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# Grants For Coronavirus Support Groups Making A Difference Across County

A number of County Durham groups offering valuable volunteer services across the county are being given a financial helping hand. Numerous voluntary groups have sprung up in the face

of the coronavirus crisis. Money available from Durham County Council's Area Action Partnership (AAP) pot is helping to ensure that groups can keep up their good work. Overall, the local authority



has given £100,000 to each of its 14 AAPs to help community and voluntary groups across the county who have been adversely affected by the pandemic. An additional £100,000 has also been allocated for countywide projects. Cabinet member for neighbourhoods and local partnerships at Durham County Council, Cllr Brian Stephens, said: "The response to the pandemic has been one filled with kindness and community spirit. We are so pleased to offer support for these incredible individuals and groups who are dedicating their time and energy."



One such group benefitting from the council's financial backing is Newton Aycliffe Play Café. Thanks to funding secured through the Great Aycliffe and Middridge AAP, Newton Aycliffe Play Café have successfully continued to support families across the area during the Covid-19 pandemic. Great Aycliffe and Middridge Partnership have been allocated £100,000 to help support groups who are working hard to provide support to those most in need.

The Play Café were successful in applying and securing £2,000 to help provide the much-needed food and household essential parcels to families across Aycliffe. Alison Firby, Play Café Trustee said: "We have seen an increase in demand for our service since the outbreak, receiving more referrals each week. The funding received will help us greatly in supporting these additional families, that find themselves in need during this difficult time. The Play Café is currently operating 2 days per week out of Newton Aycliffe workingmen's club, where a team of volunteers put packs together and organise their safe distribution."

Continued on page 3

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## TOGETHER 21 CHALLENGE RAISES OVER £9,500

One of a kind project in Newton Aycliffe, Together 21 have been enjoying personal sponsored challenges at home involving the number '21'.

Together 21 is a project under the Pioneering Care Partnership providing weekly education sessions for babies to teens with Down syndrome and their families. The group plays an essential role in giving families a source of support, information, learning and friendship.

During lockdown, families have thrived creating their own challenges at home and sharing on social media to stay connected to their friends from Together 21. Consultant Maggie Hart was amazed at the creativity of ideas as well as the dedication the children put into tasks. Ranging from 21 different cooking recipes, 21 new books, learning 21 new signs and completing 21 Joe Wicks sessions the families have kept the spirit of teamwork alive whilst being physically separated. Caroline Turner, mother of 3 year old Leo has said "This has shown the determination to do as much as we can to keep Together 21 up and running. We are proud to be an extended family as well as an essential support group,

something that has meant more during these difficult times over the last few months." Leo's challenge was to walk 2.1km over 21 days using his walker.

Adults of the group have been doing their part in the 21 Challenge too by working up a sweat running 21 miles or completing 21 workouts. Parent Leanne Baister used the power of social media to raise over £500 which is essential for the group to continue, as it is entirely reliant on fundraising, grants and corporate sponsors.

21 families have taken part in the challenge and to date they have raised £9615.94! Nigel Brough, Project Manager, said "We are all so proud of the incredible work and commitment that our children and families have shown during these testing times. It's amazing to see the group keeping the Together 21 spirit alive while social distancing."

For further information about PCP please contact us at the Pioneering Care Centre, Carer's Way, Newton Aycliffe, DL5 4SF tel: 01325 321234 email: enquiries@pcp.uk.net website: www.pcp.uk.net Or follow PCP on Twitter: @PioneeringCare and Facebook: @PCPandCentre

## Households Urged to be Vigilant Against Lockdown Scams



Concerns have been raised over the emergence of new types of scams which try to take advantage of vulnerable households in County Durham during the Covid-19 lockdown.

Over 2,000 online fraud attempts have been identified and blocked in the past month, according to the UK's National Cyber Security Centre, including fake online shops and websites which attempt to steal user data, and fraudulent adverts.

It is estimated that scams cost the UK economy up to £10bn each year with the average victim losing over £3,000. In response, OFTEC, the registration body for off-grid heating, is helping to raise awareness of the types of scams taking place during the lockdown and how households in County Durham can

protect themselves from unscrupulous activity. These include:

- Email scams. Be wary of any emails which say you can obtain a refund on taxes, heating bills or other expenses during the lockdown. Avoid clicking on links as they may contain viruses or direct you to fake websites which are designed to impersonate well-known organisations such as banks.

- Social media scams. Adverts offering miracle coronavirus cures or treatments are fake and should be ignored or reported through the relevant social media platform. These adverts may occasionally be mistakenly shared by a friend or family member but this does not make them any more legitimate.

- Telephone scams. With more people at home, there is an increased risk of telephone scams from criminals pretending to be calling from a bank, mortgage provider or utility company. If you receive an unexpected or suspicious call, do not share any financial or personal information and hang up immediately. If you have any concerns about a call you have received, contact your provider directly.

- Door knocking scams. Unqualified individuals may impersonate heating technicians or other tradespeople. If your boiler needs essential work, use a qualified technician who is GasSafe (for mains gas) or OFTEC (for heating oil or solid fuel) registered and ensure they follow government guidelines on social distancing.

Malcolm Farrow from OFTEC, commented: "Since the lockdown was announced, communities across County Durham have come together to support each other during this uncertain and unsettling time. Unfortunately, a small number of individuals have sought to take advantage of the current situation and target households through scams or other fraudulent activity."

"We all need to be on the lookout for suspicious calls, emails or visitors and regularly keep in virtual touch with vulnerable family, neighbours and friends to ensure they are not being harassed in any way. If you do need to have essential work undertaken in your home, always use a qualified professional. Check their ID badge upon arrival and ensure they follow the government's advice on social distancing at all times."

For more information and advice, visit www.oftec.org.

## Funding For Rainbow Knitting Project Helps Fight Isolation

A crafty new project is helping to tackle social isolation in Durham City and surrounding areas during the current lockdown by encouraging people to get out their knitting needles and crochet hooks.

Sandra Almeida and Veronica Freitas set up Cultural Healing Communities (CHC) with an aim to use cultural activities to engage local people in community activities.

With the help of a grant of £1,700 from Durham County Council's Durham Area Action Partnership, CHC has provided materials to one hundred self-isolating people and asked them to get stitching. Participants are creating woollen rainbow squares for inclusion in blankets, which will then be auctioned to raise money for the NHS.

Sandra said: "There are so many people who are having to isolate and who are feeling alone. Through this project they have been able to contact us, and we have been sending out yarn and instructions that will help them to get knitting. We are asking people to knit 'rainbow' squares that are going to be made into colourful blankets. At the end of the lockdown we will then auction off the blankets with the proceeds going to local NHS charities."

"Many people are lonely and without focus at the moment, so we are giving them a chance to be involved in something that is bringing people together and giving them something to do. Without the AAP funding we would not have been able to run the project, so we are very grateful for their support. Currently we cannot include any additional knitters, although we know more people would like to get involved. However, we are looking for additional grants to help us do more."

"People are fabulous, so supportive, that is what I always saw in this county, an amazing community of strong people, always rising to the challenge."

The council has allocated £100,000 to each of its 14 Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) to help community and voluntary groups across the county who have been adversely affected by the pandemic.

An additional £100,000 has been allocated for countywide projects which need assistance.

Craig Morgan, Durham AAP Coordinator, said: "The funding we have to help local projects during this current crisis can be used for a number of purposes. It can help organisations to pay bills or deliver food to people in need but this is something a bit different, which is great. "We were happy to

## Hippodrome on the Lookout for Budding Artists

Darlington Hippodrome is on the lookout for talented young artists to submit works of art to decorate theatre windows.

Darlington Hippodrome is asking for young artists to submit creative and inspiring works of art to be displayed in the theatre windows while the venue is closed during the Covid-19 outbreak.

