

Friday 22nd January 2021

Established 1948

# Newton News

Incorporating The Newtonian - Newton Aycliffe's Free Community Magazine

Editorial and Advertising contact: paul@newtonnews.co.uk - Telephone: 01325 300212 - www.newtonnews.co.uk



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PAUL HOWELL  
MP for Sedgefield





# Adults Offered the Chance to Get Healthier in 2021

The Better Health campaign comes after research found almost seven in ten North East adults want a healthier lifestyle due to their experiences of the coronavirus pandemic.

Eating more healthily, losing weight and exercising more were at the top of the list of changes from the recent country-wide survey of more than 5,000 people.

The campaign encourages residents to work towards a healthier lifestyle in manageable steps, whether losing weight by getting active and eating better, looking after their mental wellbeing, or by quitting smoking.

Support is being offered through a variety of online tools, apps and offers, including the updated NHS 12 Week Weight Loss app at [www.nhs.uk/betterhealth](http://www.nhs.uk/betterhealth)

The survey also revealed the impact of the pandemic saw behaviours in the North East change during 2020, including:

- Almost a quarter of people reported snacking on unhealthy food and drinks at least once a day (23%)
- Almost a third said they were exercising less (31%) in the latter



half of 2020

- 16% claimed their alcohol intake had increased since the start of the second national lockdown.

Claire Mathews, Health and Wellbeing Programme Lead for Public Health England North East, said: "Managing all the pressures of everyday life can mean that exercise and diet takes a back seat, but the past year has made this even more of an issue for many people in the North East. Our health survey has shown that seven out of ten adults in the region want to become healthier in 2021.

"The Better Health campaign, with NHS-approved advice, shows that making small, often simple, lifestyle changes can have a positive impact on our health and wellbeing. Looking at what we eat, what we drink and increasing our exercise gradually can reduce our future risk of cancer, heart disease, diabetes and other long-term conditions. I would urge everyone in the North East to search online for 'NHS Better Health' or speak to your GP for advice and tips to make 2021 a brighter, healthier year for you and your loved ones." To find out more about making healthy changes search 'NHS Better Health' or visit [www.nhs.uk/betterhealth](http://www.nhs.uk/betterhealth)

## A Huge Thank You!

Cash donations from supporters; supermarket staff who donated instead of doing a Secret Santa; free toys and food from supermarket - the ROC Solid supported housing charity team in Newton Aycliffe want to say a huge thank you.

"We have been blown away by the generosity of local people and companies," said Service Manager, Mandy Shaw, "their kindness meant that some very vulnerable people and families were able to enjoy a good Christmas."

The charity operates more than 70 units of accommodation in Newton Aycliffe and Teesside, including a house for women with drug and alcohol issues that has been recognised as an example of national good practice by The Prison Reform Trust.

"Staff from Sainsbury's at Cobblers Hall opted to make a donation to us instead of doing a Secret Santa," said Mandy, "and two individual women generously gave £100 and £200 towards the Christmas effort. We always make sure everyone has a Christmas dinner and has gifts. Some of the people we work with would have woken up to absolutely nothing on Christmas Day, if it wasn't for the kindness of our supporters."

Aldi and Tesco were also generous with food and toys. The charity had been very busy during the pandemic. It sourced funding to deliver 1000 home-cooked hot meals to local people and they also provided groceries to vulnerable people outside of the charity. It works in partnership with a wide range of organisations, including leaving care teams, probation and drug and alcohol services. Its co-founders, Dot and Derek Butler, are directors of Newton Aycliffe based ROC Group, which offers a range of social care services, including children's homes, extra supported living for teenagers with complex needs who are transitioning to independence, CQC Outstanding Personal Care/Outreach for children with complex needs and the supervision of contact between children in care and family members.

Photo: Mandy Shaw, ROC Solid Service Manager, is pictured far left with some of her Newton Aycliffe team.



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# Greenfield Students Follow Their Aspirations



Students from Greenfield Community College are taking part in a project that will help them explore their ambitions and aspirations. The group of young people are working alongside artist Richard Bliss in an Arts Council funded project supported by Greenfield Arts that celebrates the practices of ordinary people and how they thrived in places such as Newton Aycliffe. Drawing upon the heritage of Newton Aycliffe and its beginnings as a new town the students are learning about the early pioneers in the town and the aspirations and ambitions of those that came to work and live here. Students have been looking at the ethos and aspirations of 'new towns' and the ambitions they faced to promote a classless community with ideals that could fuel a better future.

Like the early pioneers, students are finding the resourcefulness within themselves is a positive strength and they are exploring ways that they can look at their town with new eyes and how they can create ambition for themselves and others.

Artist Richard Bliss and Katy Milne, Creative Director at Greenfield Arts, are currently meeting students online during their T4S (TimeforSuccess) lesson. "The students are exploring with artist Richard Bliss, the possibilities for their futures and the kind of place and future they want for society. They are interested in unity and are inspired by the aspirations of the new town and how we can build on these to bring about more positive change for everyone." We are looking forward to sharing the results of the project which will culminate in an exhibition or work that will tour across the county and continue to inspire ambition and aspirations in others.

"I am really pleased to be working with Greenfield Arts again and with the students from Greenfield Community College. We will be working online and our collaboration will eventually lead to us making a piece for the exhibition Workers Thread which will open at

Ushaw later this year, and then tour to other venues in Durham" said artist Richard Bliss. Greenfield Community College is an Arts and Science specialist school. The school promotes an inclusive curriculum encouraging students to work together to realise an outstanding learning experience. If you would like to find out more visit [www.greenfieldschool.net](http://www.greenfieldschool.net) or contact the school by emailing [contact@greenfieldschool.net](mailto:contact@greenfieldschool.net) or by calling 01325 300378.

This project is funded by Arts Council England and is a partnership with Ushaw Historic House, Chapel and Gardens, Bishop Auckland Town Hall, Greenfield Arts and led by artist Richard Bliss.

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# Council Shares Knowledge on Improving Energy Efficiency

A North East council has been sharing its knowledge on improving energy efficiency in businesses at an international conference. Since 2016, Durham County Council has contributed to the LOCARBO project, an interregional cooperation project which has been looking at ways to improve low-carbon economic policies. Led by the Municipality of Potenza, Italy, and involves partners from Italy (Basilicata Region), Hungary (Mi6), Lithuania (University of Kaunas), Romania (Alba Iulia Municipality), Portugal (Municipality of Vila Nova de Gaia), and the UK (County Durham). Its aim is to improve EU policy to increase energy efficiency and the use of renewables in buildings through innovative methods. The council's involvement in LOCARBO has been led by its low carbon economy team, with a particular focus on improving energy efficiency within small businesses. Specifically, the team has been working to enhance the effectiveness of the existing European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) project it manages – the Business Energy Efficiency Project (BEEP).

