

one January 2024
Darlington

number forty



**Forty reasons to
love MonGay!**



Burn Right

-  Are you burning the right type of fuel in your log burner or stove?
-  Do you know if you live in a smoke control area?
-  Are you complying with the law?

Most of Darlington falls within a smoke control area and there are certain restrictions on the type of appliance or stove you can install and the type of fuel you can burn.



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Learn what you can burn at

www.darlington.gov.uk/burnright

or scan this QR code



Welcome to One Darlington

Happy New Year! Welcome to the first One Darlington of 2024 – we hope you had a fantastic Christmas and are looking forward to the year ahead, and all that it may bring.

The decorations have gone back in their box for another year and spring is just a few short weeks away.

In this edition, we meet some of the hardworking staff who make the council tick – including ecologist Lauren (pages 16 and 17), engineer Sara (page 22) and members of the quality assurance team (page 26).

Elsewhere in the magazine, we look ahead to this year's police and crime commissioner and Tees Valley mayoral elections in May (pages 8 and 9), as well as previewing next month's jobs fair which will feature around 100 exhibitors.

Children's and adult services, which help support some of the most vulnerable people in our communities, account for the biggest share of the council's annual budget. You can find out more about the budget, including how to have your say on what's being proposed, on pages 10 and 11.

Also in this issue, on page 15, we look back at the 70th anniversary of the Darlington Town Twinning and International Association and pay tribute to its vice-chair Lukasz Samek, who died last year aged 43.

There's still plenty to look forward to now the Christmas festivities are over - check out the centre pages for your guide to all that's coming up in the next few weeks.

Thank you, as ever, for reading One Darlington. We hope you enjoy this issue. See you in March, when we'll be celebrating our 50th edition!

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Cover image by Chris Booth.

One Darlington, Room 106, Town Hall, Darlington.

Email editor@onedarlington.org.uk

Design and production – Xentrall Shared Services.

Distribution – Smart Distribution Solutions.

The next issue will be out in early March. If you haven't received your copy by mid-March, please call 0800 160 1552.

An audio and online version of One Darlington is also available at www.darlington.gov.uk/onedarlington

Rainbow over
the town centre

A year in reflection

Council leader Steve Harker and deputy leader Chris McEwan look back on 2023 and ahead to 2024



2023 was another year marked by considerable challenges. Residents and businesses continued to grapple with the high cost of living, high inflation and financial challenges. On pages 10 and 11 you can read more about how the council is tackling its own financial challenges.

We have also seen the reopening of the newly refurbished library. The new Hopetown visitor attraction approaches completion. Brunswick Street was announced as the site of the new Treasury building, which will bring hundreds of jobs to Darlington. And, we won a Britain in Bloom gold medal.

As we look ahead to 2024, our focus remains unwavering. Our vision is to ensure Darlington remains a vibrant and thriving place to live, with opportunities for all.



I have witnessed first-hand the strength that arises when a community comes together. Meeting challenges demands a holistic approach. Through open communication and shared responsibility, we find innovative solutions.

One standout achievement was the implementation of sustainable initiatives to address environmental concerns. Darlington has made significant strides toward becoming greener and more eco-conscious— with the council bringing forward by ten years its commitment to a carbon-neutral future.



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We all stand together at the threshold of a new year. Our community has demonstrated resilience, adaptability, and a genuine care for one another. It is these qualities that fuel our optimism for the future.

In 2024, our commitment is not only to address the challenges that may arise, but to proactively shape the narrative of Darlington's progress. We extend our gratitude to the residents, businesses, and organisations that make Darlington the wonderful place it is.

Together, let us continue building a community that thrives in the face of adversity and embraces the opportunities that lie ahead.

Happy New Year

Steve & Chris

Contact your councillor

Key: (C) Conservative
(G) Green (I) Independent
(L) Labour (LD) Liberal Democrats

Your councillor is there to listen to you and find out about the issues that are affecting life in your ward. Scheduled ward surgeries are detailed below, but you can email or call your local councillor.

Find out more at www.darlington.gov.uk

Emailing councillors

To email your councillor, their email address is firstname.lastname@darlington.gov.uk

For example, if you want to email Stephen Harker, type Stephen.harker@darlington.gov.uk

The only exception is Anne-Marie Curry (North Road) whose email address is shown with her contact details.

BANK TOP AND LASCELLES

Andrew Anderson (L) Tel: 07837 225041; **Helen Crumbie (L)** Tel: 07743 191014; **David Ray (L)** Tel: 07966 048647.

BRINKBURN AND FAVERDALE

Rebecca Baker (L) Tel: 07805 806420. West Park Academy, Monday 15 January and 19 February, 5-6pm. **David Beckett (L)** Tel: 07982 847837. West Park Academy, Wednesday 7 February and 6 March, 6-7pm. **Scott Durham (C)** Tel: 07805 505156. The Brinkburn, Tuesday 6 February, 7-8pm; and The White Heifer that Travelled, Tuesday 5 March, 7-8pm.

COCKERTON

Jan Cossins (L) Tel: 241124; **Jim Garner (L)** Tel: 241384; **Neil Johnson (L)** Tel: 07504 227351. Cockerton Methodist Church, Friday 12 January, 9 February and 8 March, 10-11am.

