ideal next step for you. "Similarly, we would like to hear from employers in the engineering and manufacturing sectors who are interested in upskilling their staff. You don't have to be in traditional engineering; it could also be food and drink, supply chain logistics etc. "We are offering the Level 4 Higher Apprenticeship at a very competitive rate and the Level 3 Extended Diploma in Engineering can be studied on day release with your apprentice in the workplace up to four days per week."

Thomas Lavender, 20, of Billingham, is in the third year of an Advanced Apprenticeship (Engineering Design and

Draughtsperson) with SWDT, which will give him a Level 4 HNC qualification. His employer is M5tec, a bespoke engineering design solutions company specialising in areas including nuclear, oil and gas, and renewable energies. Thomas left school unsure as to which Engineering pathway he wanted to go down either the academic or vocational. He said: "I chose a mix of the two, and went and did a two-year BTEC Level 3 in Engineering. When the opportunity of an Apprenticeship as CAD designer came up locally, I took it."

"As M5tec have invested their time in me, and continue to do so, I feel I am an integral part of its ongoing growth." For more information on the new qualifications visit swdt.co.uk or contact admin@swdt.co.uk or call (01325) 313194. Alternatively, take part in the Virtual Open Evening being held from 5pm to 7pm today (Thursday May 7th) where engineering tutors will be available to give advice 'face to face' by Zoom video conferencing, over the phone or via our Live Chat facility. To register visit bacoll.ac.uk/Events/virtualmay

Dozens Apply for Fast-Track to Care Jobs

Dozens of people have applied for jobs in the adult social care sector following a recruitment drive prompted by the coronavirus pandemic.

County Durham Care Academy launched the fast-track recruitment and training programme at the beginning of last month in response to pressures being placed on the sector by the crisis.

More than 60 applicants responded to the appeal, many of whom have now completed their training and undergone pre-employment checks.

Their details have been sent on to potential employers, with many now undergoing interviews for roles as care workers, domestic assistants and kitchen assistants.

The Care Academy was launched last year by Durham County Council to support the development of a skilled and valued adult social care workforce in the county.

Cllr Lucy Hovvels MBE, Durham County Council's Cabinet member for adult and health services, said: "We all know that the coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on the social care sector, with staff working incredibly hard to help some of our most vulnerable residents."

"It has inevitably created a need for additional staff to support this important work and by introducing this fast-track recruitment and training programme we are able to meet this need quickly and efficiently. "Not only does this mean we are able assist providers in filling vacancies and improving their resilience, but we are also helping individuals find employment at a time when some may have lost their jobs or are struggling to earn a wage."

There are more than 100 independent sector care providers in County

Durham, supporting adults with social and physical activities including household tasks, personal care and attending appointments.

The academy is in regular contact with many of these employers in order to match applicants to opportunities in their local area. This makes the recruitment process easier for the county's care providers, while supporting people to access local job opportunities.

The Care Academy is also working with day care providers who are no longer operating during the coronavirus pandemic to provide appropriate training for staff so that they can be redeployed into other care positions when needed.

Kathryn Cooper, manager of Devonshire House, West Auckland, and Chair of the County Durham Residential Registered Managers Network, said: "This is a very busy time for the care sector and this recruitment initiative by the Care Academy has certainly helped me, I don't have much time for recruitment at the moment and to know that these candidates have already been vetted by the local authority and received some training is reassuring."

The process was simple and I look forward to welcoming our new recruit this week."

The Care Academy is now launching a second round of recruitment, with applicants invited to fill in an online application form before completing online training. Opportunities are available for anyone wishing to work in adult social care, including those without prior experience. Further information is available at www.durham.gov.uk/careacademyrecruitment. Regular updates on the care academy's Facebook page www.facebook.com/CareAcademyDurham/ recruitment

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Aycliffe Angels Website Relunched

Dear Sir,
One lovely thing came out of my article in last week's Newton News about the Aycliffe Angels, inasmuch as I was contacted by Andrew Hutton.

Andrew Hutton, you will remember, was the Northern Echo community web editor who brought the 'Aycliffe Angels' to the public's attention twenty years ago. As part of that campaign he had compiled a website on the Aycliffe Angels (now lapsed), and he kindly gave me permission to re-host it on my own educational website.

I have transcribed it, brought it up to date, and added some extra materials. My website averages more than a million unique visitors a year, so many school students across the world will now be able access the refreshed site from <http://www.johndclare.net> and learn about our Aycliffe Angels.

Andrew himself has resurrected the domain name, so you can also access the site direct from <http://aycliffeangels.org.uk>

People have already contacted me with new materials for the site, which stands as a testimony to the bravery and contribution of these amazing women, to whom we owe so much.

John D Clare

75th ANNIVERSARY

VE/VJ Day Celebration

Sat., 15th August 2020
11.00am to 4.00pm
Aycliffe Town Centre

What's Happening:
Local Armed Forces displays all day

- 11am - Aycliffe Radio
- 11.30am - Jenna Highfield
- 12pm - Aycliffe Radio
- 12.30pm - Jenna Highfield
- 1pm - Major Arries - Piper
- 1.15pm - Aycliffe Radio
- 1.30pm - 1407 Cadets Drill
- 2pm - Jenna Highfield
- 2.30pm - Aycliffe Radio
- 3pm - Piper/Piano "Radio One"
- 3.15pm - Jenna Highfield
- 3.45pm - Aycliffe Radio

Jenna Highfield
1940's Singer and Entertainer

124 Recovery Company
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1407 Squadron Air Cadets
Drill Display and Recruiting

102 Battalion REME
Vehicles, Recruiting and Display

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- * Singalong with Jenna
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- * MP & Mayor Visit
- * Ice Cream / Face Painter
- * Vintage Vehicles

Household Waste Recycling Centres to be Reopened

Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) in County Durham will reopen in the next two weeks in line with government guidance. Last week, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Robert Jenrick, announced that he would be issuing guidance to councils to begin reopening HWRCs. Since the announcement, Durham County Council has been working with its contractor, HW Martins, to look at the possibility of safely reopening its main sites and this week received new guidance from central government. The council has now confirmed that it is planning for all 12 of its main sites to be reopened on Monday 18 May and will also resume its bulky waste goods collections from this day. However, government guidance has emphasised that residents should only take waste to HWRCs if it cannot be stored safely at home and no alternative disposal options are available. A number of significant safety measures have been considered in order to be able to reopen the sites in a way that ensures the safety of all staff and residents during the coronavirus outbreak. Sites are expected to be extremely busy once the HWRCs reopen. The council is currently working to implement traffic management schemes, such as temporary road closures, where necessary for sites that risk blocking main

highways and access for key services. To ensure social distancing, people will be asked to keep two metres apart at all times and a limited number of cars will be allowed on site at a time. This will be determined on a site-by-site basis and residents are being asked to be patient at sites where there are queues. Visitors may also be turned away if sites are too busy. Changes to the way the sites are used will also be made. For example, no lifting assistance will be available from staff on site, with users being responsible for this, and residents are advised to take a passenger from the household if required. Residents will also be asked to wash their hands before and after their visit. Vehicles such as vans, pickups, minibuses or vehicles towing trailers, will still be able to use the site with a waste permit. These can be applied for on the council's website. As usual, car users will not need to apply for a permit. While the main sites will reopen, some services may remain closed initially such as the mobile recycling centre at Frosterley and the trade waste facility and re-use shop at Stainton. The council is working to reopen these as soon as possible. Bulky waste collections can be booked from 9am on Tuesday 12 May at www.durham.gov.uk/bulkywaste or by calling us on 03000 260 000. Bookings cannot be taken until this date. Items should be placed at your kerbside bin collection point, where your rubbish

bins are collected from, ready for collection. The HWRC sites are expected to be extremely busy once reopened and the council is asking residents to only use the site if necessary and expect queues. Cllr Brian Stephens, Cabinet member for neighbourhoods and local partnerships, said: "We are pleased to announce that we have plans to reopen all 12 of our HWRCs in the coming weeks, as well as resume our bulky waste goods collections, while also following the government's guidance on being able to operate them safely. "We want to have the reopening as close to our normal service as possible which means that a number of significant safety measures will need to be put in place to ensure that all staff and residents can protect themselves, and others, while using the facilities. "I would like to stress, however, the importance of following government guidance about using these sites. This means asking residents to spread out their visits to HWRCs as much as possible, be patient when using the sites, and to bring materials only if they cannot be safely stored at home." Further details on sites, such as changes to opening times, can be found online at www.durham.gov.uk/hwrc