Artists are encouraged to let their imaginations run free to create a picture of the theatre, or a colourful rainbow in support of the NHS and Key Workers, or perhaps a picture of a favourite pantomime... the possibilities are endless, pictures just need to be colourful, fun and exciting. Councillor Andy Keir said "We all need a bit of colour in our lives and this is a great opportunity for young people to express their creativity and brighten up the windows of Darlington Hippodrome."

Pictures should be A4 in size – landscape or portrait. Finished works can be posted to Darlington Hippodrome, Parkgate, Darlington DL1 1RR.



support Culture Healing Communities as we know many people will be struggling and this project will give them something to do whilst in isolation."

More information about the work of CHC can be found on their Facebook page or by emailing them at culture.healingcommunities@outlook.com.

Further information about the grants available from all 14 AAPs is available online at [www.durham.gov.uk/aaps](http://www.durham.gov.uk/aaps) or by calling Durham AAP on 03000 264 991.



## HAVE YOU GOT NEWS FOR US?

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- 12.30pm - Jenna Highfield
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- 1.15pm - Aycliffe Radio
- 1.30pm - 1407 Cadets Drill
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# LOCAL GIRLS RAISE OVER £1,100 FOR MARIE CURIE

The Covid-19 crisis has brought people together from across communities to show support for each other, and local charities. Many people have set up local whatsapp groups or facebook pages to stay connected and offer help to the vulnerable and, in Heighington Village, Newton Aycliffe, raise money for Marie Curie.

Dame Dela Smith sent a message out on their whatsapp group following an email from her local Marie Curie Fundraising Group appealing for urgent support for the charity. A group of local children, who had been making rainbows to brighten up their neighbours windows, responded to the call to action and with Dame Dela's support, started making bracelets – all with a rainbow ribbon.

Dame Dela said: "I sent a whatsapp message after seeing the urgent appeal for Marie Curie. We had a wonderful response and



work in raising money, and raising awareness of our emergency appeal. The bracelets are really pretty and the girls have all worked very hard. I managed to get my hands on one and I wear it every day and I'd like to say a huge thank you to all of the girls for their hard work".



9 families offered to help". The beads and materials were kindly donated so 100% of the profit is for the charity. The girls made hundreds of bracelets and they sold out quickly and, having initially set a target of £700, were delighted to exceed £1,100 for Marie Curie.

Every day and night, Marie Curie Nurses and frontline staff give vital support to dying people and their families, in their homes

and our hospices across the UK. At this time of national emergency, when the NHS is being put under extreme strain, these crucial services are needed more than ever. Many of Marie Curie's fundraising events and campaigns have been cancelled or postponed due to COVID 19, massively reducing the amount of money the charity have been able to raise, but our Hospice in Newcastle and essential caring services in the community are continuing to operate.

Kelly Knighting-Wykes, Fundraising Manager for Marie Curie in the North East & Cumbria said: "Due to Covid-19 we can't do the things we'd usually do to raise money. We had to cut short our Great Daffodil Appeal and cancel many of our events and campaigns so we rely on support from people in our communities to enable us to continue to provide our care. We are so grateful to Dame Dela Smith and everyone involved for their hard



# VOLUNTEER FOSTER CARERS GO THE EXTRA MILE FOR DOGS IN NEED

Dogs Trust Darlington is saying a big thank you to its volunteer doggy foster carers who have continued to go the extra mile for their four-legged friends in recent months.

This week (1-7 June) is Volunteers' Week, an annual celebration of the contribution millions of people make across the UK through volunteering. Currently Dogs Trust Darlington volunteers aren't able to help out at the rehoming centre, but volunteer foster carers have been keeping busy doing their bit to help dogs most in need in these uncertain times.

Rebecca Roscoe, Home from Home Co-ordinator at Dogs Trust Darlington, says:

"Dogs that go into the loving homes of our foster carers are usually only there for a short time, revelling in their home comforts until they can find their forever homes."

"But because of the current

situation, they have been there for a while longer than anticipated and we want to say a huge thank you to our dedicated foster carers who have continued to give them all the love and care they need."

Dogs Trust's fostering scheme, called Home from Home, was established at Dogs Trust Darlington in 2016. There are 32 foster carers signed up to help provide temporary homes to dogs that come into the care of the rehoming centre but would benefit from continuing to enjoy home comforts until they find their forever family. There are currently 13 dogs in foster homes locally and one of those loving life is six-year-old Greyhound Daisy, who is staying with her foster carers Angela and David from Darlington.

David says:

"We are building up a great relationship with Daisy and you can already see how relaxed she is becoming at home."

"With the help of Angela, we have both been fostering for just over six months. We both love having dogs in our lives, little and large; and it's so good when they build up trust with you, and you know you have helped prepare them for life in a permanent home."

Volunteers are a vital part of the team at Dogs Trust Darlington but they aren't currently able to help out on site with the usual tasks of everything from dog walking to cleaning kennels and laundry.

Rebecca Roscoe says:

"We can't wait until we have our volunteers by our side at the rehoming centre once again and we know they



are raring to go, but in the meantime we want to say thank you to all of them for their continued support, and to our foster carers who are doing such a fantastic job."

Dogs Trust Darlington has been overwhelmed recently with members of the dog-loving public offering to become foster carers. As a result, the centre has temporarily paused applications. If you would like to support Dogs Trust in other ways please visit [www.dogstrust.org.uk](http://www.dogstrust.org.uk)

Dogs Trust Darlington is still closed to walk-in members of the public. However, recent changes in the government guidance means that from 1 June the team can now book appointments for those dogs who can't be rehomed using our new 'handover at home' process. Potential new owners will be able to meet the dog they are interested in rehoming at the centre in an outside play area, or in a spacious area that is separate from the main rehoming centre such as a training barn, whilst adhering to social distancing guidelines.

## Grants For Coronavirus Support Groups

*Continued from front page*

Another group benefitting is The Lanchester Partnership and Churches Together COVID19 Support Group.

Michelle Atkinson, Lanchester Partnership chair, found herself alongside other residents wondering how people in the community would be affected by measures put in place to tackle the pandemic. A chance chat on Facebook with another Lanchester local, Laura Bell, led to them teaming up with Churches Together and resident David Toner who were both already in the process of setting up teams to lend a hand to those most affected by the crisis.

A month after founding the group, 123 volunteers were signed up to help with the essential work, seven days a week, helping with free food parcels, books and emotional support for those in need. The team has responded to over 130 requests for services.

The group have now secured a grant of £5,000 from Durham County Council's Mid-Durham AAP and councillors Jude Considine and Ossie Johnson, to enable

it to continue offering these services for as long as local people need help

For further information on support in the area visit [www.durhamlocate.org.uk](http://www.durhamlocate.org.uk) or call 03000 260 260.

Crookhall Community Association is supporting the recently formed Corona Vulnerable People and Volunteers (Consett) group (CVPVG) during the coronavirus outbreak, thanks to a funding from the Derwent Valley AAP.

The organisation, which runs Crookhall Community Centre, has been awarded a grant of £10,000 to help maintain the running of the CVPVG - a large group of volunteers operating locally and supplying food and services to people in the area who do not have family or friends to support them.

Local councillors, Jane Brown and Malcom Clarke have also provided funds from their small grant neighbourhood budget.

For more information on the Corona Vulnerable People and Volunteers (Consett) Group, visit: <https://www.durhamlocate.org.uk/Services/5085/Corona-Vulnerable-Pe> or find them on Facebook.

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## HEALTHY SELFIES AT GREENFIELD

Students and staff are finding ways to share their experiences during 'lockdown', not only are they finding innovative ways to study but they are exploring clever ways to keep fit and share their healthy selfies with others.

It has been inspiring to see the many ways that students and staff are coming together to share great ideas with others, from exercise regimes to getting your five-a-day in this healthy house competition.