The project has greatly supported and contributes towards the council's Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP) by supporting and working with SMEs to decarbonise their business practices. The council's Climate Emergency Response Plan outlines measures it will take to reduce carbon emissions from its operations by 80 per cent by 2030, and to take necessary action to make County Durham carbon neutral by 2050. Throughout the LOCARBO exchange, a conference has been



hosted every six months in one of the partnering countries involved in the project.

In December 2019, the council hosted the LOCARBO event in Durham. This year, Portugal was to host, however, due to the coronavirus pandemic, the final conference took place online.

The final conference signified the end of the LOCARBO project and took place on 4 December, where the council discussed its experience as partners in the initiative.

Cllr John Clare, Durham County Council's climate change champion, said: "It has been immensely profitable to be involved in this international cooperation. We have learned a great deal from our LOCARBO partners, who have shared their expertise on projects such as 'energy clusters', 'energy intensity' in the heating sector, 'low tech solutions to building efficiency', a 'virtual power station', 'communities for change', 'behavioural economics' and a number of other innovative ways of working. At the same time, we were able to share the internationally-significant initiatives our low carbon team has been developing to help small businesses to decarbonise their processes."

For more information about the LOCARBO initiative, visit [www.durham.gov.uk/locarbo](http://www.durham.gov.uk/locarbo)



**WOODHAM ACADEMY**

Washington Crescent, Newton Aycliffe, Co. Durham DL5 4AX  
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Headteacher: Mr. A. Bell

## Covid-19 National Testing Programme

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From January, rapid-result tests will be provided to secondary schools to conduct testing - this will help identify those who are carrying the virus without displaying symptoms. Woodham Academy wishes to appoint to the positions above to undertake routine testing of staff and serial testing of pupils who are identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive. A link to the programme can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/secondary-schools-and-colleges-to-get-weekly-coronavirus-testing>

Hours will vary as the requirement for testing will be dictated by the number of positive cases within the school. However, a minimum number of hours per week will be agreed. The role will suit those with a medical, first aid or administrative background but full training will be provided.

Woodham is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to enhanced disclosure; the successful applicants will be subject to relevant vetting checks before an offer of appointment is made

Woodham Academy is an Equal Opportunities Employer. We want to develop a more diverse workforce and we positively welcome applications from all sections of the community. Applicants with disabilities will be invited for interview if the essential job criteria are met.

An application form, role descriptor and person specification can be downloaded from the school website at <https://woodham.org.uk/> or for further information please contact [s.barnett@woodham.org.uk](mailto:s.barnett@woodham.org.uk)

**Closing date: Friday 29th January 2021 at 9.00am.**

## “Only Time Will Tell Who is Right”

Dear Sir,

With regard to J.D. Clare's letter on climate change and his bucket list of 'things to do' to save the planet, I think he must live on fantasy island!

For starters there is no doubt that climate change is on its way at a great rate of knots, but if the whole of the UK became carbon free tomorrow it would have little, or no, effect on the world's climate. You've got China, America, Australia and other smaller countries burning fossil fuels and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Oil and gas will continue to be used for years to come and in Brazil the rain forests are being devastated to grow crops.

The biggest polluter on the planet is the human race, so consider this, if there wasn't a human race, would there be any pollution?

Every child born, from cradle to grave, has to be fed, watered, clothed and housed. For the materials to do this would produce tons of CO2, with ever increasing amounts as the population increased.

What is being done about it?

Nothing, and because we are doing nothing about it, old mother nature has decided to take a helping hand. Just going back a few hundred years we had the bubonic plague, the Spanish flu, two world wars and other plagues and pestilences. Now we have Covid 1 and 2 and possibly more.

As I write, on the radio it stated east Africa is being overrun with locusts. Has it not dawned on the powers that be that nature is trying to tell us something. We ignore it at our peril.

Birth control never gets a mention. It seems as if some people seem to think it is OK to have as many children as they want, whether or not they can support them.

Only time will tell who is right.

R.C. Crook

# New Business for Local Accountancy Firm

A North East accountancy firm has gone from strength to strength over the past 12 months – thanks, in part, to the pandemic. Stuart Hall & Co, which has branches in Middlesbrough, Bishop Auckland and Scotland, has had a busy year with growth up 20 per cent, an office move and a promotion.

The firm was set up in 2009 by Stuart himself, and has since grown to 16 members of staff and three branches.

Stuart said: "We have had an exceptionally busy year, both in terms of the support needed by existing clients and also demand from new clients.

"Growth since March is almost 20 per cent, in part because we have seen a number of people setting up new businesses, either because they have been made redundant due to the pandemic, or because they've seen opportunities in a changed world.

"To put this growth into context, what we have achieved in the last six months is the equivalent to the growth we achieved in the previous 24 months. I believe that is a testament to the standards of service we supply to our clients, as the vast majority of the new business has come from word-of-mouth recommendation."

To meet the rising demand the firm has recently moved its Teesside base from Stockton to Middlesbrough's Riverside Park – doubling its office space – and is now looking to make further appointments.

Stuart said: "Despite the current economic situation, we continue to win new business and needed the extra office space for more staff; Middlesbrough was the obvious choice and we have a number of clients in the area.

"Additionally, being able to socially distance our staff in our offices is important to us and so we wanted additional space sooner rather than later to allow us to do this."

Stuart has also recently promoted long-standing staff member Matthew Gilmore to the role of director, to support the firm in its continued growth plans.

Matthew, who has worked for the company for more than five years,



will split his time between the two North East offices, with a focus on Teesside.

He said: "I'm absolutely delighted to have been promoted to director. When I joined the company, we discussed what the future would look like for me but I never expected this to happen - especially not in five years.

"I am extremely grateful that I have the opportunity to be part of what Stuart has so successfully built, and I'm incredibly excited to play a part in its future - despite the current financial problems we have continued to grow the business in a sustainable way."