GREENFIELD STUDENTS INSPIRED

Reading is key at Greenfield Community College and students are reaping the benefits of the many opportunities and resources that have been available to them. During this time of uncertainty, reading is an activity that can provide a space to enjoy both fiction and non-fiction, both of which can offer a wonderful learning experience in the home and a form of freedom to explore new ideas and escape to other worlds. Every week there is a 'Reading in Lockdown' document shared with all students with reading links and ideas including items from short uplifting articles to more challenging podcasts. Students at Greenfield can find this work posted in the 'English' work files along with a shared 'reading and listening resources' folder for students and families to dip into (see the 'Reading Resources' link on our webpage). Ofsted have continually highlighted the correlation between reading, writing and the benefits it can bring across the curriculum and this is also a vital component of their 'deep dive' strategy in schools. Students at Greenfield Community College are progressing and nurturing a love of reading which will allow them to access a wide range of opportunities. Improved reading ability is essential in supporting students to successfully approach the new G.C.S.E. framework but it is also crucial in

equipping our students with the vocabulary they need to become confident young adults. Greenfield Community College are committed to encourage and develop reading through expert teaching and providing the opportunities and resources for students to read and to inspire a love of reading. Whilst at school, time is allotted each day in T4S (Time for Success) lesson, where students are given space and time to read a book of choice and the school have worked hard to widen the range of materials available during this time with form tutors. There are also reading initiatives such as 'star reading' to enable students and staff understand and evaluate levels of reading and encourage progress. Greenfield has a well-stocked library with dedicated librarians on hand to advise and encourage students. Novels and plays within the curriculum are studied in-depth with many opportunities to discuss and study texts including external visits and trips to live theatre to continually inspire reading and deepen knowledge. Forty-five students trained as peer-reading mentors during the autumn term and we hope that they will play a key



role in supporting students and promoting reading when we return to school. Last half-term some of the reading mentors began their role by supporting a break-time reading drop in for our Year 7 and 8 students who enjoyed listening to stories read by staff including Mr. Moffatt, Ms Silverwood and Mr. Mark. More recently, to celebrate world book evening, staff have been sharing their reading on social media, releasing a video to encourage students to explore their own reading tastes and gain a light-hearted insight into the choices staff are making. We have also continued to mark events such as V.E. Day with reading recommendations posted on Twitter, students who would like to forward their own

book recommendations should email Ms. Rose. This week the school are inviting students to enter a competition to design a National Book Token. See @GreenfieldTweets for more, there will also be an online book club and a new competition coming up so please keep in touch. Greenfield is committed to encouraging reading and promoting a broad and balanced curriculum enabling each and every student to reach their full potential. In the words of author Neil Gaiman, we 'hope we can give our children a world in which they will read, and be read to, and imagine, and understand' because we know that 'once a child finds their happy place in a book, they will have this gift for the rest of their lives'.

CARING FOR OUR FOUR LEGGED FRIENDS

Dear Sir,
In these unprecedented and challenging times, we would like to say a huge thank you to all Dogs Trust supporters and players of People's Postcode Lottery in the local area, for their continued support. We are currently looking after 45 dogs at Dogs Trust Darlington and without the help of the dog loving public, we would not be able to give our wonderful dogs everything they need whilst they are in our care waiting to head off to their forever homes. For many that wait is going to be longer than usual due to the current lockdown. However, regardless of how long they have to wait, we can assure you that thanks to our supporters and players of People's Postcode Lottery, all of our dogs have everything they need, every single day they are with us. More than £13 million has been awarded to Dogs Trust since the partnership with People's Postcode Lottery first began in 2013. This has meant we have been able to invest in additional highly skilled staff such as behaviourists, canine carers and veterinary staff, expand initiatives such as our Home from Home fostering scheme, invest in our volunteers and improve facilities at our rehoming centres, all of which has lasting benefits for our four-legged friends.

We know all of our supporters share our vision to improve the dog welfare landscape in the UK and although at the moment we don't know the financial implications of Coronavirus on Dogs Trust as it is an evolving situation, we are certain that the coming months are likely to see an increased demand for our services. That is

why we want to take this opportunity to thank dog lovers in the region for their vital continued support. If you would like to find out more about how Dogs Trust is helping dog owners during this difficult time, or if you would like to make a donation, please go to www.dogstrust.org.uk. Thank you. Dogs Trust Darlington

100th BIRTHDAY GREETINGS



Minnie Puttock

Minnie was born on 16th May 1920 in Lowlands, Cockfield and celebrates her 100th birthday this weekend. She attended Ramshaw School in Evenwood and went on to join the ATS in service at West Kirby in Anglesey as a cook in the officers mess. Minnie met her Husband, Bill, in Lea-on-Sea and married in 1943 and had three children. The couple moved to

Newton Aycliffe in 1953 and lived in Henderson Road, Oakfield and Bewick Crescent. Minnie currently lives with her Daughter, Joy, in Oakfield. Minnie was employed at Yardley and Flymo. She enjoys meeting with friends at the RAFA Club and Methodist Wives Club. The family has grown over the years to three grandchildren, six great grandchildren and one great granddaughter. **Happy Birthday Minnie**

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Crafter's Companion Responds to Appeal



Crafter's Companion has enlisted the help of its customers and local community to provide scrub bags for care workers in County Durham.

Customers and staff at the Newton Aycliffe-based craft retailer have created more than 250 scrub bags for Countrywide Extra Care Homes across the County Durham area. Sara Davies, founder and creative director of the company, presented the scrubs to Julie Parkin, Countrywide Extra Care Manager.

This initiative follows Sara's appearance on This Morning, to teach the nation how to create scrub bags at home by upcycling 100% cotton materials. The bags enable the country's key workers to take their scrubs home in a safe way, allowing them to place the bag directly into the washing machine and also reducing the use of plastic bags.

Sara said: "Creating scrub bags is the perfect way to stay busy at home whilst providing much-needed

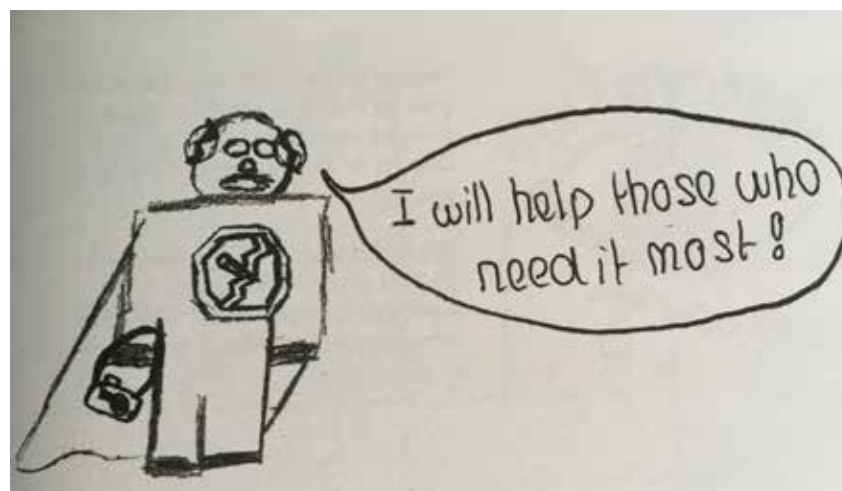
materials for our NHS staff and key workers.