We got to see Callum making slow cooked chilli and rice; Thomas exercising on the beach Dylan on his impressive bike rides; Stan playing tennis; Mrs Hackett 'putting the miles in'; amazing hand balancing from Lana and Megan's acrobatics in the sea! Just a few of the many brilliant posts shared on the greenfield twitter page.

The competition has been running over the last few weeks and has also coincided with Mental Health Awareness Week (18 – 24 May). From simple walking to hitting the weights it is known that exercise can help reduce stress and release endorphins that can improve your mood, for many of us in isolation it can be a time to be inspired by others and be part of a bigger community.

The results are now in with River gaining 155 points, Mountain 125 points and Forest and Lake joint third on 50 points. A big well done to all involved, you can see all of the healthy selfies @greenfieldtweet.



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*Paul Howell, Member of Parliament for Sedgefield*

As indicated last week I along with a number of you took a step back to more normal work and I returned to Westminster on Tuesday. We started with the debate on proceedings during the pandemic, enables us to take this step to return to work as normally as possible. We then debated the need to review parliamentary boundaries. In the last parliament a review was started but not completed, this had been with the intent of both making constituencies more equal in terms of the numbers of electorate, but also reducing the number of MP's from 650 to 600. This had been initiated before the Brexit vote and as a result of the Brexit vote there will be a return of legislation from the European Parliament to Westminster that makes the previous intention to reduce the number of MP's inappropriate. It is however very appropriate to equalise as far as possible the size of constituencies. It is also worth noting that in the final proposals of the last review it was suggesting that the Sedgefield constituency would disappear, with a significant break up and realignment of our electorate. I would hope, and indeed anticipate, that this new review will have a much less dramatic impact on us. I was able to ask the Prime Minister a question in PMQ's on Wednesday, but this is written on Tuesday so I will update you further on that next week. I also took part on Thursday in the BEIS select committee discussions to understand the impact on businesses and workers of the coronavirus so I took time to catch up with a number of local businesses to update me on this.

I spent time last week also further promoting the need that the post Covid 19 plans to reinvigorate the economy must also remember commitments already made to "level up" the UK and I will continue to press the government hard on this.

Back in the Sedgefield constituency we continue to see many volunteer groups working hard and I am continually impressed by them and hope that lockdown will continue to lift so I can get out and about more to see and thank them. Please can I ask you all to continue to follow the guidance, respect the virus and save lives.

Paul Howell

Member of Parliament for Sedgefield

## DURHAM HISTORY CENTRE PLANNING SUBMITTED



A planning application has been formally submitted for the creation of a new history centre for County Durham.

The proposed development would see the restoration and refurbishment of the Grade II-listed Mount Oswald Manor House to bring together archive, heritage and registration services for the county.

If approved, the centre will tell the story of the county's history and heritage through historic records, photographs and objects and will also host exhibitions, activities and events and provide a countywide outreach programme for children, schools and communities.

The focus would be on the stories of working people and everyday families, with people able to discover and explore the county's rich

history from nationally and internationally significant collections.

In addition to the county's archives, which are currently accessed more than one million times a year, the centre would house historic registration records, historic environment and archaeology records and local studies collections.

The Durham Light Infantry (DLI) Collection would also be included, bringing together all items from the collection with DLI archives cared for by Durham County Record Office, for the first time since 1998.

The project would also see the relocation from Aycliffe Heads of Durham Register Office, offering enhanced facilities for weddings and civil ceremonies in the historic surroundings of the manor house.

And the plans include state-of-the-art search rooms, including innovative digital facilities, a dedicated learning space, exhibition and interpretation spaces and a café.

The application for Durham History Centre has been submitted by Durham County Council and, if it is approved, the ownership of the Manor House and surrounding land will be transferred by owners The Banks Group to the county council for a nominal fee to secure its future use and benefit for the people of County Durham.

Cllr Joy Allen, Cabinet member for transformation, culture and tourism, said: "Our plans for Durham History Centre are based on providing an opportunity for our whole community to experience, enjoy and engage with the unique heritage of County Durham and its people. Restoring and enhancing the beautiful Grade II-listed manor house and its grounds, would open up new spaces for everyone to use and enjoy and provide a secure future for our important heritage collections.

"People are at the heart of our ambitions for this public venue. From weddings to school visits, researchers to community groups, our aim is to create a place rooted in the rich stories of our county, a place where everyone can feel represented, understood and celebrated."

The project has received significant support from the public, with a consultation

in 2018 receiving more than 600 responses – 83 per cent of which were in favour of the proposal.

Respondents were keen to see the centre offering exhibitions, multi-media access to collections, talks and behind the scenes tours. There was also particularly strong support for the inclusion of the Durham Light Infantry/military collection.

John Ruddick, senior property development manager at The Banks Group, said: "As part of the development of the wider Mount Oswald site, we examined a number of options for the future of the Manor House to ensure that the best sustainable, continued use could be made of this impressive Grade II-listed building.

"Locating the history centre within the Manor House site makes clear sense and will ensure it has a prestigious new home that reflects its importance to the city and county and makes everything that it holds readily available to the public.

"The redevelopment of the Mount Oswald site was designed by Banks in support of the county council's vision of Durham City acting as a driver of economic growth in the county, and a long-established Durham-based family business, we are pleased to be seeing several different aspects of these plans now being realised to the benefit of both the city and the wider region."

Copies of the applications and plan(s) are available on the council's website at [www.durham.gov.uk](http://www.durham.gov.uk). Comments can be submitted online, submitted by e-mail to [planning@durham.gov.uk](mailto:planning@durham.gov.uk) or in writing to Planning Development, Room 4/86-102, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UL during the public consultation period.

## Darlington Building Society Pledges to Help Every Borrower Keep Their Home

The package of support is available to any Society member who finds themselves in financial difficulty due to Covid-19. Included in the Darlington Building Society Support Package is:

- 3-month mortgage payment deferrals for those members who haven't as yet taken one will remain available up to 31 October.
- For those members who have already taken a payment deferral a range of flexible options are available, including extending payment deferrals for a further 3 months if that

is right for the member.

- The Society will not commence any action to repossess a member home before 30 May 2021 if they are in arrears due to Covid-19, as long as they keep working with us to get their mortgage back on track.
- Buy-to-let landlords who take payment deferrals will be encouraged to give their tenants a rent break.
- The Society, working in partnership with the Governments independent Money and Pensions Service, can refer any member in need of free

debt advice to their Money Advisor Network.

In announcing the package of support Andrew Craddock, Chief Executive of Darlington Building Society said:

"At Darlington Building Society our members come first, and we want to ensure the right support is available during any period of personal disruption, ill health or financial difficulty arising from Coronavirus (COVID-19).

"We have supported out members throughout the Coronavirus outbreak, speaking to everyone who has requested a payment deferral to help them understand if that is the right decision for them.

"It is worth remembering that whilst payment deferrals can help cash flow in the short-term, it does increase costs in the long-term.

"For those Society members who are coming to the end of their payment deferral period we will be in touch to discuss their options going forward, and I would finally encourage any of our members who are experiencing financial difficulties to get in touch to discuss their individual circumstances."

## Our PC Recruitment is Now Open!

Interested in joining one of the top-performing police forces in the country?

Applications to join Durham Constabulary as a police constable are now open and you have until 5pm on Friday, June 12, to submit your application.

We are looking for individuals who are hardworking, relish a challenge, can apply common sense and who possess a minimum of two A levels.

Successful candidates will join the force from January 2021.