COLLEGE

Bryony Holroyd (G) Tel: 07570 776553; **Matthew Snedker (G)** Tel: 07780 807059. Abbey Junior School, Monday 15 January and 12 February, 6-7pm.

EASTBOURNE

Joe Dillon (L) Tel: 07939 221166. Pilmoor Green Community Centre, Monday 29 January and 26 February, 6-7pm. **Jonathan Dulston (C)** Tel: 07775 555251. The Wheatshaf, Yarm Road, Friday 2 February, 5-6pm; and Firthmoor Community Centre, Wednesday 10 January and 6 March, 3-4pm. **Kevin Nicholson (I)** Tel: 07791 807629. Firthmoor Community Centre, Wednesday 17 January and 21 February, 6-7pm.

HARROWGATE HILL

Roz Henderson (G) Tel: 07967 213584; **Richard Lawley (G)** Tel: 07779 993336; **Anna-Maria Toms (G)** Tel: 07954 719211. St Mark's Church Hall, Thursday 11 January and 15 February, 6-7pm; and Elim Pentecostal Church, Monday 29 January and 26 February, 1.30-2.30pm.

HAUGHTON AND SPRINGFIELD

Chris McEwan (L) Tel: 07947 016598; **Dawn Storr (L)** Tel: 07543 159224; **Nick Wallis (L)** Tel: 07960 247554. Asda foyer, Saturday 3 February and 2 March, 10-11am.

HEIGHTON AND CONISCLIFFE

Paul Crudass (C) Tel: 374537; **Gerald Lee (C)** Tel: 314622. Brafferton Village Hall, Saturday 3 February, 10-11am and St Edwin's Church Hall, Saturday 2 March, 10-11am.

HUMMERSKNOTT

Kate Mammolotti (G) Tel: 07949 222733; **Thomas Robinson (G)** Tel: 07735 310357. Salutation Hall, Monday 29 January and 26 February, 6-7pm.

HURWORTH

Lorraine Tostevin (C) Tel: 333382. **Paul Walters (C)** Tel: 722097. By appointment only on Tuesday 16 January, 6 February and 5 March, 5.30-6.30pm.

MOWDEN

Pauline Cully (C) Tel: 250482; **Alan Marshall (C)** Tel: 359138 or 07807 523106. Mowden Junior School, Monday 8 January and 5 February, 6.30-7.30pm.

NORTHGATE

Sajna Ali (L) Tel: 405998; **Sonia Kane (L)** Tel: 486754. Corporation Road School Community Hub, Monday 5 February and 4 March, 10-11am.

NORTH ROAD

Hilary Allen (LD) Tel: 480277; **James Coe (LD)** Tel: 07828 178276; **Anne-Marie Curry (LD)** Tel: 07531 304050, annemarie.curry@darlington.gov.uk. Morrisons café, Wednesday 10 January and 14 February, 6-7pm; and The Well, Wednesday 24 January and 28 February, 1-2pm.

PARK EAST

Libby McCollom (L) Tel: 07910 369887; **Michael Nicholson (L)** Tel: 240750; **Matthew Roche (L)** Tel: 07403 208120. Skerne Park Community Centre, Friday 2 February and 1 March, 6-7pm; and St Columba's Church, Tuesday 9 January and 13 February, 1-2pm.

PARK WEST

Bob Donoghue (C) Tel: 07767 294194; **Heather Scott (C)** Tel: 468547.

PIERREMONT

Stephen Harker (L) Tel: 380039; **Mary Layton (L)** Tel: 491802 or 07460 980776; **James McGill (L)** Tel: 07964 670793. Reid Street Primary School, Wednesday 10 January, 7 February and 6 March, 6-7pm.

RED HALL AND LINGFIELD

Mandy Porter (L) Tel: 07962 363855; **Amanda Riley (L)** Tel: 07764 759554. Heathfield Primary School, Thursday 18 January and 15 February, 3.30-4.30pm; and Red Hall Community Centre, Thursday 11 January and 8 February, 5-6pm.

SADBERGE AND MIDDLETON ST GEORGE

Deborah Laing (C) Tel: 07747 863297; **Colin Pease (C)** Tel: 07738 422776. Middleton St George Cricket Club, Tuesday 30 January and 27 February, 7-8pm. **Yvonne Renton (I)** Tel: 07486 617516.

STEPHENSON

Ian Haszeldine (L) Tel: 07807 381613; **Mohammad Mahmud (L)** Tel: 07828 898799.

WHINFIELD

Jamie Bartch (C) Tel: 07554 645651; **Andy Keir (C)** Tel: 07597 297654. Shuttle & Loom, Saturday 27 January and 24 February, 11am- noon.

MPs' SURGERIES:



Peter Gibson (Darlington MP)

can be contacted through his constituency office at 34 Duke Street, Darlington, DL3 7TZ. Call 711711 or email peter.gibson.mp@parliament.uk



Paul Howell (Sedgefield MP)

can be contacted by email at paul.howell.mp@parliament.uk or through his constituency office at Unit 2, Sydney House, Ricknall Avenue, Newton Aycliffe, DL5 6AS or call 790580.