"It's been great to see so many people getting involved and the bags are so easy to make. We have all of the information you need to get started on our website so I would urge anyone who would like to help to have a go!"

Cllr Lucy Hovvels MBE, Durham County Council Cabinet member for adult and health services, said: "It is wonderful to see everyone rallying together in these difficult times to support our key workers and the vital role they are playing in tackling this pandemic. Our care workers are doing such an important job in supporting County Durham residents and it's very positive to see that these scrub bags will help to support them in their journey home from work."

For more information on how to make the scrubs bags and the address to send finished bags to, please visit www.crafterscompanion.co.uk/sew-a-scrub-bag

Greenfield Arts Create Community Film



Greenfield Arts have been working with the community to celebrate creativity and to help make their birthday film. The arts team, who are presently working from home, would like to say a big thank you to all for the wonderful contributions so far that help mark their twentieth birthday.

The campaign has inspired people to share their superhero talents, recall a creative moment or experience or just to remember a time or activity at Greenfield Arts. Katy Milne, Creative Director and Filmmaker Laura Degnan have been working online to bring together

your contributions and are excited to be making a film that reflects the community which is at its heart.



The overall film is inspired by a piece of poetry by spoken word artist, Tony Gadd, who was commissioned by Greenfield Arts to capture the essence of the organisation, its work and its place within the community as part of its twentieth birthday plans. We would be thrilled if you could help us illustrate this through doodles and illustrations that reflect nature or creativity.

Our Greenfield Arts Community film campaign can be found on our social media sites (Facebook and Twitter) or you can email the team by contacting info@greenfield-arts.co.uk

MAKING MUSIC AND MEMORIES IN LOCKDOWN

Videos helping children to hone their music skills at home have received more 5,000 views on YouTube. Last month, Durham Music Service (DMS) moved all of its teaching sessions online to allow schoolchildren to continue to their lessons during the lockdown.

In normal circumstances, DMS provides small group lessons to more than 4,000 primary and secondary school pupils across County Durham and Darlington per week. It also delivers whole school sessions, which see 18,000 young musicians try their hand at everything from brass and woodwind, to singing and the ukulele. By using video conferencing technology, DMS, which is partly funded by Durham County Council, Darlington Borough Council and Arts Council England, has been able to continue to deliver these sessions to pupils.

The team is also regularly uploading fun-filled music videos on its YouTube channel, with hundreds of families tuning in each day. In April, the videos received more than 4,000 views, and this figure now stands at almost 6,000. Many children and families have also been creating their own music clips and sharing them on social media using the hashtag



#DMShomesessions. Among the highlights so far has been a father and son duo of 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow' performed on the trumpet during the weekly clap for keyworkers. Michael Summers, manager of DMS, said: "We have been overwhelmed by the response to our new YouTube channel and #DMShomesessions. When we moved our regular lessons online, we were keen to do something the whole family could enjoy together, while also serving as a useful tool for parents and carers teaching children at home."

"I am delighted the videos have been so popular and have also inspired other people to create and share their own. Music can be incredibly uplifting, and it is important we all find ways to relax, enjoy ourselves and look after our mental health

during this difficult time." Cllr Olwyn Gunn, Durham County Council's Cabinet member for children and young people's services, said: "In these unprecedented and uncertain times, when our daily lives have changed so dramatically, it is important we try to provide a sense of normality for children. By enabling youngsters to continue with their music lessons, DMS is doing just that. It is wonderful to see so many families engaging with the videos and making their own music together."

For more information about DMS and how to get involved in #DMShomesessions visit www.durhammusic.org.uk or follow @DurhamMusicOnline on Facebook and @TrustDurham on Twitter. To view DMS videos on YouTube visit www.youtube.com/c/DurhamMusic

Warning Against Scam Cold Callers

A warning has been issued to County Durham residents not to give out personal information over the phone as scam callers take advantage of the coronavirus pandemic. The trading standards and corporate fraud teams at Durham County Council are urging residents to be on their guard as opportunist criminals exploit the uncertainty surrounding the current outbreak.

Reports have been received of hoax telephone calls claiming to be from council services, including registrars and the County Durham Together community hub.

A member of the public received a call claiming to be from Durham County Council Registration services. The cold caller advised of the need to take card payment to register the birth of a child.

Residents are being reminded that Durham County Council would not make calls out of the blue or seek for payment to be made or ask for personal and credit card information for birth registrations. No births are currently being registered anywhere in the UK. Deaths however are being registered over the phone, but there is a strict verification method that they are adhering to.

Anne Robson, superintendent registrar with Durham County Council, said: "We would never contact the public seeking information and payment in this way."

Callers pretending to be from the authority's community hub and requesting bank account/bank card details are also being reported.

The County Durham Together hub offers support and guidance to people during the pandemic, including support around essential food supplies,

linking people to existing local services where possible. Where there is no other support available, the community hub may provide a food parcel or, for people with specific dietary needs, essential shopping. If this is the case, payment procedures will be discussed during the conversation. However, the hub will never ask for bank or bank card details. Anyone asking for such details is a scammer, and no personal information or payment should be given.

Joanne Waller, head of community protection with Durham County Council, said: "In these changing times we would urge the public and business to take care when contacted by people by phone, email or letter seeking payments or personal and financial information. Take the time to check out the person or organisation making the request to confirm that they are in fact genuine."

Paul Bradley, chief internal auditor and corporate fraud manager said: "Fraudsters are taking advantage of these unprecedented times, with the fraud threat higher in emergency situations. We encourage anyone who has any concerns to report fraud and scams to Durham County Council. Your information will be taken seriously and will be investigated. If you wish you can remain anonymous."

Details on how to report fraud and help from Durham County Council can be found at www.durham.gov.uk/fraud or by phoning 03000 266 745.

Details of how to protect yourself and family from frauds and scams, including current coronavirus scams, can be found at www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk

CALL YOUR LOCAL POLICE

101

IN AN EMERGENCY ALWAYS CALL 999

101 is now the number to call when you want to contact your local police - when it's less urgent than 999

WHEN SHOULD I CALL 101?

To report less urgent crime or disorder and for general police enquiries, for example:

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- to give information about crime in your area;
- or
- if you would like to speak to your local police officer

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Newton Aycliffe Key Worker Recognition

Hi everyone, Jess Webb here again to introduce you to the next key worker I have interviewed from our town; Lisa Peart.

Lisa has been a social worker for the last 10 years, where she reports to have provided a high-quality service in relation to all aspects of the assessment and care management process, whilst also meeting the needs of vulnerable adults.

Within her role she is very committed to involving people, their careers, families and friends in every issue related to their care. She also strives to ensure that the people who she supports are able to identify, build and use their own strengths and abilities.

Lisa feels that lived experiences are important for her role, and that her own experiences have helped her to become a good social worker as this has allowed her to be able to empathise with others and provide the appropriate support when it is needed.

When asked what she needed to do to get into social care, Lisa said she completed a number of courses including an access course in BTEC care. She also attended Teesside University and completed a 3 year degree in Social Work and Mental Health Nursing.