**Think you've got what it takes to join us?**

Download your application pack here: <https://www.durham.police.uk/Join-us/Police-Officers/Pages/default.aspx>

## HAVE YOU GOT NEWS FOR US?

We are always interested in local news stories. We like to feature good news and interesting items on achievements & community service

Tel: Paul

**01325 300212**

or [paul@newtonnews.co.uk](mailto:paul@newtonnews.co.uk)



## Sergeant's Blog NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING

By Sergeant Andy Boyd



In the early hours of Friday 22nd May 2020, a White Ford Transit motor vehicle was stolen from outside an address in Kemble Green East, Newton Aycliffe. This van belonged to CSI (Community Support Initiative) Aycliffe who aim to carry on the amazing work carried out by Honest John over the years in Newton Aycliffe, who was responsible for raising and donating over £230,000 for local causes and vulnerable people. The van also had numerous items of gardening and decorating equipment contained within that was being used to assist some of the towns most vulnerable.

At approximately 1am on Sunday 24th May 2020, two officers from Durham Constabulary's Road Policing Unit became suspicious of a van travelling at speed in the Staindrop area. On attempting to stop this vehicle, it took off at speed, driving dangerously, failing to stop for the officers. The van attempted to reverse twice into the police vehicle, successfully colliding at the second attempt causing considerable damage to both the van and police vehicle, but also causing minor injury to both officers. Despite this, the officers were able to alight from their vehicle, and apprehend the driver of the vehicle

who had tried to run away from the scene. This van, which had been displaying false number plates, was identified as the van that had been stolen from Newton Aycliffe a few days previously. Unfortunately, due to the offenders actions, the van was a complete write off, all items had been removed from inside and massive damage was caused to the police vehicle. Hayden Bowers, aged 24 from Bishop Auckland was later charged with a number of offences including aggravated vehicle taking, dangerous driving, assault on the two officers, and failing to provide a breath specimen for analysis. He was remanded to court where he pleaded guilty to 8 offences altogether and will appear at Crown Court at a later date for sentencing. Bowers remains in custody until this time.

Newton Aycliffe Neighbourhood Sergeant Andy Boyd said "The impact that this crime has had on the victim is massive, but also has a knock on affect for the community. CSI Aycliffe are now prevented from carrying out the amazing work they do in carrying on with Honest Johns legacy. We have reached out already to local businesses for help in getting these guys up and running again, but if there is anyone out there that can help, please get in touch. I'd also like to commend the officers involved for their tenacity in capturing this male who was intent on evading capture with no regard for public safety. Despite being injured they managed to arrest this male, preventing him from going on and committing further offences and endangering the public. It's why we joined the police!"

### NEWTON NEWS

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# SAGA POLL SHOWS MENTAL HEALTH OF OVER 70'S FARING BEST IN LOCKDOWN

A national poll commissioned by Saga has found that the mental health of the over 70's has been the least impacted by lockdown measures when

directly compared to other age groups.

The findings, published to mark Mental Health Awareness Week, might surprise many people who

have expressed concern over how the over 70s are faring in the COVID-19 pandemic. While there have been marked increases in anxiety, depression and loneliness among the over 70s, the increases are significantly below those of younger age groups. Of those surveyed:

- 12% of over 70s have felt lonelier during lockdown, compared to: 52% of 18-24 year old's; 32% of 25-34 year old's; 28% of 35-44 year old's; 21% of 45-54 year old's
- 19% of over 70s have felt more anxious during lockdown, compared to: 47% of 18-24 year old's; 39% of 25-34 year old's; 41% of 35-44 year old's; 33% of 45-54 year old's
- 17% of over 70s have experienced lower mood or felt depressed, compared to: 44% of 18-24 year old's; 39% of 25-34 year old's; 36% of 35-44 year old's; 34% of 45-54 year old's

The over 70's are challenging the age-old stereotype that older generations are the loneliest age group by demonstrating their resilience to the lockdown measures. The survey indicates that many have taken the need to spend more time at home in their stride and adapted better than other age groups to the new limitations on their movement.

To help keep up spirits during lockdown, Saga launched the #NotGoingOutClub, creating engaging content for Saga members and customers. This included joining forces with a number of celebrities to create podcasts; guests to date have included Joanna Lumley, Alan Titchmarsh, Roger Daltrey and John Sergeant.

Nick Stace, Chief Strategy Officer at Saga, said: "The resilience and stoicism of people over 70 shines through this survey. We at Saga know that those in this age group are fiercely independent and determined to live life to the fullest – and now we can see that they have adapted better to lockdown than other age groups. "Even so, the limitations on social interaction have had a knock on effect on mental health across all ages, perhaps unsurprisingly given the fact that COVID-19 is undoubtedly the most significant peacetime challenge we have collectively faced in our lifetime.

"Despite being the least affected age group, the fact that one in five people over 70 have experienced increased low mood, loneliness and anxiety as a result of lockdown is clearly concerning. As we enter this important next phase, we will be doing all we can at Saga to make sure we can support our members and wider community to limit the knock-on effect of lockdown on mental health."

## Coates Takes Podium in Opening MINI eSeries Races



Photo: Max Coates in action at the MINI CHALLENGE UK Official eSeries opener

Key points:

- Max Coates takes podium finish in inaugural MINI CHALLENGE UK Official eSeries
- Over 13,000 people have watched the live stream video
- Next race at Brands Hatch on 30th May

Max Coates took to the virtual race track before the real one in the MINI CHALLENGE UK this year as the marques Official eSeries started at Donington Park.

More than 13,000 have now watched the live stream of the races at the opening round in which Coates took a podium position in race four.

It didn't all go plane sailing as Coates suffered internet connection issues in the first of two qualifying sessions. Just inside the top 15 he progressed through to a tenth-place finish in the opening race of the eSeries. Running inside the top six in the second race a number of clashes with rivals related him to bottom regions of the top 20 drivers where after more incidents he remained to the finish.

The second qualifying session went much better, Coates taking 7th spot on the grid. He progressed in the early laps and challenged for a podium when two drivers in front collided and on re-joining the track left Coates nowhere to go but into the back of them and into the gravel. He started a charge back through the field climbing to 16th place at the flag.

His progression continued in the final race of the weekend and he again moved up the hotly contested pack of drivers. With just three minutes plus one lap remaining the Elite Motorsport driver found himself in 4th place. Not content he kept charging

and on the penultimate lap took the final podium spot where he stayed until the chequered flag.

Coates said, "What a mixed bag of results, the first qualifying and two races were hampered by internet issues but after that I felt like I had good pace. Race three was a shame but I'm pleased to get a podium in race four." The next round of the championship comes from the virtual version of Brands Hatch and their Indy circuit configuration. Coates has been one of the fastest drivers in pre-event testing and hopes to continue with strong results there. The races can be watched via the MINI CHALLENGE UK social media channels and the links below.

MINI CHALLENGE UK Live Stream Links for Round 2:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MINICHALLENGEUK/posts/4046132305426996>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-SRmMowvEQ>

Twitch: <https://www.twitch.tv/vrracingclub>

Season Calendar:

1. Donington Park National – Saturday 23rd May
2. Brands Hatch Indy – Saturday 30th May
3. Silverstone National – Saturday 6th June
4. Silverstone International – Saturday 13th June
5. Snetterton 300 – Saturday 20th June
6. Croft – Saturday 27th June
7. Knockhill – Saturday 4th July
8. Brands Hatch GP – Saturday 11th July

Event Timetable:

- Live streams start approximately 11:45
- Qualifying 1: 12:00
- Race 1: 12:30
- Race 2: 13:00 (Reverse grid top ten)
- Qualifying 2: 13:45
- Race 3: 14:15
- Race 4: 14:45 (Reverse grid top ten)



## Programme Schedule

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NEWTON AYCLIFFE TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT  
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### CLASSIC "LOVE SONGS" Sun-Thurs 12 to 3am, Fri & Sat 2-4am

Some of our shows will be cancelled until the Coronavirus situation is resolved  
**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	Caz Bojangles
2-4pm	Weekly Edition	Paul Baker
4-6pm	Northern & Classic Soul (R)	Kevin Sowerby
<b>"The Saturday Night Experience" Sponsored by Bengal Lounge Indian Restaurant &amp; Takeaway</b>		
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	Mystery Year	Paul Baker
12-2pm	Country & Americana Show	David Ringer
<b>Blues Show Sponsored by Whitehouse Funeral Service</b>		
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	Mystery Year	Paul Baker
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
6-7:30pm	Joey's Jukebox	Joey Collins
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	12th June - Martin Norris Movin' Melodies	Movin' Melodies
10-12am	Alternative Aycliffe (R)	Gaz n Alby
12-2am	Night Club Session	

Check our website for full schedule  
**[www.ayclifferadio.co.uk](http://www.ayclifferadio.co.uk)**

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### LISTENING OPTIONS:

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UK Online Radio - Radio Garden - Online Radio Box  
Streema - StreamFinder - Deezer  
Radio Shaker - [www.radio.net](http://www.radio.net)

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# GREENFIELD ARTS A CENTRE OF CREATIVITY

Greenfield Arts are a centre of creativity, offering not only a physical arts centre space but a support to creatives and groups within the community. At present the facility is closed but staff are continuing to work from home connecting with their community and exploring ways to inspire creativity and curiosity.