For more information on Stuart Hall & Co, visit [www.stuarthall.co.uk](http://www.stuarthall.co.uk)  
Photo: (Left to right) Founder of Stuart Hall & Co, Stuart Hall and Director Matthew Gilmore

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## Local Vaccination Sites Available

Health officials are reassuring patients that they will be able to get their Covid-19 vaccination locally if they prefer not to travel to a mass vaccination site.

GPs in County Durham have stressed that patients invited to book a vaccination appointment at The Centre for Life, Newcastle - the North-East's designated mass vaccination site - can choose to wait until they are contacted by their local GP.

NHS County Durham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), chief officer, Dr Stewart Findlay, said: "Letters from NHS England have been sent to people aged 80 or older who live within a 45-minute drive of the vaccination site in Newcastle, inviting them to book their COVID-19 vaccination.

"If people have received this letter but would prefer to have their vaccination locally, then they can choose to wait until they are contacted by their local GP service.

"We know this may cause confusion for many vulnerable people and their families but please be assured, anyone registered with a County Durham GP practice will be contacted and invited to book their COVID-19 vaccine at a local GP vaccination hub."

County Durham has 13 vaccination hubs across the county, with groups of GP practices working together in Primary Care Networks (PCNs), delivering the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

People who are unable to leave their home to travel to where they are offered an appointment, and cannot arrange for someone to help them, will be contacted by their local GP services to arrange a vaccination with a GP or District Nurse.

"If people receive a letter inviting them to the mass vaccination site and they have already booked an appointment with their local GP service then they should just ignore the letter," added Dr Findlay.

"There is nothing they need to do except to turn up at their scheduled GP appointment."

## GNAAS New Kit Bag Improves Patient Care

A team from the Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAS) has pioneered a new kit bag aimed at making their patient care more efficient.

When GNAAS is called out to a critically ill patient, seconds count and since the development of these 15kg kit bags, the critical care team has seen shorter on-scene times which has ultimately resulted in better patient care.

GNAAS paramedic, Lee Salmon, was part of the team of five who came up with the concept. Mr Salmon said: "These new bags contain all our medical equipment.

"They are a modular system, comprising of two main bags, a monitoring bag, and a procedure bag. They are also supported by small modules that can be clipped to each bag to change its operational capability." Inside the new kit bags, you can expect to find a ventilator for protective ventilator strategies for those patients who are critically ill, as well as a butterfly scanner ultrasound so the team can do scanning on patients and see whether they have any internal bleeding. There is also a defibrillator and monitoring unit to look at patients' observations.

Mr Salmon said: "The bags function as a miniature on-the-move A&E unit, but right by the side of the patient when they are fighting for survival.

"They will allow us to take critical care equipment to the scene of the patient with ease. We can't always walk back to the aircraft - if we were going to a patient on a mountain top, for example - so we will always want to take this with us."

Hansell Composites from Stokesley helped GNAAS to design and manufacture the structure of the bag and Cumbrian-based mountain equipment manufacturer, Aiguille, also collaborated with the team to create a bag that can carry a heavy load, safely and ergonomically.

Before the bags were designed, members of GNAAS' critical care team would have to go back to the aircraft for certain bits of equipment or ask the ambulance crew to get the things that we couldn't carry. This essentially created a time delay.

The new bags will be used on every job GNAAS attends, from serious head injuries to large road traffic collisions.

Mr Salmon said: "In situations like this, the new bag system will save lives and justifies the time, cost, and collaborative approach to getting it right.

"We are always looking for new ventures, pieces of equipment, and possibilities on how to make people's lives better, and the public support in this endeavour is greatly appreciated."

GNAAS relies on donations to survive. Please visit [www.gnaas.com](http://www.gnaas.com) or call 01768 899 150 to support the charity, which operates from Langwathby, near Penrith.

## READERS' PHOTOGRAPHS



Views around the Boating Lake by Yvonne Wood (Newton Aycliffe FC Treasurer).

### (B6444 HEIGHINGTON LANE, AYCLIFFE) (TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE) ORDER 2021

The Council on 15/1/21 made the above Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act, 1984 as amended, Section 14 (1) to prohibit all vehicular traffic from proceeding on 75m of B6444 Heighington Ln, Aycliffe from the junction with Station Rd westwards to the entrance to Heighington Station car park to enable barrier testing works at Heighington Station level crossing. Alt route from the eastern side of the closure, B6444 Heighington Ln south easterly on B6444 St Andrews Way to A167 then southerly to A1(M) Junction 59 (Aycliffe) Interchange, south westerly on A1(M) to Burtree Interchange (J58) then northerly along A68 and A6072 to the roundabout junction with B6444 leading to the western side of the closure, and vice versa. A local (non-HGV) diversion will be signed from the eastern side of the closure, northerly via Spring Rd and Whinbank Rd, left onto Horndale Ave then south westerly along School Aycliffe Ln to the A6072 roundabout junction with B6444 to the western side of the closure and vice versa. The maximum duration of the Order is 18 months. The proposed works are to commence from 11pm on 20/1/21 until 7am on 21/1/21. On occasions, alternative dates for closure may be necessary and these will be signed accordingly.

Dated: 22nd January 2021



Helen Lynch  
Head of Legal & Democratic Services  
County Hall, Durham DH1 5UL

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# Why Are Lockdowns and Social Distancing Important During the Pandemic?

Dear Sir,

As a scientist at the beginning of 2020, looking at past pandemics, such as the Spanish Flu, Cholera and the Black Death, the potential that this unknown rising virus had was unthinkable. At first, people thought that it would arise to nothing, blanket statements of 'don't panic' could be heard all over the news. However, a year on since the first recorded cases, the Coronavirus outbreak has the potential to become one of the deadliest pandemics of all time, with millions of deaths predicted worldwide by the end of 2021.

However, what is unnerving is the number of people who still do not take this virus and the precautions put in place, such as lockdowns and social distancing, seriously; "Seasonal flu kills more people than COVID-19", "...lockdown will do nothing...", "...we should just let the virus run its course...", are among some of the statements we hear regularly.

So why are measures such as lockdowns and social distancing important during this pandemic?

Well, there is something called the basic reproduction number.

This is the number of people that can catch the virus from an infected person, assuming there is no immunity. For example, if you are infected with the virus and infect your partner, Grandma and neighbour, then you've infected 3 people in total. Think of this as a chain reaction, you infect some people, they themselves then go on to infect others, and so the chain continues, and the infection levels increase.

What is not known, is what the average rate of infection is for COVID-19.