Her previous jobs have mostly included working in care environments, such as a nanny, care assistant, and even an activity care coordinator in an older person's care home. These previous jobs gave Lisa a range of opportunities to gain the experience needed for her current job and benefited her hugely.

For Lisa's job, you require:

- Problem solving skills to advise people on the best support for them;
- Digital skills to keep records and find information online;
- The ability to stay calm under pressure;
- Team working skills to work with other social care



and health professionals;

- Good communication and listening skills.

When asked what she likes most about her job, Lisa said "I get a sense of happiness when I have worked with individuals that need additional support, to complete goals which they wished to do. Also being able to protect and safeguard individuals from exploitation due to their vulnerabilities". However, when asked what she likes least about her job, she replied "It is heartbreaking watching individuals in crisis situations and when an individual you have worked with becomes very unwell and needs to go into hospital".

It is essential that everyone considers their work life balance to promote their own well-being, and when asked what Lisa likes to do in her spare time, she reported that she enjoys going for bike rides, spending time with her grandchildren, and of course spa days with friends! She also told me that her favourite film to watch is Grease and to go with this she loves cheese and wine, which I hope is in moderate amounts! Hope Lisa's interview might provide some inspiration for pursuing a career in social care. I am sure you would like to join me in thanking Lisa, and recognising the key and vital role that she plays in society. Thank you Lisa!

BRAVE HEARTS COMMUNITY GROUP



friendships and inspiring our community.

You can join our community on our face book page @ braveheartsnortheast or send

an email to braveheartsnortheast@gmail.com

Dr Adebola Adisa
GP and Founder-Brave Hearts North East CIC

Brave Hearts is a North East of England based community interest group founded by Dr Adebola Adisa as a WhatsApp group in May 2018. This was in response to her friends' request to join her in the Darlington 2018 5K Race for Life. Whilst she felt a huge sense of achievement during her first race in 2017, she thought more could be done to encourage women from ethnic minority backgrounds to join the CRUK cause and run with thousands of other ladies.

The group which has since grown to over 20 members, most of whom participated in the 2019 Darlington 5K Race for Life. The Darlington based Hinds Building Services(HBS) sponsored our branded pink T-shirts for the race.

We are now a registered community interest company; "Brave Hearts North East CIC". Brave Hearts has held various programmes including a Family Sports Fun Day in July 2019, the Darlington Women's Health Talk in September 2019, Career talk and launch of our mentorship programme in February 2020, which was attended by the Mayor of Darlington, Mayor Nick Wallis. We also organised a virtual 5K event in May 2020

Our other activities include; group Sunday morning exercises, in the warmer months of the year at our beautiful South Park; meet ups at different churches, kids' birthday parties, house parties and BBQs, movies, pick your own vegetables dates, sightseeing events, soft plays and individual playdates.

Our adopted charity is the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust Charity and 100% of funds raised through us, goes to them. So far, we have raised a total of £299, through our various events.

Brave Hearts is committed to building strong

County Volunteering Unit Launches

A new volunteering unit has been set up in County Durham to provide more support to local organisations and charities during the coronavirus pandemic.

The unit builds on the work of County Durham Together, the community hub operated by Durham County Council to support people and families who are vulnerable and in need during these unprecedented times.

It will provide a central location where organisations needing additional help or practical resources can go to register that need.

The aim of the unit is to help manage offers of support from businesses and individuals who have volunteered their services and resources in County Durham.

Staff will be able to match them to groups across the county's voluntary and community sector who have requested help in a number of different areas. For example, many organisations are in need of extra staff, equipment, premises, vehicles, IT support and communications and marketing skills.

The team is also working with key organisations including local charities and the care sector to assess their needs and establish where additional support

may be needed. Cllr Brian Stephens, Cabinet member for neighbourhoods and local partnerships, said:

"We are thankful for all of the volunteering that is going on in the county and the feedback we are getting is that the groups involved are doing some truly amazing work in difficult circumstances. However as the challenge of the virus could go on for some time and as some volunteers will be going back to work once restrictions are eased, we are conscious that these groups are likely to need support – if only to give some of their volunteers a well earned break."

"While our community hub will continue to offer support to the vulnerable, this unit will seek to provide similar to our amazing army of volunteers."

Any businesses which are able to offer support to charity groups or local organisations should fill in a form on the council's website:

<https://www.durham.gov.uk/volunteerunit>

Any organisation or charity in need of either IT, financial, telephone and customer services support, or in need of resources such as premises, vehicles, drivers or other essential equipment, can also request help online at the same page <https://www.durham.gov.uk/volunteerunit>



Programme Schedule

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HOWEVER WE WILL CONTINUE BROADCASTING 24/7
Updates from MP Paul Howell at 12noon daily

SATURDAY

9-10am	Eurovision Show	Simon Harding
10-12am	Moderation	Jack & Garvey
12-2pm	Kitchen Floorfillers	Cazbo Jangles
2-4pm	Weekly Edition	Paul Baker
4-6pm	Northern & Classic Soul (R)	Kevin Sowerby
"The Saturday Night Experience" Sponsored by Bengal Lounge Indian Restaurant & Takeaway		
6-8pm	Evening Session	Jimjams
8-9pm	Rock the House	Carl Booth
9-10pm	Retro Trance Mix	OZ-DJ
10-12am	Street 'n' Drum 'n' Bass	MC Supa
12-2am	Night Club Session	

SUNDAY

9-10am	Church Service	Xcel Centre
10-11am	Yesterdays Music Today	Alan Brown
11-12pm	Random Reiki Master	Phil Hawkins
12-2pm	Country & Americana Show	David Ringer
Blues Show Sponsored by Whitehouse Funeral Service		
2-4pm	Bear Blues Show	Colin & Monica
4-6pm	Folk/Celtic/Rock Show	Steve & Col
6-7.30pm	Jazz Time	Mike Dixon
8-10pm	The Rock Show	CAD
10-12am	Paul's Down Time	Paul Kjenstad

MONDAY

10-12am	Golden Years	Paul Baker
12-1pm	A to Z of Pop	Richard Smith
1-2pm	Memory Lane	Gary Avery
2-4pm	Afternoon Aycliffe	Paul Baker
6-7pm	60s Show	Karl Simons
7-8pm	70s Show	Peter Rush
8-9pm	80s Show	Gary Avery
9-10pm	90s Show	Paul Baker
10-11pm	00s Show	Producer Dan
11-12am	Teens Show	Andy Fittes

TUESDAY

10-12am	Golden Years	Paul Baker
12-1pm	A to Z of Pop	Richard Smith
1-2pm	Memory Lane	A DJ
2-4pm	Afternoon Aycliffe	Paul Baker
6-7pm	All About the 60s	Honest John
7.30-9.30pm	Northern & Classic Soul	Kevin Sowerby

WEDNESDAY

10-12am	Golden Years	Paul Baker
12-1pm	A to Z of Pop	Richard Smith
1-2pm	Memory Lane	A DJ
2-4pm	Afternoon Aycliffe	Paul Baker
8-10pm	Alternative Aycliffe	Gaz n Alby

THURSDAY

10-12am	Golden Years	Paul Baker
12-1pm	A to Z of Pop	Richard Smith
1-2pm	Memory Lane	A DJ
2-4pm	Afternoon Aycliffe	Paul Baker
6-8pm	The List	Colin McNeillie
8-10pm	BeatRoots	Graeme Roote