Ben Houchen – TEES VALLEY MAYOR

Office of the Tees Valley Mayor, Tees Valley Combined Authority, Teesside International Airport, Darlington, DL2 1NJ
Call 792600 or email mayor@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk

number forty

supporting MonGay!

Number Forty is opening its doors on the second Monday of every month to coincide with MonGay.

MonGay promotes venues in the town centre which, once a month, provide entertainment and a safe space for the LGBTQIA+ community.

Venues involved are displaying posters in their windows to show they are taking part.

Number Forty in Skinnergate is open every MonGay offering practical help to anyone who feels vulnerable.

Volunteers and trained door staff can provide everything from flip flops and phone chargers to first aid and support to victims of crime.

Number Forty is also open every Friday and Saturday 9pm-3am.

Number Forty is always looking for volunteers to ensure it can continue its great work.

To find out more email safeststreets@darlington.gov.uk
or call 07929 739450



Photo shows: Nikki Rett; Nigel Bryson, deputy Durham police and crime commissioner, Cllr James Coe and Dan Middleton from Dr Inks

Celebrating young people leaving care

Last year 186 young people living in care left their supportive care homes to take their next step of independence by setting up a home of their own.

Our children's services care team continues to support care leavers when they leave their foster care homes for as long as they feel they need it.

An awards evening was recently held to celebrate care leavers and showcase their strengths and achievements.



Four care leavers talk about their achievements

Robin Stein was in care from 15 years of age and now works as a children's residential support worker.

Billy Lawson, who experienced foster care from 11, is now 31, and loving his post at Darlington Memorial Hospital as a security guard. He also volunteers at Pepperfield Farm Hedgehog Rescue and champions men's mental health.

Kate Morgan, now 27, experienced being in care from 11 years of age. She has completed a Masters in English literature and creative studies and now facilitates Darlington Libraries book clubs.

Danny Atkinson, 32, was in foster care from the age of 14 and now is a proud father of two.

All our care leavers have their own unique story.

To read some visit www.darlington.gov.uk/care-leavers-stories



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Care leavers often don't have the money to afford luxuries when setting up a home.

The care team always welcomes donations of unopened toiletries, unwanted gifts, clothes, bags, shoes, or anything a person setting up home could use, along with easter eggs at Easter and selection boxes at Christmas. Please keep care leavers in mind when having a declutter or clear out.

Donations can be dropped off at Pease House in Bull Wynd, Monday to Friday from 9am to 4.30pm.

If you think you can help a baby or young person by providing a supportive, trusting home, visit www.fosterwithnortheast.org.uk to find out more about becoming a foster carer or supported lodgings provider.

POLLING STATION

Make sure you can vote in elections this year

Changes introduced by the Elections Act 2022 will be fully in force ahead of elections to be held later this year.

As with last year's elections, all voters will be required to take photographic identification (ID) with them when voting at polling stations. A list of the acceptable forms of photographic ID is available on our website and will also appear on your poll card. If you do not have one of the photographic ID listed, you will be able to apply for a voter authority certificate.

Further changes will be introduced ahead of the police and crime commissioner and the Tees Valley Combined Authority mayoral elections, which take place on Thursday 2 May.

A (parliamentary) general election will also be held by January 2025, and may take place this year.

A number of changes to voting by post, and proxy voting (where you need someone else to vote for you) have been introduced.

These include:

- a new requirement to check and verify a person's identity when an application for a postal or proxy vote is made
- the introduction of a new online system for both postal and some proxy vote applications - www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote
- a restriction on the number of electors for whom one person can act as a proxy (reduced to four)
- electors will be required to re-apply for their postal vote every three years.

Postal voting

If you wish to apply for a postal vote for the police and crime commissioner and the Tees Valley Combined Authority mayoral elections in May, applications must be received by 5pm on Tuesday 17 April.

Applications can be made via the government's new online system, or by using the application form on the next page. We will need to verify a person's identity for all new applications.

If you already have a Postal Vote set up there is no need to reapply until we contact you.

Further details of the changes, acceptable ID and voter authority certificates, are available on our website at www.darlington.gov.uk/elections - under The Elections Act 2022 - or you can call our elections team on 406444 or email at elections@darlington.gov.uk



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

HAVE YOUR SAY O

The council's budget for the next financial year, and our four-year medium-term financial plan (MTFP), are now out for public consultation. Don't miss out on the chance to have your say!

Like many councils across the country, we are facing significant financial challenges stemming from reductions in public spending between 2010 and 2019, when our budget was reduced by £46m in real terms – a 36% reduction.

The difficult financial position has worsened in the aftermath of the pandemic and the current economic climate, with demand for services rising and the cost of delivering services increasing because of high inflation and interest rates.

Over two thirds of our budget is spent on adult and children's social care, caring for our most vulnerable residents and children, and these costs are rising.

Since the pandemic there has been a 33% increase in children in our care, many with increasingly complex needs requiring help and support. Rising inflation means the cost of our adult care contracts increased by 15.6% over the last year. These are our largest budgets yet only touch 4% of our population.