It appears that this number is variable, when we are not socially distancing and wearing masks, that rate is higher because more people are being infected by the virus. If there is a lockdown, and people are isolating, then this rate will reduce and, generally, the virus will be spread in smaller numbers. As a rule, the stronger the lockdown, the more the rate will drop.

Now, let's put this in the perspective of healthcare capacity. If we let the virus roam free, with no restrictions, then the virus reproduction number would increase. There are restricted bed spaces as well as limited numbers of doctors and nurses, and the higher that reproduction number gets, more people will require hospitalisation. This will result in more people receiving inadequate treatment as a result of an overwhelmed NHS. Put simply, if we stay at home, that virus reproduction number decreases, and the NHS can run safely - providing care to those who desperately need it.

Maria O'Hanlon

PhD Student - National Horizons Centre (Teesside University)

# Too Late To Avoid Climate Change?

Dear Sir,

Paul Howell MP has indeed helped to get Brexit DONE! And so will many electors discover they have been, as the reality of Brexit, as opposed to the fantasy world portrayed by Leave supporters, becomes increasingly apparent.

Brexit was an avoidable calamity, but we are now stuck with it. However, it may not yet be too late to avoid Climate Change, which is a disaster that threatens everyone in the world, and not, as with Brexit, only us here in the UK. And John D Clare is working to try and prevent this disaster from happening, rather than helping to inflict one upon us. I know whom I consider has, and is, doing more for the town.

Alan Jordan, Middridge

*Humorous stories reproduced from newspapers from around the world*

*"A dopey pot-smoker spent her birthday in jail - after asking police to help her find her drugs stash. Shane Walker was planning to celebrate her 25th birthday when she realised her marijuana had been stolen by her boyfriend. She called officers in Charleston, West Virginia - and even told them she planned to sell the drugs to pay for a birthday treat."*



## Financial Balance Sheet

(October 2019 to September 2020)

We have, at last, received the signed off accounts for the last financial year. Normally the Balance Sheet would have been circulated in November and presented to members attending an AGM in December. Obviously, due to the pandemic and lockdown periods, the normal procedures couldn't be actioned.

Any members wanting to receive a copy of the Balance Sheet please follow the steps below:

**- Email a request to: [nawmcthebigclub@outlook.com](mailto:nawmcthebigclub@outlook.com)**

*Please include your Name, Home Address, Loyalty Card Number or Club Membership Number. Membership details will be checked against the 2020 register before sending a Balance Sheet.*

A copy of the Balance Sheet will be emailed back in a timely manner. If there are any questions relating to the contents of the Balance Sheet, please submit them by replying to the received email. This will provide a line of traceability.

Replies to questions will also be dealt with in a timely manner.

The request window is now open and will close on Sunday 31st January 2021.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The Balance Sheet is a confidential document and can only be shared with members of the Club.

Many Thanks, NAWMC Management Team.



**"Unbelievable service today!**

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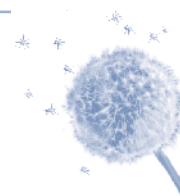
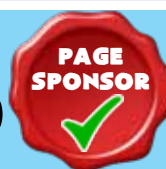


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**Updates from MP Paul Howell at 12noon daily**

### 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

**"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	A DJ

### 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

**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	Paul's Down Time	Paul Kjenstad
10-12am	Sean's Sunday Set List	Sean Lawless

### MONDAY to FRIDAY DAILY

10-12am	Golden Years	Paul Baker
12-1pm	A to Z of Pop (Mon, Tues & Wed)	Richard Smith
12-1pm	Call Me No 1 (Tues & Thurs)	Richard Smith
1-2pm	Memory Lane	Colin McNeillie
2-4pm	Afternoon Aycliffe	Paul Baker

### MONDAY

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

6-7pm	Mystery Year	Paul Baker
7.30-11pm	Northern & Classic Soul	Kevin Sowerby

### WEDNESDAY

5-6.30pm	Joey's Jukebox	Joey Collins
8-10pm	Alternative Aycliffe	Gaz n Alby

### THURSDAY

6-8pm	The List	Colin McNeillie
8-10pm	BeatRoote	Graeme Roote

### FRIDAY

6-8pm	Techno Trance Mix	PVR Studios
8-10pm	29th Jan - BeatRoote House Mix	
10-12am	Alternative Aycliffe (R)	Gaz n Alby
12-2am	Night Club Session	A DJ

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

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## Greenfield Arts Support a Creative Exchange



Greenfield Arts are busy supporting creativity in the community and are looking forward to encouraging a creative exchange that will inspire originality and an opportunity to produce new work. Although the arts facility is presently closed the team are working to bring about new innovative opportunities that will quench our thirst for creativity. Greenfield Arts are working alongside professional photographer Elaine Vizor to publish a new magazine. 'Our Place' will boast a collection of images, stories and recipes with some top tips from artist and photographer Elaine. We will be calling out for contributions that will form a creative exchange that we can share and support each other's creativity. Guidelines allowing, Elaine will be launching the new venture with an outdoor walk where you can explore and share your photography with others and find out tips and ideas to capture the changing seasons. The walk is scheduled for 2 March, visit our website to find out more and to register your interest for this one-off activity. Greenfield Arts are committed to providing high quality arts and creative opportunities that encourage creativity, questioning and curiosity. To find out more about us please visit [www.greenfield-arts.co.uk](http://www.greenfield-arts.co.uk)

## Have Your Say . . .

Residents across County Durham are being invited to take part in a survey about digital services over the next month. Durham County Council is hoping the survey will help to identify any barriers facing people across the county, in a bid to improve access for its users.

Since March, more than 26,000 residents have created an online account to access the council's digital services.

The results of the survey will be used to further improve access by identifying whether better information, training or equipment would help more people move online.

Residents have until 25 January 2021 to take part in the survey.

It can be completed online at <https://wh1.snapsurveys.com/s.asp?k=160683861188>.

A paper copy of the survey can also be requested by calling 03000 260 000. These can either be posted back or dropped in to collection boxes at Newton Aycliffe leisure centre.

They can also be returned to the following libraries: Barnard Castle, Bishop Auckland, Chester-le-Street, Consett, Crook, Durham Clayport, Newton Aycliffe, Peterlee, Seaham, Shildon, Spennymoor and Stanley.

Cllr Andrea Patterson, Cabinet member for corporate services and rural issues, said: "It is important that we continue to innovate and improve the quality of our online services. As well as working in better and smarter ways to support our residents, we want to be able to remove access barriers and help more people access our online services in a way that is convenient to them.