FRIDAY

10-12am	Golden Years	Paul Baker
12-1pm	A to Z of Pop	Richard Smith
1-2pm	Memory Lane	A DJ
2-4pm	Afternoon Aycliffe	Paul Baker
6-8pm	Techno Trance Mix	PVR Studios
8-10pm	22nd May - Pauly Mac	Rare Vinyl Mix
10-12am	Alternative Aycliffe (R)	Gaz n Alby
12-2am	Night Club Session	

Check our website for full schedule
www.ayclifferadio.co.uk

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CURTAIN TO RISE ON NEW ONLINE THEATRE FESTIVAL

An online theatre festival aimed at celebrating creativity during the lockdown will showcase County Durham talent to a global audience this June. The Gala Theatre has teamed up with Durham University for Onstage: Online, a digital festival that will bring together a series of theatre shorts and longer productions created while the UK stays at home. Theatre companies and performing arts groups in the county are being invited to apply for the festival,

with funding and mentoring available to those selected. Onstage: Online will take place from Thursday 11 to Sunday 14 June and will see live sessions streamed each day on the Gala Theatre's YouTube channel, along with scheduled pre-recorded content. The videos will also be shared on social media and will remain available for people to enjoy when the festival is over on both the Gala Theatre and Durham University's YouTube channels. In line with Government

guidance, the Gala Theatre, which is owned by Durham County Council, and the Assembly Rooms Theatre, which is the main venue used by Durham University's Durham Student Theatre, have temporarily closed to help slow the spread of coronavirus. However, both teams are determined to continue to provide a platform for local theatre-makers to showcase their work, while also promoting the mental health benefits creativity can bring. Cllr Joy Allen, the council's Cabinet member for transformation, culture and tourism, said: "Onstage: Online is a wonderful opportunity to use our time in lockdown to be creative, while also celebrating what a great place County Durham is with people around the world."

"It is well known that watching theatre and engaging in the arts can be

incredibly beneficial to our mental health and wellbeing, and finding things that lift our spirits is especially important right now.

"I know the team at the Gala Theatre is really enjoying working with our partners at Durham University, and I can't wait to see what theatrical gems the project produces."

Kate Barton, head of student theatre at Durham University, said: "We are thrilled to be running a joint festival bringing creativity from Durham to the world."

"We want to programme the best of the North East and appeal to a wide range of audiences and ages and are particularly interested in work that will appeal to a family audience, though all applications will be

considered."

Theatre companies with projects selected for the festival will receive up to £250 to help create their production and a dedicated slot in the event programme. Emerging theatre companies can also take advantage of free mentoring.

The deadline for applications is Monday 11 May. For more information or to request an application form, contact Kate Barton on 0191 334 4316 or email assemblyrooms.theatre@durham.ac.uk

To find out more about the Gala Theatre, visit www.galadurham.co.uk. For more information about theatre events involving Durham University visit www.theassemblyroomstheatre.org



LUCID INTRODUCES FREE ROUND THE CLOCK SUPPORT



North East based IT services provider Lucid Technology Solutions is offering some peace of mind to its clients during the Coronavirus pandemic, by providing them with access to free 24/7 remote support.

Lucid, which has offices in Newton Aycliffe, Stockton and Team Valley, has extended its external IT support service, which it usually operates 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday, to help clients at any hour of the day at no extra cost, in a bid to help businesses continue to operate efficiently and securely during the crisis.

Lucid works with over 100 clients across the North East operating in a variety of sectors including legal, healthcare, accountancy and manufacturing, many of whom have transitioned to home working since lockdown measures were declared in March. The business will be offering the enhanced service to its clients who currently receive IT support from this week delivered by its team of 16 IT specialists.

Cheryl Spears, sales director at Lucid Technology Solutions, said: "The whole ethos of our business is geared around helping clients to operate as effectively and efficiently as possible through the best use of IT technology and this has never been more important during these challenging times, especially when many clients have had to adapt to home working."

"We recognise that working from home can bring additional IT challenges and clients may need extra support until they can resume their usual working practices. We're also

finding that people are not necessarily working typical office hours and are either starting earlier or finishing later as they work around other commitments such as home schooling, so we wanted to offer a completely flexible service at no extra cost to give something back to our loyal client base at this difficult time."

Jonathan Fletcher, managing director of PG Legal, said: "Lucid's support during this difficult period has been invaluable to my business. Not only did they ensure that the entire team were able to work from home with full remote access at the start of the lockdown but their offer of free 24/7 support as an enhancement to our existing support package has meant that all of the team have been able to access Lucid's expertise at any time of the day or night."

Lucid Technology Solutions, formerly known as Yarm Computers Ltd, has been operating for over 30 years and offers a full suite of business technology solutions including; IT support, software development, telecoms, CCTV, access control, and security solutions. The company's IT support package includes proactive maintenance and monitor of all IT systems to reduce tech calls and business disruption, working to the principle that prevention is better than cure.

For further information about Lucid Technology Solutions contact Tel: 01642 792 567 (Stockton office), 0191 792 567 (Team Valley office) or 01325 792 567, hi@lucidgrp.co.uk or visit the website www.lucidgrp.co.uk



Paul Howell, Member of Parliament for Sedgefield

It is good to see that we are in a position to consider taking steps towards a new normal and that we can contemplate a future post lockdown.

There were a number of clear points from the speech last Sunday firstly from Wednesday we were able to exercise outside more frequently but only with your own household or one other person with social distancing. It's hoped that by June schools and shops may be reopening and by July restaurants may start reopening but only if it can be done safely.

He also said that where it is safe a planned return to work is encouraged and this will need to be worked through by employees and employers. Outside of that the rules are basically the same stay home as much as possible, work from home if you can, limit your contact with others, and keep your 2m distance in addition you should continue to wash your hands regularly and self isolate if anyone in your household has symptoms.

It is important that we all do what the Prime Minister said, be cautious, so if you have any doubt as to whether you can do something, assume you can't. It's important that people do not try to interpret things as loosely as possible but rather as conservatively as possible and we continue to consider everyone around us. I know that there will be a multitude of questions as the release develops and if you would like us to answer any specifics for you please get in touch. I think it is worth noting that there is an inherent requirement that as we progress we all display common sense, it is very easy to look at the government

messages and try to spin them as not clear if you are expecting a full and precise statement of what to do in every situation, we are all better than that.

My weeks continue as before with my team dealing with the in box and working on supporting you all. We have had our first BEIS (Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) select committee meeting with the new chair and we will be very busy here looking at things like the governments plans for supporting business and workers as we exit the pandemic. I continue with regular Zoom conferences with a number of Secretaries of State and lobby for our area on all of these. I am pleased to see the Chancellor has extended the furlough scheme and indicated that some additional flexibility will shortly be introduced. This flexibility is something I have been lobbying for after numerous representations. Last week I also initiated a meeting with the Council leaders and other Conservative MP's to coordinate our representations and we had good positive discussions. The way forward is to work together not to look for selective interpretations to undermine the great work that is happening.

I have also had our first remote vote in Parliament, a historic step, my expectation is that we will be mostly back in Westminster in June. So for now, stay alert, follow the rules and we can control this virus to save lives. Please look after you and yours Stay safe Paul Howell MP MP for Sedgefield

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Popular Online Stories to Continue Through May

New virtual storytelling sessions are to continue throughout May following their initial success.

Durham County Council's library service recently began teaming up with artists to create video recitals of popular stories and poems which children and their families can enjoy online.

The sessions are just one of many online services libraries in the county are offering, all free of charge, to help residents through the coronavirus pandemic.

The online sessions began in April and the first four have been viewed hundreds of times each so far.

On the back of that success, the library service has lined up four more, in partnership with theatre company for young audiences Kitchen Zoo – stars of two of April's recordings, and North East actors Shelley O'Brien, from Mad Alice Theatre Company, and Stan Hodgson.