To protect services as far as possible, council budgets have been reviewed and challenged and savings of £4m achieved through savings and efficiencies, which do not affect front line service delivery.

In addition, a council tax increase of 2.99% and a 2% social care precept to help fund adult social care has been proposed which would generate £1.869m and £1.250m respectively to help continue to provide vital services.

To help our most vulnerable households, we have agreed to extend our council tax reduction scheme in its existing form for another year. This scheme offers a council tax discount to eligible residents on low incomes whether in work, unemployed or retired.

Darlington is not alone in facing these pressures. Councils across the country are struggling with the



same issues which have been widely reported in the media with a growing number indicating the inability to balance their books.

Without extra government funding, we will need to carry out a fundamental review during 2024, to decide what services will be delivered in the coming years and how.

Extensive consultations will be carried out with residents, staff, charities, businesses and other key stakeholders, to explore how we can deal with the scale of the financial challenge we face.

N BUDGET PLANS

Where
does
your
money
go?

Where your money will be spent in 2024/25

Adult social care	£48.9m
Children's social care	£37.0m
Education and learning	£5.1m
Environment - grass cutting, parks etc ...	£7.0m
Highways	£5.3m
Concessionary fares/transport	£2.2m
Regulatory services	£1.6m
Waste management	£4.3m
Housing, welfare and benefits	£1.9m
Planning, development and regeneration ..	£1.6m
Cost of democracy	£2.6m
Members' allowances	£0.7m
Financing costs	£3.5m
Arts, culture and leisure	£5.7m
Total	£127.4m

Have your say!

The draft budget and MTFP are out for consultation until Monday 22 January. For full details of the proposals and how to have your say online, visit www.darlington.gov.uk/consultations

Hard copies will also be available to view in Darlington Library and Cockerton branch. You can email your comments to MTFPConsultation@darlington.gov.uk or post them to MTFP Consultation, Finance Team, Darlington Borough Council, Town Hall, Feethams, Darlington DL1 5QT.



Attendees at last year's Jobs Fair which attracted around 2,000 visitors.

New year, new job

If you are looking for a new job, an apprenticeship or are about to finish your qualifications, come and join us at Darlington Jobs Fair on Thursday 8 February.

The event, at the Dolphin Centre between 10am and 2pm, coincides with National Apprenticeships Week and has opportunities for people of all ages, interests and backgrounds.

Around 100 exhibitors, including both public sector organisations and private businesses, are expected to be at the event with employers in healthcare, life science, construction, engineering, professional services, manufacturing, retail, transport and logistics already confirmed.

Local education and training providers will be on hand to signpost you to apprenticeships or courses that will help you gain employment or progress in your career, as well as a number of support organisations offering help, advice and guidance on getting work, transport, childcare, disability, benefits and health issues.

Specific support is also available for veterans, people who do not speak English as a first language and those who have gained qualifications in other countries.

An attendee at last year's event described the jobs fair as "one of, if not the best I attended in the North of England" - make sure not to miss it this year. No appointment is necessary, just come along! However, you can register online to receive alerts and reminders about the event.

To register,
visit www.eventbrite.co.uk and
search for Darlington Jobs Fair 2024.

Thursday
8 February
2024

10am - 2pm

Dolphin Centre,
Horsemarket,
Darlington,
DL1 5RP

FREE
TO
ATTEND



DARLINGTON JOBS FAIR



REGISTER NOW. Scan the QR Code or
visit <https://bit.ly/darlingtonjobsfair2024>





Children's services praised by Ofsted



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Ofsted has once again praised the council's children's services teams.

Inspectors paid a focused visit late last year – following an earlier visit in October 2022, in which the service was given an overall rating of good, with outstanding elements.

The return visit, rather than being a full inspection, focused on the council's arrangements for children in need and children subject to a protection plan, provided by children's services.

Inspectors looked at a range of evidence, including case discussions with social workers, performance management, quality assurance information, and children's case records.

Ofsted was impressed with comprehensive performance information, and quality assurance activity, helping leaders to understand child experience and progress, and noted that this leads to robust child-centred responses to identified risk and need.

Cllr Nick Wallis, cabinet member for children and young people, said: "We are delighted children's services have been praised once again for their great work by the Ofsted inspection team and welcome their positive feedback.

"The report recognises the quality of the services we provide and concurs we ensure a relentless

focus on continuing to improve the experiences of children who need help and protection in Darlington, ensuring the children and their families are at the heart of our work.

"We work extremely well with partners and agencies, sharing information to ensure we work safely and closely together and support families to take responsibility for decision making, when appropriate.

"I meet regularly with staff and some of the young people who use our children's services and am consistently impressed by the respect, trust, and great working relationships that are formed.

"This Ofsted inspection report reflects the hard work carried out by our diverse teams of children's services staff, and I would like to thank them all for their commitment, passion, and dedication. They really do make a difference to people's lives.

"We recognise there is always room for improvement, this focused report witnesses our continued drive to improve where improvements can be made.

"We are committed to continuing to deliver the very best services possible for all our children and young people to ensure they have the best possible experiences growing up in Darlington."