"Digital services provide a lot of flexibility and widen the range of ways residents can access council services. I would encourage everyone to complete the survey and I look forward to seeing the results in January to help inform our next steps."



# Reshaping the Way Maternity Services are Delivered



The maternity service for County Durham and Darlington is rolling out a new way of working from this month that will mean mums to be will have the same midwife caring for them in pregnancy, during and after their baby's birth. The continuity of carer initiative will be piloted in Stanley, County Durham, where pregnant ladies will have one of a small team of midwives caring for them through every step of their journey. Each lady will also have a second 'buddy' midwife. Amy Matthews, continuity of carer team lead and project midwife, at County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, explains, "The project is part of a national drive to

improve birth outcomes for families and their new babies and there are huge advantages to women in having continuity of carer during pregnancy. They and their families can get to know their named midwife and develop a strong relationship with them. A trusting relationship makes it easier and more likely they'll raise any worries or problems they're experiencing that could impact them or their baby - crucial to identifying concerns early. While women will have a single midwife leading their care, their 'buddy' midwife will step in when their colleague can't be with them for whatever reason. "The new scheme will apply whether the baby is planned to be born in hospital or at home. The team we've established - The Infinity Team - is made up of experienced midwives from both a community and hospital background, plus a maternity care assistant, and myself. We already work closely with GP practices in Stanley, some of whom will be involved in the pilot. We'll also continue working closely with health visitors and, in most cases, will still transfer care to them at between 10-14 days after the baby is born. We're very excited about the pilot which will, in time, be extended across County Durham and Darlington community midwifery teams - we hope it will bring many benefits for families and their babies."

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**OFSTED quote:** "Playday Nursery offers an outstanding provision with high quality teaching provided by highly qualified staff."

## Sensible Opinions

Dear Sir,  
**In response to Mr. Alastair P. G. Welsh, Newton News 15 Jan 2021.**

We are constantly hearing in the media about extinctions occurring now and in the past and one reason they say is climate change. Scientists speculate about why most of the dinosaurs went extinct and a very popular theory is climate change caused by an asteroid strike.

I really can't see how climate change can't cause extinctions and as for it being a crisis, it depends on your point of view. As far as the fact that he will be unlucky for it to happen in his life time, or for that matter mine also (I'm 72), I'll think about that. I get a lot of my opinions from David Attenborough, he seems like a very sensible person. Covering so many topics, as Mr. Welsh does, he's bound to hit on something true and if I was to dissect everything he says it would fill this entire magazine. John Parlour, Newton Aycliffe.



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## Where Have all the Reserve Funds Gone?

Dear Sir,  
Reference: Proposed Increase for Policing.  
In the Newton News last week the acting Police and Crime Commissioner is going to seek the opinion of the residents of Durham and Darlington on the ideas and schemes we would like to see the tax invested in.  
It is also stated that he intends to increase the Police contribution element by £15 for Band D dwellings. Whilst also mentioning that none of the increase will go to fund the new custody suite, 21 million pounds.  
We have been told that the increases in previous council tax rises were vital to ongoing police commitments, so how did they manage to under spend by 21 million and still say the increases were and are vitally warranted?  
Can I point out that the increase for Band A type dwelling in 2018/19 was 7.1%, £120.83 in total. Then in 2019/20 by 13.2%, £136 in total. This was an increase of £15.17 from the previous year and these figures have been taken from my council tax bills. My contribution must be going up as they do year on year.  
The Commissioner states he wants the permitted maximum increase, does this mean no increase for Band A?  
Can he now tell me how a Band D is only going to pay £1.13p more than I did last year - the figures do not seem correct?  
Can we also all be reassured that he will not be starting another slush fund (sorry, slip of the tongue) a new and better reserve fund, this year. Can I also add that I have only seen six PCSOs since last September, 4 of which were on the same day. What will the numbers increase to in the coming year?  
I thought that County Durham Police HQ had recently been built, did they furnish it with kit that was obsolete or past its sell by date? So what new equipment do they require?  
To conclude, if the Police have £21 million in reserve, can we also assume that the Fire Department, Great Aycliffe Town Council, and not forgetting Durham County Council - have they also got reserve funds?  
Name and address supplied

## Aycliffe Secure Centre Praised for Outstanding Care of its Young People



A County Durham young people's home continues to provide outstanding care for young people, according to Ofsted. Aycliffe Secure Centre, which provides a secure and caring home for vulnerable young people between the ages of 10 and 18, was judged as outstanding across all areas in 2019 and received an assurance visit last month from Ofsted which again highly praised the quality of care at the home.  
Findings from November's visit praised staff for building supportive relationships with young people and for being nurturing in their care of young people with complex needs.  
The report noted that healthcare staff at the centre, including the commissioned mental health service, have ensured that young people can access regular support for their physical and mental health and wellbeing.  
The centre, which is run by Durham County Council, has recently revamped its gym facilities to include a range of high-standard weight and cardio machines to allow young people to enjoy physical exercise and support their emotional wellbeing.  
Gym programmes are individually developed by PE teachers at the centre's school and all young people are provided with a gym induction.  
A park area with swings has been recently developed and includes areas for outdoor games such as chess. This couples with a designated horticultural area with electricity-run polytunnels for use all year round.  
The horticultural area forms part of the centre's school curriculum and benefits young people through their enjoyment of being able to grow food while allowing them to develop qualifications where appropriate.  
All of these developments further enhance the opportunities for young people at the centre to achieve life skills and qualifications for the future.  
Multi-agency staff have also been using a range of resources to help young people to understand the changing situation of the coronavirus pandemic.  
For example, staff have been using social stories to explain the reasons for imposed restrictions and have introduced wellness packs to enhance young people's well-being.  
The Ofsted inspector commented that staff have proactively supported young people to maintain relationships with families and professionals during periods of coronavirus restrictions.