Greenfield Arts are presently working with a number of partners to inspire creativity in public spaces and create installations and initiatives that help us ask questions and understand ourselves and the world around us.

One of the many projects in development explores the heritage of the area and how innovation and technologies have changed over time. The Cree Group, led by Greenfield Arts, have an exciting opportunity to contribute to the significant 2025 anniversary of the Stockton to Darlington Railway.

The Cree group are a group of male volunteers who work on a variety of projects that often benefit the wider community and are a creative contribution to their own wellbeing. Their fabulous achievements can be seen at Greenfield Arts,



Greenfield Community College but also in the wider community and throughout the region. The group are delighted to be part of the celebrations and will be creating a new piece to be displayed as part of the Locomotion collection.

Cree are funded by Greenfield Arts and Public Health and volunteer their time to help both the community and themselves as they participate in creative projects. "I enjoy working together with others and exploring ideas, it's a great way to express yourself, feel good and build confidence" Cree member.

At present physical meetings are on hold but previously the group met at Greenfield Arts on a weekly basis. If you would like to know a bit more about Greenfield Arts you can email [info@greenfield-arts.co.uk](mailto:info@greenfield-arts.co.uk) or check out our website where you can join our mailing list and keep in touch [www.greenfield-arts.co.uk](http://www.greenfield-arts.co.uk)

## READERS' PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo of blue tit feeding her young. "Hi Mum, what's for tea?". By John Williamson. Send your photos for inclusion in the Newton News to [paul@newtonnews.co.uk](mailto:paul@newtonnews.co.uk)

# Celebrating Volunteers' Week

Thousands of volunteers are being recognised for the massive contribution they make across County Durham. During Volunteers' Week, which runs from Monday 1 to Sunday 7 June, Durham County Council will be showing its gratitude for the work done by dedicated volunteers.

In more normal times, volunteers play an essential role in supporting the council's cultural and sporting events, and environmental projects, from the Lumiere light festival to storytelling in libraries, and from litter picking to leading walking, running and wellbeing groups.

The current coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the essential support volunteers provide, helping those isolating to get food, medication and other essential supplies to help keep them safe.

Hundreds of people in County Durham are receiving help from volunteers every day, with thousands of people coming forward to support the NHS and help local charities and community groups.

The council's 14 area action partnerships have been awarded £1.4 million to support projects across County Durham, whose selfless volunteers are helping their communities to cope with coronavirus. To date, they have received 188 funding applications.

In Crook, Willington, Tow Law and surrounding villages, Jack Drum Arts received a grant to enable volunteers to deliver activity packs to keep children and young people busy over the May half term.

PACT House in Stanley received a grant to support its Fresh Foodbank, ensuring those in need can access and receive free food parcels and hygiene essentials. The group saw an increase to between 25 to 30 contacts a day, six days a week as a result of coronavirus, and its volunteers have been crucial in helping them to maintain the service.

Another organisation, The Lanchester Partnership and Churches Together COVID19 Support Group, was formed by strangers Michelle Atkinson and Laura Bell, to help their community through lockdown. In the month following its creation, 123 volunteers signed up to deliver the group's services, seven days a week, including making essential food and shopping deliveries, as well as offering a listening ear for anyone experiencing loneliness.

East Durham Trust in Shotton has also received funding to distribute hundreds of meals to people in isolation and has recruited 20 new volunteers to meet the 400 per cent increase in demand for food parcels since the lockdown began.

Every day, during Volunteer Week, the council will be publishing videos on its social media channels thanking people who have volunteered on different projects over the last year. It will also be highlighting examples of volunteers in different areas of the county every day and asking people to share stories of their volunteering experiences.

Gordon Elliott, the council's head of partnerships and community engagement, including area action partnerships, said: "Volunteers' Week is our chance to celebrate and say thank you to the thousands of volunteers across the county for their amazing hard work."

"It's estimated that the value of volunteers to UK charities alone is £22.6bn. Our volunteers have always been essential in helping us to run our events and keep the county a clean and safe place to live, work and visit. However, their willingness to give up their time to support vulnerable and at-risk people has never been more vital or more gratefully received than in the current circumstances."

"New initiatives have been created specifically to cope with these challenging times, whilst existing projects have seen a dramatic increase in the demand for their services. It's important that we recognise the fantastic contribution of everyone who has stepped up to meet the needs of our communities."

Details of volunteering opportunities at the council and throughout County Durham can be found at [www.durham.gov.uk/volunteering](http://www.durham.gov.uk/volunteering) and [www.durham.gov.uk/Covid19volunteer](http://www.durham.gov.uk/Covid19volunteer)



# NHS Trust Launches 'Stay in Touch' Scheme for Patients and Loved Ones

Like many NHS Trusts nationally, County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust has introduced temporary visiting restrictions to help protect patients, visitors and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During these unprecedented times of restricted visiting, the local Trust is exploring different ways to make sure that family and friends can continue to communicate with their loved ones. This now includes the launch of the 'Stay in Touch' scheme. Family and friends can send letters, messages and photographs to their loved ones while they are a patient in one of the Trust's hospitals across County Durham and Darlington.

The Trust has set up a web form and dedicated email address where messages can be sent into the hospitals with a team of colleagues on hand to deliver the messages to patients Monday – Friday. Noel Scanlon, Executive Director of Nursing for County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust said: "We are very aware that during this time when patients are unable to receive visitors at their bedside, any form of communication from their loved ones can lift the spirits and help their overall wellbeing."

"We understand how distressing it can be for both our patients and their loved ones when they cannot physically come in to visit, and the visiting suspension

was not a decision we made lightly, however we acted to protect patient safety and that of our healthcare teams, in line with national Government advice at this time. Therefore, by setting up our 'Stay in Touch' scheme, we hope to help patients and families feel closer to one another while these restrictions are in place.

"We have a team of colleagues who will be delivering messages and correspondence to patients across our eight hospital sites on a Monday to Friday. We are also supporting patients to use electronic devices such as iPads on the ward areas to communicate with family and friends, where possible."

Loved ones with relatives at any of the Trust's hospitals can send their messages either through the Trust's website [www.cddft.nhs.uk](http://www.cddft.nhs.uk) or via email to [stayintouch@nhs.net](mailto:stayintouch@nhs.net)

Alongside their letters, families are also asked to include the patient's name, date of birth, hospital site where they are being treated and the ward or department, to help the team ensure their letters are delivered to the right place.

Letters received before 3pm Monday – Friday will be delivered on the same day. Any correspondence received after 3pm will roll into the next day's deliveries and anything received on a Saturday or a Sunday will be delivered on the following Monday.