Town twinning association anniversary



Darlington Town Twinning and International Association has celebrated its 70th anniversary – marking our first twinning with Mülheim an der Ruhr and Amiens in 1953.

Towns throughout Europe decided to take part in twinning as a way to bring people together, by establishing exchanges and celebrating that our similarities are much greater than our differences.

The anniversary celebrations included a visit by 32 citizens from Mülheim in July. During their stay they met the Mayor Jan Cossins, had a guided tour of the town, a great evening at the Quoits Club, and days out in Northumberland and the Durham Dales. A civic party and association members also visited Mülheim.

In early December, in conjunction with the Mülheim Twinning Association, a Christmas market stall was opened in their old town, where jam, chutney, ginger wine, Yorkshire tea and other items were on sale.

The twinning association is always seeking new members, visit darlingtowntwinning.co.uk to find out more.

Lukasz Samek

Vice-chair of the twinning association Lukasz Samek passed away last September at the age of 43.

Lukasz and his wife Dominika came to Darlington from Poland 18 years ago, and their daughter Gabriela was born here five years ago.

A lovely man who did so much for the association and many others in the town, he was a credit to both countries. Lukasz will be greatly missed by his many friends here in Darlington.

He was also named Young Pole of the Year at the Outstanding Pole in England, Wales and Northern Ireland ceremony in 2015.



DELVING INTO



What does 'biodiversity net gain' mean?



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

South Park lake

Biodiversity net gain is an environmental hot topic, especially when it comes to development. But to many people this might be the first time they have heard of it. So, what is biodiversity net gain? Put simply, biodiversity is the variety of life found in an area – including animals, plants, fungi and even micro-organisms; and net gain is an overall increase. Therefore, biodiversity net gain simply means the increase in biodiversity in an area.

Why does this matter?

Biodiversity net gain is important as it allows the development and management of land to have a positive impact on nature and leave the natural environment in a better state than it was before. It does this by enhancing, creating and increasing habitats on a site, which will hopefully increase the wildlife in the area.

If habitats cannot be created on a development site, then they can be created elsewhere within the local area. However, if this is not possible, the government has a system which allows developers

to buy credits which create habitats at a different location. The credits can only be bought once all other options for habitat creation onsite and offsite have been exhausted. In Darlington we have been working towards securing areas which can be used as offsite habitat creation which will increase biodiversity within the borough. These areas will be managed and monitored for a 30-year period.

The background

Darlington's Local Plan (2016 – 2036) already has a requirement for developments to show a biodiversity net gain. However, as of this month, there is a legal requirement for at least a 10% increase in biodiversity for large sites, and then from April 2024 this will also cover small sites. This means that developers must increase biodiversity levels to a minimum of 10% to secure planning permission, as without it, planning permission will be declined. Habitats will then need to be protected, managed, and monitored for a period of 30 years.

NATURE



Meet our ecologist!

Lauren Gibson, our ecologist

“I am Lauren Gibson, the council’s ecologist and have been in post since the end of July last year. I came directly from working within private ecological consultancies where I was a senior ecologist.

“Before working in ecology, I was a lecturer at a large land-based college for 11 years, specialising in ecology and conservation, and biodiversity restoration.

“As a lecturer, I was involved in organising environmental and ecological field trips and took groups of students across the globe to places such as the Netherlands, Belgium, South Africa, and Transylvania.

“I have also volunteered at Knepp Rewilding in West Sussex, teaching budding ecologists about bird ringing, survey techniques for habitats and wildlife, and undertaking biodiversity net gain assessments.

“I am extremely enthusiastic about the natural world, especially native wildlife. I have a

passion for birds, reptiles and amphibians, bats, hedgehogs, and beavers! In my spare time I volunteer as a bird ringer for the British Trust for Ornithology, generating valuable data on survival, productivity, and movements and migration of birds.

“I am also a registered bat carer for the Bat Conservation Trust and a trustee of Durham Bat Group.

“As the council ecologist, I have a wide range of job roles, such as providing advice and recommendations on ecological matters including planning applications; working with Tees Valley Combined Authority in the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy; and working collaboratively to get the best outcomes for nature within the borough.

“I have a vision for Darlington that we will increase green space for nature and for people, and our natural habitats will become bigger, better and more joined up.”

CLUBS AND COM

To have your community group or club featured, email editor@onedarlington.org.uk

Can you step up to help a pup?

Hearing Dogs for Deaf People has expanded its work into Darlington and needs more help. Michael Douglas, area training manager, said: "We need full time and short-term volunteers who can help us raise and train our dogs. From eight weeks to around 16 months old, our hearing dog pups stay with one of our volunteer puppy trainers where they will receive most of their obedience training and attend regular sessions at one of our training centres. As well as pups, we also need volunteers to look after older dogs at different stages in their training.

"A big part of a hearing dog's job is to alert their deaf partner to sounds they would otherwise miss such as a smoke alarm, alarm clock, and even a baby's cry. Imagine you are deaf. You can't hear your alarm clock. You can't hear your text message alerts. You miss out on social interactions. That's what life is like for deaf people, and it can be very isolating.