The classic tales, retold by regional artists, will go live on the council's YouTube channel www.durham.gov.uk/youtubelibraryonline on the following days:

• Thursday 21 May: Kitchen Zoo reading The Boy who Cried Wolf
• Thursday 28 May:

Shelley O'Brien reading The Magic Porridge Pot by Brothers Grimm

Cllr Joy Allen, the council's Cabinet member for transformation, culture and tourism, said: "We started these story videos to give children and their families something to enjoy at home while the very necessary restrictions are in place to slow the spread of coronavirus."

"We're thrilled that the first four have gone down so well and equally delighted to have four more to release in the coming weeks."

"I hope everyone really enjoys them."

Shelley said: "I'm so excited to be telling this classic tale, it's one of my all time favourites. Children can come and join the poor old farmer and his wife whose cupboards are bare and pockets are empty but whose happiness and good fortune is restored by a friendly and clever porridge pot! A wonderful classic story to be enjoyed by young and old."

Stan added: "These stories are such a fun and important way of bringing people together. I'm delighted to be re-telling one of the North East's most famous tales, children might even like to sing along too!"



All libraries in County Durham remain closed in response to government guidance on coronavirus.

People who are not already members of the library service can sign up at <https://www.durham.gov.uk/libraryonline> for free access to daily newspapers, eMagazines and eComics. Library Online also gives access to thousands of free eBooks and eAudiobooks online. Content can be downloaded online or via the Borrowbox app, which is available in the App Store and Google Play.

Library Online is also offering free online access to family history site Ancestry (Library Edition), through which members can browse historical documents and photographs plus local history, oral histories, indexes and other resources.

No awkward silences please: Take a moment to talk about organ donation during Dying Matters Awareness Week

On the 20th May the law around organ donation is changing in England, subject to finalising the Parliamentary process, and we want to encourage everyone to consider the options and register or share their decision.

Under the new law, all adults in England will be considered as having agreed to donate their own organs when they die unless they record a decision not to donate, (known as 'opting out'), or are in one of the excluded groups.

Those excluded will be people under 18, those who lack the mental capacity to understand the new arrangements and take the necessary action; people who have lived in England for less than 12 months or who are not living here voluntarily and those who have nominated someone else to make the decision on their behalf.

It is important that people know they will still have a choice whether or not to donate. Families will still be consulted, and people's faith, beliefs and culture will continue to be respected. Where the individual hasn't expressed a decision, specialist nurses will support their families to make a decision, based on what their loved ones would have wanted. If the decision is not to donate, this will be honoured and upheld.

Very few people die in the circumstances where organ donation is possible so every organ donor is precious. Organ donation will not go ahead if a potential donor tests positive for Covid-19. However, there are still life saving organ transplants taking place at this time, bringing hope to seriously ill patients on the Transplant Waiting List.

Anthony Clarkson, Director of Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation at NHS Blood and Transplant, said: "This year during Dying Matters Awareness Week, we are asking everyone to talk about organ donation. Not only is it important to register your choice but also to discuss your decision with your family and friends."

"Even though the law around organ donation is changing on the 20th May, there is no deadline to making your donation decision, you can register your choice at any time."

"Your family will always be involved in discussions about the possibility of donation, so it is vital you share your choice with them, whether you are with them in person, or are staying connected via a chat over the phone or on family Zoom or Skype calls."

The main theme for this year's Dying Matters Awareness Week (May 11th – 17th) is 'Dying to be heard'. It encourages



us to also consider the other side of conversation – not just talking but listening too. If you've already made your organ donation decision, do you know the decision of those around you?

If organ donation becomes a possibility, relatives find it much easier to support a loved one's decision if they already know what they wanted.

If you haven't already, please make your choice now, register it on the NHS Organ Donor Register and tell your family. For more information and to register your decision, whether you decide to opt in or opt out, visit: www.organdonation.nhs.uk

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New Guidelines for Builders' Merchants Can Tradespeople Still Work in my Home?

Guidance for the safe operation of builders' merchants in the North East during Covid-19 has been produced by an industry trade body. The Builders Merchants Federation (BMF) has produced an 18-page document, setting out guidelines and additional precautions for builders' merchant staff to follow in the office and trade counter, for customer and supplier deliveries,

customer collection and for tool hire during the Covid-19 outbreak.

Two-metre social distancing is absolute between staff, customers and suppliers - and information is included on detailed cleaning routines and mandatory compliance to avoid transmission of the virus. John Newcomb, BMF chief executive, said: "This is a comprehensive document which sets out how to achieve minimum Covid-19 spread by developing a new operating model. "That model centres

around phone, click/call and collect and pre-arranged orders, with no public access into shop or products.

"As a trade association, the BMF does not have the authority to instruct members to remain open, or to close, their businesses. We all understand that in current circumstances, it is not 'business as usual' and difficult decisions must be made at every level. "The number one priority is to minimise the risk of transmitting coronavirus. "The safety of staff, suppliers and customers is

paramount, and the risks can be managed if safe systems of work are in place and remain effective until further notice."

The guidance has been endorsed by the Construction Leadership Council (CLC), which has created a Construction Industry Task Force to provide a focal point for co-ordinating the industry's response to the Covid-19 crisis. BMF is a member of the Task Force, which comprises of leading trade associations representing both large and small firms in the construction sector,

specialist contractors, home builders, product manufacturers, merchants and associated professional services, as well as Government Departments and major clients of the industry. Mr Newcomb added: "The Government has made it clear that merchants are a vital part of the construction supply chain and it is important they continue to support the construction industry to operate on sites, and to provide the link between product manufacturers and the firms and tradespeople that use and install the products they make."

New advice has been issued to households in County Durham to help answer questions over whether maintenance or servicing work can still be carried out in the home during the Covid-19 lockdown.

According to a survey conducted before the pandemic, over half of UK homeowners were planning to have work completed on their property during 2020, at a total cost of £55bn*. Many households may now be asking whether their plans can still go ahead in the current climate and, in response, OFTEC, the registration body for off-grid heating work, has answered some of the most common questions to help homeowners in County Durham comply with government advice and stay safe. These include:

Can work continue in my home?

• Repair and maintenance work can be carried out by a tradesperson providing no one in your, or the tradesperson's, family are showing any Covid-19 symptoms. However, two metre social distancing rules must be followed and regular handwashing is recommended. It may also be worth considering whether it may be better to postpone 'non-essential work'. OFTEC has advised technicians to undertake additional risk assessments and many businesses have signalled that they will only carry out emergency work.

Are there circumstances when work must not be carried out in my home?

• Work should not be carried out in households where occupants are self-isolating or being 'shielded'. If there is an urgent need to address a direct risk to those living in the property, such as emergency plumbing or repair work, this can go ahead if the tradesperson is willing to do so. Additional precautions may also need to be put in place.

If it is safe to carry out work in my home, what should I expect?

• Many tradespeople have introduced additional precautionary measures and it is important to follow these

carefully. They may include:

- o Asking you to stay in a separate room whilst the work is completed
- o Requesting doors and windows are open to increase ventilation
- o Adapting payment methods e.g. no paper invoices or cash payments
- o Wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- o Regularly washing their hands and bringing their own towel
- o Declining refreshments

Can I still have heating oil delivered?

• Yes. There are 16,000 households in County Durham who rely on oil to heat their homes and, fortunately, the price of oil has plummeted which is a welcome relief when many incomes have been reduced. However, delivery times may be slightly longer than normal so regularly check your oil level to ensure you don't run out. Some oil delivery firms are prioritising vulnerable households so ask your provider if you fall into this category. More information is available from the liquid fuel distribution trade association's website: UKIFDA.