## The scheme covers the following hospitals:

- Darlington Memorial Hospital
- University Hospital of North Durham
- Bishop Auckland Hospital
- Sedgefield Community Hospital
- Richardson Community Hospital
- Weardale Community Hospital
- Chester-le-Street Community Hospital
- Shotley Bridge Community Hospital

## NEWTON NEWS

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## BRIC-A-BRAC APPEAL

We are appealing for good quality items to use for auctions/raffles, car boot sales to help boost our funds and support more animals in need, as well as vet costs.

## WILD BIRD APPEAL

In order to help the wild bird population over the winter months, we are appealing for donations of fat balls, peanuts and bird seed.

## CAT FOOD APPEAL

We are in need of wet cat food, kitten food and cat litter to support the animals currently in our care.

## DROP OFF POINTS

Any of the above items can be dropped off at Tesco's, Honest John, Julie's Pet Show or Grannies Choice - thank you for your support.

Please contact 01325 321855 or 01325 311215

## Paul Howell MP

Member of Parliament for Sedgefield



## CORONAVIRUS ADVICE



PROTECT THE NHS

save lives

I am not currently able to hold face-to-face advice surgeries, but if you live in the Sedgefield Constituency and you are self isolating and finding it hard to manage, please contact us on any of the details below and we will do everything we can to get you the help you need.

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## Headliner Announced For Online Theatre Festival

North East comedian Carl Hutchinson will headline a series of virtual theatre performances in County Durham.

On Stage: Online, organised by Durham County Council's Gala Theatre and Durham University, was announced last month and will feature a host of theatre companies and performing arts groups from around the county.

Sixteen acts will be taking part in the festival from Thursday 11 to Sunday 14 June, with Carl creating three sets that will headline on Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 8.30pm.

The Geordie comic has been described as 'one of the hardest working comedians of 2018', and his debut Edinburgh Fringe Festival solo show made the top 10 shows of the Amused Moose Laughter Awards 2012.

The majority of the artists, companies and productions chosen for On Stage: Online have links to the region, and the festival will see theatre shorts and longer productions streamed live each day on the Gala Theatre's YouTube channel, alongside scheduled pre-recorded content.

Robin Byers, manager for



the Gala Theatre, said: "We're delighted that Carl will be headlining the festival and we can't wait to see his show. Carl would have been performing at the Gala Theatre in April, supporting fellow North East comedian Chris Ramsay, but unfortunately that was cancelled because of the pandemic so it will be great to welcome him online."

To view the full festival programme, visit the Gala Theatre and Cinema website at: <http://www.galadurham.co.uk/whats-on/onstage-online/>

## YOUR LOCAL MCDONALD'S RETURNS WITH NEW MEASURES IN PLACE

All McDonald's Drive-Thru restaurants set to reopen this week following successful pilot

Today McDonald's will reopen restaurants for Drive-Thru and McDelivery with new measures in place to help keep employees and customers safe. This follows a successful pilot in May.

With restaurant teams adjusting to new procedures to enable safe working and social distancing, things may take a little longer – and high demand is anticipated. McDonald's and its franchisees are working closely with local authorities and the police, and may determine that it is necessary to close Drive Thru lanes if queues cause disruption at busier sites or put employees or customers at risk.

To help create a safe experience for everyone, McDonald's has introduced a number of changes to their restaurants, including:

- Social distancing has been introduced in the kitchens and service areas to help create a safe working environment for restaurant teams.
  - Perspex screens at Drive-Thru windows and employees wearing protective equipment, as well as Perspex screens and floor markings in specific areas in the restaurant and kitchen.
  - All McDonald's employees will be asked to confirm they are fit and able to work and contactless thermometers will be used to take employee temperatures on arrival at work for every shift.
  - Ensuring our delivery procedures with couriers are contactless for both our people and our customers
  - Restaurants will return with smaller teams, offering a limited menu\* and operating reduced hours.
  - Encouraging capped spend for Drive-Thru and McDelivery at £25 per order, and customers are encouraged to pay by contactless payment methods,
  - For those visiting Drive-Thrus, customers can browse the menu, order and pay ahead using the My McDonald's App
- As employees and the business adapt to a new way of working, McDonald's would like to thank customers for their continued support and patience.
- Between 2 and 4 June over 1000 McDonald's restaurants will be open in the UK and Ireland, either for Drive-Thru or McDelivery. Restaurants opening will be published each day and can be found on our restaurant locator.

## THEATRE COMPANY TO RAISE MONEY FOR NHS HEROES

A successful north east theatre group is producing a compilation CD of lockdown musical theatre classics to help support the National Health Service.

Darlington Operatic Society has announced plans to release a CD called "Strictly Lockdown" – comprising up to 18 musical theatre songs – with 50 per cent of the profits being donated to NHS charities.

All of the songs have been created by members singing from their spare bedrooms, under-stair cupboards, bathrooms and conservatories. The result will be more than 70 minutes of "virtual musical theatre magic", with the CD going on sale in early July.

DOS spokesman Julian Cound said: "This is probably one of the most challenging projects the Society has faced – and that includes having to make Chitty Chitty Bang fly."

"The idea of creating a compilation CD came fairly soon after the lockdown happened. It has taken many weeks of planning and organisation to get it to the stage we are at now."

The process has involved choosing the right mix of



songs, arranging backing tracks, and making sure the project meets all legal requirements.

"Getting 30 or so cast members to sing accurately when they are standing shoulder to shoulder is one thing, getting voices to match when they have been recorded completely independently from all corners of the North-East has been a huge technical challenge," said Julian. "However, from hearing the first two tracks completed, I know we have absolutely nailed it."

DOS had been due to stage Strictly Musicals 3 at Darlington Hippodrome Theatre from April 22 but, after months of rehearsals, the show had to be postponed due to the

coronavirus pandemic.

However, the Society bounced back from the disappointment by creating a virtual choir to perform One Day More, from Les Miserables, on its Facebook page. That was followed by a virtual dance video to From Now On, taken from The Greatest Showman. Those two performances have been watched by more than 33,000 people.

As well as supporting the NHS, sales of Strictly Lockdown will also help DOS through a difficult period until it can resume staging its high quality shows at the Hippodrome. The CD will be priced at £10 plus P&P and will be available to purchase through the DarlingtonOS website in early July.

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# Keep County Durham Rolling This Bike Month

Set new goals, win prizes and help keep the county rolling forward this Bike Month.

This June, everyone in the UK is invited to join Bike Month, a national campaign to get more people on bikes. This follows the UK Government putting cycling at the centre of plans to get the country moving again. As well as great daily exercise, cycling and walking are being encouraged as alternatives

to public transport. This is to help avoid congestion for any journey and allows for social distancing.

As part of Bike Month, Durham County Council has teamed up with County Durham with Love to Ride, to encourage more people to get out on their bikes and cycle for essential travel and leisure journeys.

A special Durham page on the Love to Ride website is up and running so that members can set themselves goals, track their mileage, earn badges, share photos and encourage others to ride, as well as allowing workplaces to set shared

goals, incentivise their staff to ride and monitor cycling participation.

Prizes are also up for grabs, with daily prize draws during the whole of Bike Month. Each week one rider will receive £500 to donate to their local Bikes for Key Workers initiative or Coronavirus Community Support group of their choice. There will also be two brand new bike giveaways and daily spot prizes throughout June. Residents in County Durham are invited to join in and sign up at <https://www.lovetoride.net/durham>. Entry is free and open to all.

Cllr Charlie Kay, Durham County Council's cycling champion, said: "Cycling is going to play a crucial role as we start to adjust to the circumstances presented by coronavirus. The aim of Bike Month is to help people enjoy the fun and freedom of riding bikes and to help them to access the support they need to ride confidently for transport as we emerge from lockdown. "Bike Month is also about sharing the joys and benefits of riding bikes and emphasising how cycling can help us to make the 'new normal' cleaner, greener and healthier than ever."

sustainable travel officer for Durham County Council, said: "It doesn't matter if you ride every day or if you haven't been on a bike in years. You only have to ride for ten minutes to take part and indoor rides count too. Even if we can't ride together, we can stay connected."