"Volunteers are asked to provide: a loving home and secure garden; access to IT for video calling and online training; lots of time to give a young pup or dog - we cannot accept people who work full time even from home; access to a vehicle for

training and emergency purposes; aged 18 or over and live in the catchment area.

No previous experience is required – you will have full support and guidance from a local, qualified, trainer."

Email volunteer@hearingdogs.org.uk

Phone 01844 348129

www.hearingdogs.org.uk/volunteering



Darlington Stitch and Create

meets at 1pm on the first Saturday of the month at Elm Ridge Methodist Church Hall to enjoy everything to do with decorative stitching. The latest whole group project will commemorate the bi-centenary of the Stockton & Darlington Railway for an exhibition taking place towards the end of 2025. A work has been designed featuring Locomotion No 1. It involves a wide range of embroidery and stitching including modern creative textile techniques, patchwork and traditional embroidery from goldwork, tapestry to machine and hand quilting. To get involved email secretary@darlingtonstitchandcreate.com Check them out on Instagram and Facebook Darlington SaC.

Darlington Social Club for the Blind and Visually Impaired

is a charity for blind and visually impaired people of all ages. They meet every Tuesday, 10am-noon, for a coffee and a friendly chat and occasional visiting speakers. They also hold monthly arts and crafts classes and social outings in warmer months. Some activities and outings take place on Thursdays. They are based at Hampton House, 73 Corporation Road (opposite Corporation Road Primary School). Family members and friends are also welcome as are volunteers to help at events and to help with fundraising. Anyone is welcome to drop into the Tuesday morning sessions. Call Sue, on 484539, Jonathan 384649 or 07813 703719, or Allan on 07816 127002.



MUSIC CREATORS

YB

YOUNG BLOOD

YB

PROMOTERS AND LIVE GIGS

Are you aged 13-24?

The Forum Music Studios is **RECRUITING NOW** for an exciting youth led live music programme.

YB Promoters
(16-24)

'Have a budget to book bands'

Industry guidance and support to schedule gig nights for young people.

YB Gigs
(13-17)

'Where youth ignites sound'

Monthly under 18's gig night organised by Young Blood Promoters.

YB Music Creators
(13-17)

'Fuelling the future of music'

Write, Create and Develop your music guided by professional mentors

THE FORUM

Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND



Young Blood

Young people aged 13-24 can get involved with creating new music, developing business skills in the music industry or enjoy live music from up-and-coming bands with friends in a new programme of weekly sessions.

Visit www.theforumonline.co.uk/young-blood



Charity bookshop goes from strength to strength

Darlington Lions Charity Bookshop was first established over 40 years ago as a fundraising project. Every penny raised in the bookshop goes to charitable needs. The shop stocks around 6,000 books and is run by volunteers five days a week. They are open from 10am-4pm every day, except Tuesday and Sunday. The shop front faces onto Blackwellgate and sells books from as little as 50p. The shop also welcomes donations of used spectacles that are sent to developing countries.

DARLINGTON INDOOR BOWLS CLUB

OPEN DAY

Saturday 3rd February

10:30 to 14:30

Watching on TV, give it a try
Bowls & shoes provided
for free
No booking required



Morrisons Centre, North Road
Darlington, DL1 2PY
Tel 01325 485414

Enjoy what's on in

The new year promises a whole new programme of events and activities to enjoy in Darlington in the months ahead.

For more details of what's on visit enjoydarlington.co.uk or follow the council on Facebook.

Want to be in the next edition of One Darlington? Email your events for January and February to communications@darlington.gov.uk

parkrun and junior parkrun – weekends, South Park. A free, weekly, timed run, walk or jog. The 5km event is on Saturdays at 9am. The 2km event, for those aged 4-14, is on Sundays at 9am.

Market quiz – every Thursday, 7pm, Darlington Market.

Live jazz/music – every Saturday, 7pm, The Vault (hidden under Darlington Market). Free entry.

Lego Club home ed – second Tuesday of every month (9 Jan, 13 Feb and 12 March), 1.30-2.30pm, Darlington Library. Lego Club for the home educated families of Darlington, free drop-in session, no booking required.

Coffee morning, catch up & craft stalls – last Thursday of every month, 11am-3pm, Redhall Community Centre. Visit redhallcommunitycentre.org for more details.

January

Open mic night – Wednesday 3, 7.30pm, The Forum. Free admission.

The Jam'd – Friday 5, 7.30pm, The Forum Music Studios. Tickets £12.

Hilarity Bites Comedy Club – Saturday 6, 7.30pm, The Forum Music Studios. Tickets £10.50.

Darlington Record Fair – Saturday 6, 10am-4pm, Darlington Market.

Darlington Locomotive Works open day – Saturdays 6 and 20, 10am-3pm, Bonomi Way. Free entry.

Darlington RnB Club feat. Danny Bryant – Friday 12, 7.30pm, The Forum Music Studios. Tickets £18.

Black Ice (AC/DC) – Saturday 13, 7.30pm, The Forum Music Studios. Tickets £10.

Paper cutting and collage (adult crafts) – Sunday 14, 1-3pm, Darlington RA Club (organised by Hopetown Darlington). Tickets £15 includes all materials and refreshments, must be booked in advance.