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## Parliament Talk

Tel: 01325 790580 - Email: [paul.howell.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:paul.howell.mp@parliament.uk)

Another interesting week that included me joining two parish council meetings, one at Middridge and one at Fishburn. Both, of course, virtual. Whilst very different places they both can have similar problems, typically things like planning and traffic. I like getting to these meetings when I can as the Parish Councillors are properly in touch with their local issues and at the moment it is difficult to get into communities to listen myself. As I have said before the range of subject areas I engage in is beyond interesting and this week included meeting an energy efficiency company; a round table discussion on vaccine misinformation; a discussion on getting to zero and a briefing from the Department for International Trade on the continuity deals from leaving the EU. The Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, joined us at the virtual 1922 Committee. As a reminder this is a committee formed from all the back bench Conservative members of Parliament. I also had a meeting with Save the Children who wanted to discuss the work we are doing in the Left Behind Neighbourhoods APPG. Our next meeting of the APPG is on the 26th January when we will be discussing infrastructure under the heading of Buses, Broadband and Beeching. I recorded an interview for Radio 4 on Sedgefield, the red, now blue, wall and the Northern Research Group. This should be broadcast in the next week or so. I am a member of the NRG who are working to support the government in identifying the policies that are particularly important to the north. Other discussions included with East Durham Running; EMAG (who are campaigning on the Equitable Life scandal). I also had sessions with Nadhim Zahawi, the Vaccines minister; Mark Spencer, the Chief Whip, Therese Coffey, the Secretary of State for DWP and education ministers Vicky Ford and Nick Gibb. I had the opportunity to talk with Wingate Nursery School about the pressures they are facing and to then raise these with the Secretary of State for Education in the chamber as I had drawn a question. In case you didn't know, when it comes to questions in the House of Commons to ministers we put our names forward and there is then a draw to see who gets to ask a question. As these are mostly

virtual now, demand is high and we don't get as many opportunities as normal. As you can see I have real engagement opportunities despite the constraints of Covid so if you have something you want raising with ministers please get in touch. Monday was brew Monday where we met representatives from Samaritans and had a virtual cuppa with them on line to both promote their work and to hear how the pandemic was impacting them. For the first time for a few weeks I was able to go and volunteer with the Play Cafe crew at the Big Club. It's a pleasure to help them and it also gives me the opportunity to hear the sort of issues they are trying to help. Monday ended with a meeting with the rail minister where I once again promoted the need to support our local infrastructure needs in Ferryhill station and the Leamside line. BEIS select committee this week had us questioning Alok Sharma, President of COP26, on progress and planning for this critical event before then questioning the new Secretary of State for BEIS, Kwasi Kwarteng, on the Energy White Paper and other issues. These included Brexit, Covid 19 and the Mineworkers pension scheme. If you would like to watch them, these sessions are live on Parliament.tv or you can go to watch later on catch up. Our next few weeks Sedgefield virtual surgeries, all held at 3.00pm on Thursdays, are to cover Covid19 specific enquiries; Education; Benefits assistance; Council Services; Crime; Community issues; Housing and Broadband. If you want to talk to us on any of these please call or email the office and we can book a slot. If the time doesn't suit you please call anyway and we will sort something for you. I am delighted that the North East are leading the way on the vaccination roll out and, of course, that the UK to is one of the best in the world at getting vaccines into arms. As I write we seem to be seeing a start to the infection rates falling which, hopefully, will then manifest itself in reduced pressure on our NHS. It's great that we are seeing the vaccine rolling out at pace but remember it takes a couple of weeks to get immunity in your system and we don't know yet whether, even if you are immunised, you could still carry and transmit Covid to others. So whether you have been immunised or not please continue to follow the rules: **Stay Home, Save Lives and Protect our NHS** Paul Howell, Member of Parliament for Sedgefield

## Xmas Drink & Drug Drive Campaign

248 people were arrested during a Christmas campaign across Cleveland and Durham to target drink and drug drivers. The national Christmas drink and drug drive campaign took place from 1st December for around a month, to tackle those who get behind the wheel whilst under the influence. Drink and drug driving is one of the main four causes of fatal collisions, alongside speeding, distraction and not wearing a seatbelt.

A total of 991 drivers were stopped and checked for alcohol and drugs across the two counties during the campaign. Officers from the Cleveland and Durham Specialist Operations Unit carried out the tests alongside colleagues from Cleveland Special Constabulary.

In Durham, there were 103 arrests; 59 for drivers suspected of being over the limit for alcohol and 44 suspected of driving under the influence of drugs.

In Cleveland, there were 145 arrests made; 38 for drivers suspected of being over the limit for alcohol and 107 suspected of driving under the influence of drugs.

Inspector Jamie Bell, from the Cleveland and Durham Specialist Operations Unit, said: "One driver getting behind the wheel with drugs or alcohol in their system is enough to kill someone, so to have 248 drivers suspected of being under the influence throughout December in Cleveland and Durham is shocking.

"It is unthinkable that drivers continue to put their lives and the lives of other road users at risk despite the warnings, and it won't be tolerated in Cleveland and Durham.

"Emergency services have enough to deal with during the ongoing pandemic without unnecessary tragedies at the hands of irresponsible drivers.

"This campaign has demonstrated that there are a minority of people out there who still think it's acceptable to drive whilst intoxicated, whatever the cost may be, so we will do everything in our power to stop them, put them before the courts and bring them to justice."

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# Durham Town Hall's History to be Preserved

Work is set to be carried out at a historic Durham City building to preserve its heritage for centuries to come.

Durham Town Hall has been central to the city from as far back as the 14th century and is a popular site to learn about County Durham's heritage.

The building has attracted almost 16,000 visitors since Durham County Council opened it to the public in November 2018, with people stopping by each Saturday to learn about the Prince Bishops who ruled the county from the 11th Century, the evolution of local government, or how the town hall developed from the first timber structure of

1356 to the complex building it is today. However, under coronavirus restrictions, Durham Town Hall has been closed to the public since 5 November.

This closure is to be extended through spring 2021 to allow the council to carry out a wide range of external and internal repairs, maintenance, conservation and restoration to preserve the building and the artefacts within.

Cllr Joy Allen, Durham County Council's Cabinet member for transformation, culture and tourism, said: "We have some stunning artefacts and historical pieces on display at Durham Town Hall spanning across the county's rich history which, along with the fantastic architecture of the building itself, deserve to be preserved. These important works are being carried out to make sure this historical site can be enjoyed by generations to come."

"We look forward to completing these works and welcoming visitors back in the near future and for many more years to follow."

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# New Year, Fresh Hope

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cope,

We've learned to appreciate life anew,  
We take time to 'smell the coffee,'  
Enjoy the view.

Stop on our socially distanced walk,  
To say hello and have a talk.

Wave to our neighbours,  
as they clear snow from their path,  
Giving the children some fun and laugh,  
As they sit on their sleds and shout with  
glee,

Just as childhood is meant to be,  
Spring is coming and the bulbs will pop  
through,

Filling us with hope anew,  
The circle of life continues on,  
And the human spirit remains so strong,  
We're being taught to enjoy life's small  
things,

There is still so much to make our hearts  
sing.