Find out cycle routes around County Durham by visiting [www.durham.gov.uk/article/11672/Where-to-cycle](http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/11672/Where-to-cycle). Read about riding during the pandemic, including tips and advice on the benefits of cycling at [www.lovetoride.net/uk/pages/info?page=2\\_covid](http://www.lovetoride.net/uk/pages/info?page=2_covid)



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## THANK YOU NOTES TO BIN CREWS DO NOT GO WASTED



A big thank you to the bin crew- that's the message being displayed on County Durham bin wagons as people continue to support one another.

County Durham bin crews are showcasing some of the thanks they have received for their work during the pandemic, as letters and drawings from residents have been blown up and added to the side of three wagons.

The Durham County Council workers have been inundated with letters of appreciation as they continue to carry out collections during the coronavirus outbreak.

These have been met with delight from the crews and displaying them is a way of showing how much these correspondences continue to lift spirits.

Cllr Brian Stephens, Cabinet member for neighbourhoods and local partnerships, said: "In this unusual time, we have been moved by how much our communities come together. These displays of gratitude for our bin crews really do highlight that good work does not go unnoticed, and that a small gesture, such as a small thank you note, can make a big difference during times of hardship."

"We will continue to ensure our essential services are available, and we cannot thank everyone enough for their hard work and encouragement."

Durham County Council rubbish and recycling collections remain as normal. Residents should put bins out for collection at 7am on the collection day.

Visit [www.durham.gov.uk/article/22999/Bin-collections-garden-waste-and-tips](http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/22999/Bin-collections-garden-waste-and-tips) for up to date information on bin collections and garden waste.





# NORTHERN PRIDE TO GO AHEAD – ONLINE...

This year's Northern Pride will go ahead – with a full day of events taking place virtually.

Organisers of the annual celebration of the LGBTQ+ community – which regularly attracts tens of thousands of visitors to Newcastle – had to postpone this year's UK Pride event following the outbreak of COVID-19.

But today (1 June) on the day marking the beginning of Pride Month, the Northern Pride committee has announced its plans for the

celebration to be marked, with a packed programme taking place on 18 July across Facebook and YouTube.

At the heart of the event will be a "virtual march" where people are being encouraged to send in images or videos of past Pride events they have attended.

These will then be edited together to create a Pride march which people will be able to watch on the day.

The march will be part of a full day of entertainment and education which can be viewed on social media platforms, covering all of the various aspects which would be part of a Pride celebration. That includes performances on the main stage and from Curious Arts and Be Scene, plus content from all of the festival zones – health and wellbeing, family and youth

and sport.

The event will end with a virtual candlelit vigil, followed by an official after party.

Chair of Northern Pride, Ste Dunn, said the organising committee felt it was important to still mark Pride in some way.

"We have taken the decision to create Northern Pride Online so even if we can't meet in person, we can still all be together in spirit" he said.

"And we want as many people as possible to take part in the march. If they don't have images or videos from previous Prides, then they can just dress up in their Pride best and take a picture which we can use."

The event is being organised around a number of key themes, the first of which is

unity which Ste sees as at the heart of what Pride is about. "Our festival every year is a chance for people to get together with family and friends," he said.

"We come together to celebrate, remember and unite. With the challenges of COVID-19, Pride festivals and events across the globe are cancelled and postponed. While we are separated, we now more than ever need to be united."

The theme of protect – one of the core values of Northern Pride – will also be reflected at the event, highlighting the fact that there is still a huge amount of inequality in the world.

Pride will also focus on identity, and about bringing home the message that "everyone deserves to be accepted for who they are,

regardless of their gender identity or sexuality."

The event is also taking three elements of the rainbow flag to represent other important messages – orange for healing, yellow for sunlight to support those who have to hide their true identity during lockdown and purple for spirit – which will be seen at the candlelight vigil which will end the day.

"It is so vital that we continue to keep Pride alive, even in these difficult times," said Ste.

"And we're looking forward to as many people as possible coming together."

Anyone who would like to contribute an image of video for the virtual march should send them to prideonline@npride.org.uk or visit www.northern-pride.com/prideonline



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# A Family Going Above & Beyond for Their Local Community

## The Gibson family

interview by Jess Webb

It's common knowledge that Personal Protective Equipment also known as PPE has been in short supply for the Key Workers nationally during this pandemic.

I had been told that a family in our town, had selflessly took it upon themselves to go above and beyond, by producing PPE for members of the community. This was in their own time in the form of reusable face masks, and I had been told the whole family had got involved.

I wanted to speak to Paul and Davinia Gibson, who I was told were in charge of this family venture, to find out more about what they've been doing to help, and what prompted their action. The following interview with Davinia was with Paul present.

*I have been told you have been using up your own time to make and supply a form of PPE for Key Workers in Newton Aycliffe. Could you tell me more about this and why?*

Davinia: I saw a call for help from a local care homes and with Paul being an Ex-Army Qualified Tailor, we decided with Paul's skill we could, and wanted to, do something to help.

We had only planned on making and donating a hundred or so, from materials we already had or what could be donated. This would mean we could provide them free and that would be it. But we were taken aback by the extreme demand, and also that members of the public were paying £8 upwards for these masks. We felt people were being taken advantage of, and knew this was wrong and that we needed to continue.

We wanted to start providing them to the public at around cost, but also continue to donate them free to different local services, accepting donations along the way. We have not been charging people for our time, but have needed to purchase or rely on kind members of the public donating our materials. It's the elastics that have been the most costly, as they have risen in price as you may expect and cost hundreds to date for these and thread. We have thankfully managed to keep purchasing cost to an absolute minimum, whilst still being able to donate masks to local services and making charity donations to Junction 7 of any surplus monies keeping it all local.

*Can you tell me which key worker services you have made these for, and how*

*many you have made to date?*

We have made them for care homes within Aycliffe, staff at a local Mental Health hospital, some Veterinary services in Newton Aycliffe, Cafe Pronto in the town centre, bus drivers, health care workers, teachers etc.

As mentioned, we have also been supplying them to the wider community, ie; people who are in isolation and Aycliffe residents in general who feel they need them. To date we have made approximately 2500 masks, give or take a few hundred - we unfortunately haven't been able to keep absolute track as it has been so busy.

*I have heard it's been a family affair, with all family members getting involved in this venture, how did that happen and what experience has everyone got in sewing?*

Paul is a trained Army Veteran of 24 years, who was trained as a Military Tailor and has many years experience. Myself and the children have had absolutely no experience at all until now. Paul could not keep up with the demand of the whole process; including the cutting of materials and elastics, taking requests and crafting face masks to completion. Therefore he roped all us into the process, willingly, obviously. Paul taught me how to use a sewing machine to help out, allowing him then to concentrate on the more intricate finishes. My daughter, Jennifer, (16 years), has been the Administrator, taking face mask requests over Facebook messenger and writing them down. My other daughter, Britney, (13 years), and foster children (7 and 5 years) have been

helping by unfolding the materials, once stitched into pockets and ready to go then next step. So yes we have all been involved as a family and enjoyed it.

*How many hours do you think you have all put in together making these masks?*

It's really hard to say; we have worked every day since we started, cutting materials, sewing etc. Paul is also still working full time as a Key Worker in a local Mental Health Hospital, and after a full days work, he then works to midnight most nights sewing and finishing requests. On a weekend and the Bank Holidays, he's been working on the masks up to 18 hours a day. I have been putting up to 8 hours a day cutting and sewing material, with the help of the kids.

*What do you both normally do for work?*

Paul is a Patient Transport Driver for a Mental Health Hospital in Darlington. I recently gave up work to foster two children and also look after my own three girls.