Darlington Music Society, Milo Harper (harp) – Saturday 13, 7.30-9.30pm, Dolphin Centre. Tickets £17. Visit www.darlingtonmusicsociety.org.uk for more details.

Watercolours – Tuesday 16, 2.30-4pm, Darlington Library and Friday 19, 11am-12.30pm, Cockerton Library. Tickets £5, bookable online.

Musical Memories – Wednesday 17, 10.30-11.30am, Darlington Library. Take a trip down memory lane and explore different eras in time through the reminiscence collection, alongside music. Free, bookable in person at library.

Live&Local: Lounge Code, Exit & The Blue Hummingbirds – Thursday 18, 7.30pm, The Forum Music Studios. Tickets £4.

Gasto Promotions presents Fleeting Rumours – Friday 19, 7.30pm, The Forum Music Studios. Tickets £15.

Big Little Gigs family rave – Saturday 20, 5-6pm and 7-8pm, Darlington Library. Tickets £5 (under 1s free) including a free glowstick, bookable online.

Darlington Piano Society, Alasdair Beatson and Viv McLean duo – Sunday 21, 3-5pm, Dolphin Centre. Visit www.dpiano.co.uk - adult tickets £15, under 21s free.

Legend – The Music of Bob Marley – Wednesday 24, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. Celebrate the music of Bob Marley. Tickets from £18.

Roy Orbison & The Traveling Wilburys Experience – Thursday 25, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. Take a journey through several decades of pop. Tickets from £16.50.

Hilarity Bites Comedy Club presents: Connor Burns: Vertigo – Thursday 25, 7.30pm, The Forum Music Studios. Tickets £10.



The Kill, 80s Classic Rock – Friday 26, 7-30pm, The Forum Music Studios. Tickets £12.

Sleeping Beauty – Friday 26, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. Performance by Varna Ballet. Tickets from £17.

Swan Lake – Saturday 27, 2.30pm and 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. Performance by Varna Ballet. Tickets from £17.



Darlington Orchestra Winter Concert – Saturday 27, Central Hall at Dolphin Centre, 7.30pm (doors open at 7pm). Special guests Darlington SING Community Choir. Tickets £7 (£5 concessions) available from Dolphin Centre, call 406000. Cash only on door. Follow the orchestra on [Facebook.com/darlingtonorchestra](https://www.facebook.com/darlingtonorchestra) or [Instagram.com/darlington_orchestra](https://www.instagram.com/darlington_orchestra).

Nearly Noel Gallagher w/Acoustic Weller – Saturday 27, 7.30pm, The Forum Music Studios. Tickets £12.

The Nutcracker – Sunday 28, 2.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. Performance by Varna Ballet. Tickets from £17.

Bowie Experience – Tuesday 30, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. A spectacular concert celebrating David Bowie. Tickets from £14.50.

Solve-A-Long-A-Murder-She-Wrote – Tuesday 30 and Wednesday 31, 8pm, Hipp@The Hullabaloo. A cult hit interactive screening of Murder She Wrote. Tickets £18.

Believe – The Cher Songbook – Wednesday 31, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. Turn back time and celebrate Cher. Tickets from £14.50.

February

Misfit Market – Thursday 1, 5pm, Darlington Market. Alternative night market.

The ELO Experience – Friday 2, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. The world's foremost multi award winning tribute to The Electric Light Orchestra. Tickets from £18.

Maria & James The Album Launch (with a live band) – Friday 2, 7.30pm, The Forum Music Studios. Tickets £12.

Bowls open day – Saturday 3, 10.30am-3pm, Darlington Indoor Bowls Club, North Road. Free entry, no booking required. Free parking in car park at rear of Morrisons. All ages and abilities welcome. Disabled access via main entrance. Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. For more details call 485414.

Ed Byrne: Tragedy Plus Time – Sunday 4, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. Ed Byrne mines the most tragic events in his life for laughs. Tickets from £20.

Hilarity Bites presents Anth Young: Forever Young – Thursday 8, 7.30pm, The Forum Music Studios. Tickets £10.

Darlington RnB Club feat. Robin Bibi Band – Friday 9, 7.30pm, The Forum Music Studios. Tickets £13.

Giovanni – Let Me Entertain You – Friday 9, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. The ultimate showman returns. Tickets from £20.

Darlington Music Society, Madeleine Pickering (violin) and Kumi Matsuo (piano) – Saturday 10, 7.30-9.30pm, Dolphin Centre. Tickets £17. Visit www.darlingtonmusicsociety.org.uk for more details.

The Hallé orchestra – Saturday 10, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. £15 Lucky Hipp tickets available. Other tickets from £16.

Creedence Clearwater Revival Revival – Saturday 10, 7.30pm, The Forum Music Studios. Tickets £12.

Lino Print (adult crafts) – Sunday 11, 1-3pm, Darlington RA Club (organised by Hopetown Darlington). Tickets £15 includes all materials and refreshments, must be booked in advance.

That'll Be The Day – Tuesday 13 and Wednesday 14, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. Celebrate the golden years of rock and roll. Tickets from £17.