Malcolm Farrow of OFTEC, commented: "It is a very unsettling time for many households and there is a lot of confusion about tradespeople working in homes. The government advice is regularly being updated so ensure you check their website for the latest information."

"Most tradespeople are also introducing new safety measures as a precaution for both your and their benefit so don't take it personally if they change the way they work! If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to raise them with the tradesperson. Remember, always ask to see an ID badge to check their credentials such as whether they are OFTEC (for oil and solid fuel) or GasSafe (for mains gas) registered. This will ensure the work is completed safely and to a high standard."

More information and advice is available on the OFTEC website.

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NHS Urges People to Seek Help for Cancer Symptoms

Health officials across County Durham are urging people to contact their GP if they have a symptom they are worried about as urgent GP hospital referrals for suspected cancer fall by 44% during the Coronavirus pandemic.

The plea is being made amid fears that people with cancer symptoms are not coming forward as they worry about seeking help during the lockdown.

Dr Stewart Findlay, Chief Officer, NHS

County Durham Clinical Commissioning Group, said, "Contracting Coronavirus or passing it to loved ones are reasons people are not coming forward when they have cancer symptoms. If you notice something out of the ordinary you must tell your doctor. The chances are it is nothing serious but finding it early makes it more treatable."

"We are doing everything we can to protect patients, with routine GP appointments taking place remotely by telephone or video call, minimising face-to-face appointments. When someone does need to be seen, there will have been a shared decision about the

consequent balance of risk between the patient and a member of the GP team. We are using carefully controlled access into the GP surgery, with staggered appointment times to avoid waiting in communal areas and using personal protective equipment (PPE) to stop the spread of any possible infection."

A major public information campaign has been launched to encourage people to contact their GP or 111 if they have urgent care needs and to go to hospital if they are told they should. Lives are saved if cancer is detected as early as possible, if referrals by GPs to cancer specialists for further investigation are

down this suggests people are not coming forward for help.

County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust cancer lead Sue Green, said, "At the Trust we would usually receive about 489 referrals over a six week period from GPs for further investigation if cancer is suspected, that is down to about 215 which is a dramatic reduction. We really welcome the NHS campaign encouraging people to contact their GP if they have any symptoms of cancer, unexplained changes to your body such as the appearance of a lump, blood in your urine, changes to your usual bowel habits, changes to moles,

unexplained weight loss, are all symptoms that you should see your GP about. More information about symptoms can be found at www.nhs.uk/cancer

"We want to reassure people that we have worked really hard to minimise the risk to patients of contracting Coronavirus and that every precaution is being taken to keep patients safe with very clear Covid-19 and non Covid-19 areas in hospital and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) to stop the spread of infection."

To support this, the NHS has announced the set up of a dedicated 'cancer hub' in the region to coordinate cancer treatment and ensure

it can continue safely during the pandemic. The 'cancer hub' will support hospitals across the NHS and the independent sector to work together to make sure people receive the care that they need. The 'cancer hub' will be managed from two locations, one in the south, managed collaboratively by South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust and County Durham and

Darlington NHS Foundation Trust and one in Newcastle, responsible for coordinating cancer treatment at a safe, COVID-free location.

The key message from the NHS is, if you need medical help you should still contact your GP practice, use NHS 111 online or call 111 and if you are told to go to hospital it is important that you go. If you are concerned about your health, please don't put it off, we'll give you the care you need.

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Police Issue Certificates of Achievement to School Pupils

Police have drawn up Certificates of Achievement for school pupils across County Durham and Darlington to thank them for playing their part in keeping people safe during lockdown. Most children have been at home for nearly seven weeks as part of measures put in place to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and protect the most vulnerable people in our society. To acknowledge their co-operation, Chief Constable Jo Farrell felt it was important to recognise not only their efforts, but equally the role the children of key workers have played in continuing to go into the classroom. All children in

primary and secondary schoolchildren are eligible for one of our specially-created colour certificates, which will be distributed by officers out on patrol or can be downloaded from our social media sites by parents or carers to present to their children. A black and white version has also been created for youngsters who enjoy colouring and want to put their own creative stamp on it.

Chief Constable Farrell said: "A lot has changed for our children in the last few weeks and it can't have been easy for them. I think it is important we recognise their hard work and co-operation. "I understand many of them are bored, missing their friends and hobbies and desperate to swap home schooling for life back in the classroom, but despite this they continue to do us all proud. "Many of our children will not truly comprehend what is going on right now but I want them to know how much we appreciate what they are doing and the important role they are playing in helping to tackle the pandemic. "As many of our officers and staff are parents, it is very much at the forefront of our minds that key worker children have still been attending school. "They might think it is unfair, but I hope they realise the importance of the work their parents are doing as these people really are at the forefront of this battle. "Unfortunately given the circumstances we can't present them in person, but we hope parents, carers and teachers will ensure all children receive one. "We are all doing our bit to keep everyone safe - please make sure your children know how much of a fantastic job they are doing and for that we say thank you."



Selective Comparisons

Dear Sir,
It was frustrating to see the Labour politicians finding nuances in the funding to Durham Council as a means to try to politicise the allocations at a time when we should be focusing on the prize of defeating the virus. They have been active in the press and social media claiming Durham has been disadvantaged compared to Surrey et al in the 2nd tranche of the £1.6 billion paid to local authorities. To share the facts with you, on a per head basis Durham received over 25% more than Surrey. There were two tranches of £1.6b shared between the local authorities and they are complaining because we got less in the 2nd tranche than the first. As a combined position over the 2 payments Durham received over £33 million but yes they did worse than Surrey in the second payment. This was due to the second payment including a catch up for the District Councils and Fire Authorities, as an example Durham and Darlington Fire Authority received almost 4 times as much in the second payment as it did in the first.

There are always going to be movements in the timing of payments and making selective comparisons for attempted political gain at this time is intensely disappointing and shows that even before we are through the crisis they are intent on politicising at any opportunity. This old Labour story is tiresome.

Paul Howell MP, MP for Sedgefield

EVERYBODY NEEDS GOOD NEIGHBOURS

Research reveals how lockdown is bringing local communities closer together

• Searches for 'how can I help my neighbour?' and 'community volunteering' see huge uplifts

• Norwich residents named friendliest neighbours in the UK

With the country spending more time at home, many are lacking daily interactions with family and friends. And now more than ever UK residents are turning to their local community to offer help or seek vital support despite previous reservations about befriending their neighbours. Research by pension advice specialist, Portafina, suggests that before the government implemented a nationwide lockdown, many of us avoided our neighbours, with one in five (22%) getting less than an hour of 'facetime' with their neighbours each year. Many Brits (40%) admit to previously only striking up conversation with a neighbour because they had taken in a parcel. But during lockdown, we're now keen to make sure the elderly and vulnerable are ok, despite not wanting to invade our neighbour's privacy topping the reasons we would usually put off speaking to our neighbours (22%).

Despite only a quarter (25%) of Brits making the effort to strike up a conversation with their neighbours once or twice a week, community spirit rated highly at 6.7/10 amongst the nation. This rises to 7.2/10 for people living in smaller villages, with one in five people in these areas (20%) seeing their neighbours as friends. While pre-lockdown neighbourly bonds may have been fading, with one in six (15%) worrying they had nothing in common, concern for the welfare for others is contributing towards more interaction with our neighbours than ever before. In recent months there has been a huge increase in online searches for 'how can I help my neighbour?' with an uplift of 50%, whilst

'community volunteering' has increased by nearly 200% since last year. Echoing these findings, Frances, 27, from Leeds, explains how she and her fiancé built a relationship with their neighbour during lockdown: "I bought my first house three years ago with my fiancé and apart from a brief hello on the driveway we haven't really built up a relationship with our neighbours. But once the lockdown came into place, we noticed our elderly neighbours' car had not moved off the driveway for around a week and we hadn't seen them pottering in the garden."