MMK January 2021

# Light at the End of the Tunnel

Social care workers express relief at receiving Covid-19 vaccine

Keyworkers caring for some of County Durham's most vulnerable residents have begun to receive their Covid-19 vaccines at a new dedicated centre.

This week, a vaccination centre opened at County Hall in Durham City to vaccinate frontline social care workers, including those employed by Durham County Council, the NHS and the independent sector.

The centre will operate seven days a week, from 8am to 8pm, to ensure those working with elderly people and children and adults with complex needs are offered vaccines as quickly and efficiently as possible. It is anticipated up to 10,000 social care workers will be vaccinated at the centre over the next five weeks.

Meagan Hodgson, a home care worker at Maple Court Extra Care facility in Consett, and Tim Carter, operations supervisor at Chester View Extra Care facility in Ouston, near Chester-le-Street, were among the first to receive their initial dose of the vaccine.

Meagan has worked at Maple Court for three years and is one of a team of care workers providing domiciliary care to the facility's elderly tenants. This ranges from personal care and assisting with medication, to wellbeing checks. The latter has proven particularly important during the pandemic when the residents have been unable to see their families and friends.

Meagan said: "It's been a very stressful year as although we are incredibly careful and have robust processes in place, every time I come into work I have been worried I might inadvertently pass on the virus to the tenants. When we heard the first vaccine had been approved, we felt so relieved and it was the same when I was invited to make my appointment this week. It's just such a huge relief, not for myself but for the protection of the vulnerable people I care for." Tim has been leading a team of care workers at Chester View since September and has worked in adult social care for the council for 25 years.

"It's been an incredibly tough time, but the vaccine means there is finally light at the end of the tunnel," he said.

"It's our way of fighting back against the virus. The team here have been working incredibly hard to keep our tenants safe and well, and now that we are getting the vaccine, it offers that extra level of protection."

Along with other local authorities across the country, Durham County Council was asked to identify frontline social care workers to be vaccinated as part of the NHS's national vaccination programme.

These employees have been prioritised in terms of the nature of their role and the vulnerability of the people they are caring for and the lists have been shared with the NHS. This week, the NHS began to contact staff to offer appointments, with the first taking place at County Hall yesterday (Tuesday).

All other council staff will be vaccinated in line with the NHS guidance. Members of the public are asked not to contact the council to request an appointment, as the centre is only providing the vaccine to frontline social care staff who will be contacted by the NHS directly.

Cllr Lucy Hovvels, Durham County Council's Cabinet member for adults and health services, said: "Our social care workers support some of the county's most vulnerable people and so we are delighted to be assisting the NHS to ensure they receive their Covid-19 vaccines as quickly as possible."

"I know how much this means to dedicated keyworkers such as Tim and Meagan, who have continued to provide the personal care their tenants need throughout the pandemic. These vaccinations are about protecting the people they care for; people who are more likely to become seriously ill if they catch coronavirus."

"The vaccination programme is a sign of great progress, but it is important those who have had their first dose continue to follow the rules, as they are not yet fully protected and could still pass on the virus. This includes social distancing and wearing a face covering in places where it is hard to stay away from other people."

Cllr Hovvels added: "I would like to thank all of our keyworkers for their dedication during this difficult time, the scientists who have developed the vaccines and those working so hard to deliver the vaccination programme that will save hundreds of thousands of lives."

For more information about the national vaccination programme, visit [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/)

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near McColls, close  
to the bench where  
the slope is into the  
water, on Sunday 17th  
January whilst feeding  
the ducks.  
If found please contact  
Newton News.

## Sudoku

5		9			8			6
	6		3		2			9
		8		5	9			4
	3		8			4		5
	5				4		8	3
9	8			3			6	
8		6	5			9		
		5	4	9				8
7						5	4	



# Don't Miss the Self Assessment Deadline

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is calling on the North East's 290,700 Self Assessment customers not to miss the 31 January deadline.

The 2019-20 tax return can be finalised at any time up to the deadline but HMRC is encouraging customers to complete it early to allow for more time to pay their tax bill or set up a payment plan.

Customers must complete a Self Assessment return if:

- they've earned more than £2,500 from renting out property
- they've received, or their partner has received, Child Benefit and either of them had an annual income of more than £50,000
- they've received more than £2,500 in other untaxed income, for example from tips or commission
- they are a self-employed sole trader whose annual turnover is over £1,000
- they are an employee claiming expenses in excess of £2,500
- they have an annual income of over £100,000
- they have earned income from abroad that they need to pay tax on.

HMRC's Interim Director General of Customer Services, Karl Khan, said: "The 31st January deadline for tax returns is still a week away, but customers don't have to wait until then. We're encouraging them to beat the rush and get their tax returns in now. We know that many people are

affected by the coronavirus pandemic this year and we're here to help if they need to spread the cost of their tax bill. It's quick and easy to set up a payment plan online and there's no need to call us to set it up."

Once Self Assessment customers have completed their 2019-20 tax return, and know how much tax is owed, they can set up their own payment plan to help spread the cost of their tax liabilities, up to the value of £30,000. They can use the self-serve Time to Pay facility to set up monthly direct debits and this can all be done online. Interest will be applied to any outstanding balance from 1 February 2021.

To find out if they're eligible, customers can visit GOV.UK to learn more about the service.

Customers can also now check on GOV.UK whether they need to declare, or possibly pay tax, on any 'casual' income they receive. The new interactive guidance is quick and easy to use and explains what individuals need to do if they receive non-PAYE income from:

- selling things, for example at car boot sales or auctions, or online
- doing casual jobs such as gardening, food delivery or babysitting
- charging other people for using your equipment or tools
- renting out property or part of their home, including for holidays (for example, through an agency or online).

Be aware of copycat HMRC websites and phishing scams. Customers should always type in the full online address [www.gov.uk/hmrc](http://www.gov.uk/hmrc) to get the correct link for filing their Self Assessment return online securely and free of charge. They also need to be alert if someone calls, emails or texts claiming to be from HMRC, saying that they can claim financial help, are due a tax refund or owe tax. It might be a scam. Check GOV.UK for information on how to recognise genuine HMRC contact.

## Obituary

### Donald McKenzie Fraser

of Newton Aycliffe. Peacefully on 6th January, aged 92 years.