*What do you all do for fun?*  
We all love going to the lakes to walk up mountains, but during this lockdown unfortunately not been able to do what we love - and probably have been doing much the same as everyone else.

A couple of years ago myself, Paul and Jennifer did the 3 Peaks over the summer and had planned to do it again this year. But due to the lockdown this has put a stop to this plan, but hopefully next year. We recently took our foster children up their first "mountain" Roseberry Topping, which they really enjoyed, so hopefully we

can get them to do a real mountain by the end of the year.

*Have you got any other ventures planned?*

Our current venture with mask making was purely an accident by scale, as we only wanted to make a hundred or so for a care home. So when the demand is no

longer needed we intend to hang up our kit, as we really can't wait to get a bit more freedom, and get out to the Lake District again to get some good fell walking in. Jess Webb: What can I say about this fantastic family effort? All I can think to say is WOW!

I am sure you would all like to thank Davinia, Paul and the rest of their incredible family in supporting our community in this inspirational way. Thank you the Gibsons.



## In Memoriam

### Sylvia Hubbard

13th June 2007

Greatly loved and dearly missed by Derrick, family and friends.

Every day gets longer without you. 13 years now.

Love you for eternity.

See you every day. Your loving Husband, Derrick xxxxxx

## In Memoriam

### In loving memory of Elizabeth Reid

God saw you getting tired ad a cure was not to be. So he put His arms around you and He whispered "come to me". With tearful eyes we watched you.

We watched you fade away. Although we loved you dearly, we could not make you stay.

A golden heart stopped beating, hard-working hands at rest. God broke our hearts to prove to us, he chose to take the best. It's lonesome here without you, we miss you more each day. Life doesn't seem the same since you have gone away.

When days are sad and lovely and everything goes wrong, we seem to hear you whisper "cheer up and carry on".

Each time we see your picture you seem to smile and say, "don't cry, I'm in God's hands, we'll meet again someday.

From your loving Daughter Carol and all the family xxxx

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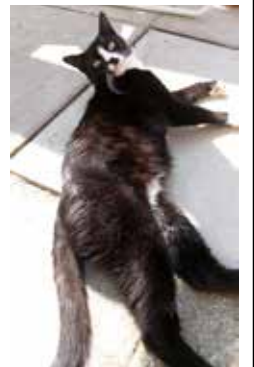
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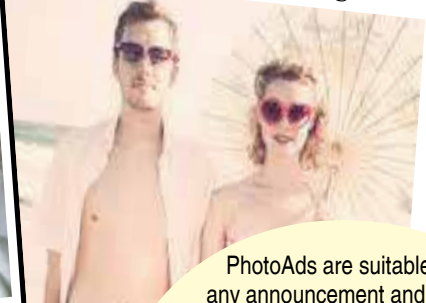


### Happy 21st Birthday

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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!



## MAJOR WORKS TO COMMENCE ON NEW ELVET BRIDGE

Major repairs to one of Durham City Centre's bridges are expected to begin next month.

There will be a full road closure in place as significant work takes place on New Elvet Bridge, lasting up to 14 months.

Linking the east and west sides of Durham, the bridge carries an average of 17,000 vehicles a day each year.

It was constructed in 1975 to relieve traffic from the adjacent Old Elvet Bridge and the market place as part of the Durham City Relief Road project, and the repairs are crucial for the long-term future of the bridge.

The project will cost £7.5 million to complete. However, Durham County Council has been awarded £4.238 million towards the repairs following a successful bid to the Department for Transport.

Cllr Brian Stephens, Cabinet member for neighbourhoods and local partnerships, said: "Although there will be major

disruption while these works are carried out, it is essential that this work is undertaken. We would encourage people to avoid travelling through the city during peak travel times if possible and to plan extra time for their journeys. Hopefully, with more people now working from home, it will be easier to manage the delays and disruption during peak times.

"Alongside the improvements to Milburngate and plans for the bus station, these significant repairs to New Elvet Bridge will help to bring about many benefits to Durham and we will still look forward to welcoming more visitors once restrictions start to ease and we start to recover from the effects of the coronavirus."

The works to New Elvet Bridge will see the lifting and supporting of the central section of the bridge whilst work is undertaken on the deck joints, along with extensive concrete repairs. The bridge deck will also be

waterproofed and resurfaced to extend the life of the bridge.

In addition, drainage systems will be improved and the protective coatings to the concrete surfaces will be renewed, giving waterproof protection to the structure and improving the appearance of the bridge.

If works aren't carried out now, more extensive and prolonged repairs will be required in the future.

It is also hoped that the repairs will help to enable future developments and improvements in and around the city.

Works are expected to start on 20 July and alternative routes through the city should be planned. Recommended diversions from different parts of the county are available on the council's website: [www.durham.gov.uk/newelvet](http://www.durham.gov.uk/newelvet). The council will also be making direct contact with residents and businesses in the vicinity of the works, in the coming weeks.

## Spectrum Fly The Flag at International Skating Challenges



We are very proud of our skaters from Spectrum Roller Skating Club who

took part in the international flexibility challenge with our friends over seas. Clubs in 10

countries (Argentina, Brazil, Columbia, Chillie, Spain, Ecuador, Paraguay, Uruguay, Panama and Great Britain) took part uniting young people across the globe with a shared passion for roller skating. The focus was to keep skaters motivated and the theme was flexibility. The skaters had a week to collect photos and/or video of how they practice being flexible. All of the clubs involved then shared their videos.

"We have been using our time to work hard. We are focussing on our goals and preparing for the future. What an amazing opportunity for our skaters. Something they will never forget" said coach Tracy Stevens, "The project is called

Friends without borders! - Amigos sin fronteras! It has come with language barriers but with assistance from google translate we can learn together with skaters in other countries".

Its tough when you are involved with sport and your athletes have been training so hard for competitions and unfortunately such unprecedented times occur -

as a coach this is devastating. The biggest blow was when British Championships and all International Competitions were cancelled. Hopes and dreams were shattered, but after speaking to former World Champion Paola Franchini on her zoom training, she reassured us that, its these moments that really define us in life. Its the athletes who go that extra mile when times are tough. It is the one who will not let anything stop them - even a pandemic. These moments when life is at its worst - they give you an opportunity to make a choice. Our choice at Spectrum RSC is to give skaters every opportunity we can to develop their skills and make us stronger and better as individuals and as a club.

We think this has been such an incredible time to share information about how our sport works in other nations. We are so thankful for this opportunity. You can watch the flexibility challenges on our Facebook and Instagram pages and if you are interested in roller skating in the future please get in touch.

## Oakleaf Football Pitches Grant Award

In early 2020, The Football Foundation offered funding, to improve pitches across the country, that were used by Youth Football clubs, but owned by Town and County Councils. Newton Aycliffe Youth FC as an FA Charter Standard Community Club, were invited to apply for a grant by Durham FA, to fund improvements to the Oakleaf Pitches. After discussions with Great Aycliffe Town Council, Officers and Council members, the go ahead was given for the football club to apply for funding. This was for a 10 year project to improve all the pitches at the Oakleaf that would be funded, primarily by the football foundation but would also require a financial input from the football club. In early April we were advised that our application had been successful and we awarded £45,000. Then the preparation started, as we invited contractors to tender for the work. Eventually the project was started at the end of May on the 10 year journey to improve the pitches for the boys and girls of Newton Aycliffe Youth FC, to play their football.

Martin Smalls, Chairman commented "the club has always invested in our coaches, to ensure they get the best qualifications and training, to coach our players to a high standard. This grant will ensure that the players will be playing on top quality pitches."

Berni Borsberry, Secretary

commented "The hard work of the Great Aycliffe Town Council, works department over the years, has given us the best possible pitches to play our football. The funding for a 10 year pitch improvement project, will ensure we will have some of the best grass pitches in County Durham, for our boys and girls to develop their skills and play their matches.

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