"So we contacted our milkman and increased our weekly delivery and left milk and eggs on our neighbours doorstep along with a note with my mobile number and an offer to do any further shopping trips they needed. My neighbour called my phone straight away to say thank you for the offer and we had a good chat about how they are getting on during this time. We've been catching up every week or so since and especially during the weekly Clap for Carers where we often chat out of the window to one another." Interestingly, the amount of time we are willing to spend speaking to neighbours varies from city to city. Across the whole of the UK, the five locations with the friendliest neighbours (based on time spent chatting with next door on average, per month) are:

1. Norwich (50 minutes)
2. Glasgow (43 minutes)
3. Dublin (40 minutes)
4. Nottingham (40 minutes)
5. Newcastle (37 minutes)

For those interested in building a relationship with neighbours during lockdown, there are opportunities to do so. Jamie Smith-Thompson, managing director of Portafina, says: "While visiting neighbours for a proper introduction isn't currently an option, there are ways you can still make yourself known. If you have elderly or vulnerable neighbours, consider posting your contact details through the door so they know you're contactable if they need any support. There are various downloadable templates that can be used. And with limited access to family and caregivers, this is a gesture that could go a long way with those who need the help. "If you're new to an area, going out a few minutes early to the weekly Thursday 8pm NHS clap will help you to meet

some of your neighbours while adhering to social distancing. You'll instantly have something in common and the conversation will flow easily. "During these unprecedented times, we have seen big disruption to our everyday lives and routines. It is really encouraging to see how well the British public can come together in times of crisis.

Obituary

Barry Hodgson

21st February 1965

Newton Aycliffe

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He was a loving Husband to Sharon; Father to Anthony and Christopher; Father-in-Law to Natalie; Grandad to Declan, Emmie and Freddie and also the younger Brother of Joe, Chris, Geoff, Ann, Alan and Angie.

He will be sadly missed by all his family and friends.

Due to current circumstances the Funeral will take place at Wear Valley Crematorium on Friday 22nd May at 11.30am. Friends can meet at the crematorium although social distancing will be adhered to with the Service being broadcast around the outer building's and car park through the speaker system.

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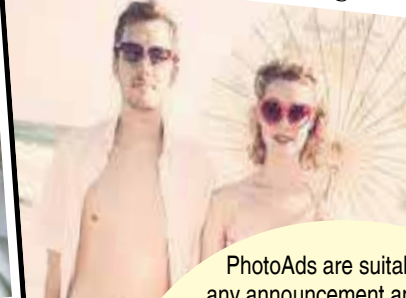
Alice Springs



Happy 21st Birthday 10-10-10

to our beautiful Daughter on your 21st birthday. Lots of love from Mam & Dad xxx

Bonny and Clyde Cunningham



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We are currently working on an archive site which will bring you ALL the past issues of the Newton News as far back as 1948!

FULL STEAM AHEAD

North East Charity Event Taken Online

During this period of lockdown, many events of all shapes and sizes have been cancelled or postponed. However, one such event will be taking place online this weekend for all to enjoy. Throughout Saturday 9th May, the first ever Twitter Steam Rally invites people to enjoy a whole day of steam traction. Participants are invited to share photos, videos and live streams to emphasise the collaborative atmosphere of an event of this kind. Through social media, people will be able to enjoy a traditional steam rally in the safety of their own home, garden or shed. Participants have been invited to bring their own drinks and snacks where they can sit back and enjoy a wonderful hobby in these difficult times. With this being an online event people from all over the world can take part and enjoy. Mechanical Music Radio have signed up as a supporter and partner for the event and will be broadcasting the sounds of a rally online on the evening



Charlotte Coulls shows some of the family collection of model engines.

of the event, including some beer tent singing. The event is organised by Anthony Coulls, Curator at Locomotion in Shildon whose daughter Charlotte Coulls, aged 14 who saw the events she was looking forward to attending had been cancelled and came up with the idea of holding a virtual steam rally in their place.

The steam rally will raise funds for a selection of charities including Butterwick Hospice, Young at Heart and the NHS Foundation. Alongside a JustGiving page there are also souvenirs to buy to help support these worthy causes. Search on Facebook or Twitter for #TwitterSteamRally to take part.

Coronavirus Home Testing Programme

• First phase of programme will see 100,000 people sent self-testing kits to determine if they are infected

• Second phase of programme will see antibody tests validated for accuracy and usability

• The most effective antibody test to then be sent to 100,000 people to help understand levels of immunity

A major new programme of home testing for coronavirus will track the progress of the infection across England, the Government announced recently.

The programme, commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care, is being led by a world-class team of scientists, clinicians and researchers at Imperial College London alongside colleagues at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, and Ipsos MORI.

It will help improve understanding of how many people are currently infected with the virus, and potentially how many have been infected and recovered since the outbreak began.

It will also help identify individuals who may have some immunity to the virus. Health Minister Lord Bethell said: "Understanding more about the current spread of coronavirus and the prevalence of antibodies is a vital part of our ongoing response to this pandemic."

"This ambitious new testing programme will help us track the rate of the infection now. And, crucially, it will help identify an antibody test that is accurate and easy to use, and which can give us an indication of how many people have already had the infection. This information will inform the future action we take to manage the spread of the virus, including the development of new tests and treatments."

Self-sampling is widely used in health care, for example in the management of diabetes and the diagnosis of HIV. The accuracy of Covid-19 antibody tests is still improving and their usability by members of the public is untested.

In the first part of the REal-time Assessment of Community Transmission (REACT-1) programme, which begins now, 100,000 randomly selected people from 315 local authorities across England will be invited to provide nose and throat swabs, which will be tested for antigens indicating the presence of the virus. This kind of test looks for evidence that someone is currently infected with the coronavirus.

In the second part of the programme (REACT-2), a number of different antibody tests will be assessed for their accuracy and ease of use at home.

The antibody tests will first be carried out on volunteers from Imperial Healthcare NHS Trust who are known to have had the virus to

establish their accuracy.

Three hundred public volunteers will also be given a sample test to self-administer, which requires them to place a finger prick of blood in a cassette, add a dye and read off the result, to assess its acceptability and whether they understand the guidance on how it is to be used.

If the sample tests prove easy to use, they will then be distributed to a larger cohort of up to 10,000 people. The aim is solely to ensure that people can properly self-administer the test, rather than to provide an accurate assessment of antibody levels.

The next stage will involve up to 5,000 key workers, who will both self-test and have the test administered by a health professional. These results will also be compared with the results of blood samples from participants tested in the laboratory. This stage will provide more information about the accuracy of the tests.

If antibody self-testing is found to work with a high degree of accuracy, acceptability and usability, it will be rolled out to 100,000 people later this year, to provide an indication of the prevalence of Covid-19 based on the presence of coronavirus antibodies.

Professor Tim Orchard, Chief Executive at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, said: "We are delighted to take part in this programme and contribute to efforts to improve COVID-19 antibody testing in the NHS and more widely across our communities. Community testing will be important in ongoing efforts to tackle the pandemic, potentially easing the burden on health workers and freeing up resources in our health system."

READERS' PHOTOGRAPHS



It looks like we're all self-isolating. By John Williamson. Send your photos to paul@newtonnews.co.uk

Appreciation Shown



Residents of Hardwick Court clapping for key workers last Thursday. Send your photos to paul@newtonnews.co.uk



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