Husband of the late Sheila; a much loved Dad to Lesley, Katrine and the late Fiona; a dear Grandad, Great Grandad, Father-in-Law and friend to many.

Due to the current circumstances a private family funeral Service will take place at St. Clare's Church on Thursday 28th January at 1.45pm, to be followed by Committal at Wear Valley Crematorium. Family flowers only, donations in lieu, if so desired, may be made to The Royal British Legion.

### John Pollock

Passed away at home, in the arms of his loved ones, aged 80 years, on Thursday 14th January 2021.

Beloved Husband of the late Frances; much loved Dad of Cyd, Lee and Son-in-Law Malcolm; dearly loved Grandad of Jordan, Lois, Greg, Bret and Grandson-in-Law Daniel and loved Great Grandad of Bayley and Bobby. Funeral to take place on Thursday 28th January, 3.30pm at Wear Valley Crematorium, Coundon. Family and friends please meet at the Crematorium.

### Roy Reed

Aged 71

Passed away suddenly on 12th January 2021. Husband of the late Carol; loving Dad of Steven, Lara and the late Julie; Father-in-Law of Stuart; Son of Elsie and the late Roy Reed; loving Grandad and Great Grandpops; loving Brother, Uncle, Nephew and Cousin; Brother-in-Law and good friend to many. Funeral to be held on Thursday 28th January 2021, 1.30pm at Wear Valley Crematorium. Family flowers only, donations in lieu, to Macmillan Nurses.

## Acknowledgement

### Patricia Hanson (nee Hood)

23rd December 2020 The family of the late Patricia "Tricia" Hanson would like to thank all our friends and neighbours for the beautiful condolence cards which we have received.

We would also like to thank Daniel from Bewick Crescent Surgery and the team of Community and Macmillan nurses for their professional help and support.

Thank you to Father Cornforth for the lovely Service and also Bryan Shepherd and his team at Whitehouse Funeral Service who were professional, as they battled through the snow and blizzards. Lastly, a thank you to the residents in Langley Road who came out with shovels to ensure the road and path was clear so the cortège could proceed.

### Terence Woodward (Terry)

of Newton Aycliffe, passed away peacefully on 8th January.

A much loved Husband, Dad, Father-in-Law, Grandad and Great Grandad. Family and friends please meet for a funeral Service at Darlington Crematorium on Tuesday 26th January at 2.15pm. Bright colours please at the family's request.

## Congratulations

### Jordan Louise Kjenstad

**Happy 21st Birthday**  
22nd January 2021  
You are the best Sister ever, happy birthday. Love from your Brother, Jack xxx

### Jordan Louise Kjenstad

**Happy 21st Birthday**  
22nd January 2021  
Enjoy your special day. Love from Mam and Dad xxxxx

### Jordan Louise Kjenstad

**21 Today**  
22nd January 2021  
Enjoy your day and we will eventually go out and celebrate once we are allowed but enjoy your takeaway. Love from Gran xxx Grandad Alan xxx



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# Anwen Construction Lays the Foundations for Growth with Tough, Practical 3.5t FUSO Canter

Anwen Construction has never been busier – so the County Durham-based firm has just commissioned its first FUSO Canter, to help it stay on top of current and projected demand for its groundworks services.

With many businesses reporting pandemic-related confidence issues, the family-owned operator's Financial Director struck a refreshingly optimistic note. "We've plenty in hand right now and there's lots more business out there," said Damian Stevenson. "We're currently tendering for work which, if it all came our way, would keep us going for five or six years. That scale of opportunity is unheard of." Established nearly 30 years ago by proprietor and Managing Director Andrew Bosomworth, Anwen Construction has a head office in Newton Aycliffe. It works primarily in the North-East but has also undertaken projects as far afield as the Scottish Borders and Manchester. The latest addition to the company's fleet arrived via local dealer Bell Truck and Van. A 3.5-tonne Canter 3C13 model, it is fitted with a bespoke tipping dropside body built by Dependable Bodies, of Gateshead. Anwen Construction acquired its new truck with the help of competitive funding from Mercedes-Benz Finance – like other FUSO Dealers in Britain, Bell Truck and Van also sells and supports commercial vehicles



bearing the three-pointed star. The operator also runs a number of vans and a pair of tippers by other manufacturers, one a 7.5-tonner, the other a 3.5-tonner. Whereas the latter has van-based underpinnings, the Canter – although it shares the same gross weight – is built around a rugged ladder frame chassis and has twin rear wheels.

"Given some of the rough sites on which we work, its strength and durability were certainly key to the Canter's appeal," explained Mr Stevenson. "It's as compact and manoeuvrable as a van, and any member of our team can drive it on a car licence. Make no mistake though, this is a proper little truck, and we've bought it to do a proper day's work."

Anwen Construction's Canter has a 2,500mm wheelbase – the shortest of the four available – and offers a highly competitive payload allowance of 980kg. Its fuel-efficient 3.0-litre common-rail turbodiesel produces 96 kW (130 hp) and 300 Nm of torque at 1,300-3,000 rpm, and drives through a five-speed manual gearbox.

Anwen Construction serves local authorities and other public sector clients, as well as industrial concerns. However, the company's recent and anticipated growth owes much to its specialisation in the provision of fully supervised and quality-controlled sub-structure installations for private housing and retirement living developers.

The Canter is assigned to general duties and carries aggregates such as gravel and sand, as well as bricks and blocks, paving slabs and drainage materials, to and from sites. The operator anticipates running it for at least three years.

"The intensive, demanding nature of our work means that vehicles can quickly become tired," continued Mr Stevenson. "While they're in service though, it's essential they're always in the right place at the right time. I've every confidence that our new tipper will live up to the FUSO brand reputation for toughness and reliability."

"While Bell supplied the chassis from stock, and at short notice, we were able to design

the body to our precise specification, so that it incorporates a number of detail features which mean it is perfectly customised to our requirements. As a result, despite the initial reservations you'll always get when implementing any kind of change, the vehicle has been very well received by those colleagues who are now using it."

He added: "Bell Truck and Van's Truck Sales Executive, Craig Graham, provided an excellent service. The communication was clear, consistent and honest throughout, which is all we would ever ask for."

"These are still early days, of course, but our initial perceptions of the Dealer are entirely positive. So, providing its pricing is competitive, we'll certainly be giving Bell Truck and Van the opportunity to maintain our Canter."

[www.anwenconstructionltd.com](http://www.anwenconstructionltd.com)

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