Wedding Showcase – Saturday 17, 10.30am-4.30pm, Dolphin Centre. If you're planning a wedding, pop in and see what's on offer at local venues and from local suppliers. Free admission.

Bi-Topia – Tuesday 13, 8pm, Hipp@The Hullabaloo. A hilarious and raw coming of age story. Tickets £15.

Steve Steinman's Vampires Rock – Thursday 15, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. A classic rock spectacle with a vampiric twist. Tickets from £18.50.

Gasto Promotions - Rebecca Downes & Phil Caffrey – Friday 16, 7.30pm, The Forum Music Studios. Tickets £15.

The Story of Guitar Heroes – Saturday 17, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. Expect legendary hits from the 1950s to the modern era. Tickets from £18.

Darlington Piano Society, Rebeca Ormordia – Sunday 18, 3-7pm, Dolphin Centre. Visit www.dpiano.co.uk - adult tickets £15, under 21s free.

Dr Michael Mosley and Dr Clare Bailey – Eat (well), Sleep (better), Live (longer)! – Sunday 18, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. Tickets from £18.50.

Illustration workshop with Liz Million – Monday 19, 2-3.30pm, Darlington Library. An interactive and fun draw-a-long session. Tickets free (with optional donation to Quinn's Retreat), bookable online.

Queenz – The Show With Balls – Wednesday 21, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. Feel fierce and fabulous with these dazzling divas. Tickets from £16.

Madame Dragon's Training School – Wednesday 21, 9.30-10.30am, Darlington Library and 1.30-2.30pm, Cockerton Library. A fun and physical session at The Dragon Training School learning how to be the best dragons you can be! Bookable online.

Musical Memories – Wednesday 21, 10.30-11.30am, Darlington Library. Free, bookable in person at Darlington Library.

Shakespeare Remixed – Wednesday 21, 11am-noon, Darlington Library and 3-4pm, Cockerton Library. Using rap, stage combat and street dance, children will take the prologue from Romeo and Juliet and bring it to life like never before! Bookable online.

Imagine Me Storytelling Adventure – Thursday 22, 10-11am, Cockerton Library and 12.30-1.30pm, Darlington Library. Interactive storytelling for pre-schoolers. Bookable online.

Crooners – Thursday 22, 7.30pm, Darlington Hippodrome. A hilarious combination of The Play That Goes Wrong and big band swing. Tickets from £18.

Hopetown Darlington visit www.hopetowndarlington.co.uk call 405060, or email hopetown@darlington.gov.uk

Darlington Hippodrome visit www.darlingtonhippodrome.co.uk or call 405405

Theatre Hullabaloo – call 405405 or visit www.theatrehullabaloo.org.uk

Darlington Libraries – call 349610 or visit www.darlington.gov.uk/library

Dolphin Centre – call 406000 or email healthydarlington@darlington.gov.uk

The Forum Music Studios – visit www.theforumonline.co.uk

Contacts

Fixing roads around our town



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Our highways service employs over 60 people to maintain and improve the town's roads, footpaths, bridges, street lights and traffic signals. Looking after our 366 miles of carriageways is a central part of the service and by the end of the financial year in March, we will have spent about £2.9million on essential repairs to our roads.

Sara Forbes, principal engineer, has worked for the highways service in Darlington for five years. Here's what she had to say about the service.

“Looking after highways is like painting the Forth Bridge – as soon as you finish, you start again! Keeping our road networks in good working order is important for the local economy, the environment and quality of life for residents.

“All of the town's major routes, including those leading out of Darlington or connecting different areas, are maintained by the team; we also look after smaller roads connecting residential areas. Each year our roads are surveyed, and we use this information to decide where and when works are needed. This feeds into our yearly work schedule and five-year plan, which sets out how our budget will be spent. We also carry out regular safety inspections of the network throughout the year and repair any defects.

“Each year around 7,000 permit requests are received from utility companies. These are considered when coordinating works to minimise disruption. Most work tends to happen during the spring and summer. This is because the conditions are better for resurfacing roads. Work on major routes is scheduled during the summer holidays and overnight where possible as traffic is lighter.

“We do our best to keep people informed about road works. Where there are planned closures, we issue letters to residents and businesses in the affected area, update the council website and display advanced notice signs on the affected road. When there is high impact work planned, we'll also keep the local media informed and share news on social media.

“In the past, roads were replaced once they had reached the end of their life. Now we focus on preventing problems and treating roads earlier. This means that some damaged roads will not be fixed as quickly in the short term. However, in the long term it will ensure the longevity of roads, save money, and lessen disruption to your journeys.”



Sara Forbes,
principal engineer
for highways.

Annmarie Bainbridge (centre) collecting an award for vocational excellence alongside other Learning & Skills students and staff

Stronger Communities Awards



Make a change with Learning & Skills

As we enter the new year it's a great time to start thinking about the things we can do or change to make our lives better.

For some, that's about improving wellbeing, learning something new or exciting, finding employment or performing better at work. If this is you, Learning & Skills may be able to help.

Based in the heart of the town centre, Learning & Skills offers adult education, apprenticeships and study programmes with a range of courses for young people and adults. From English for speakers of other languages to maths, parenting, creative crafts and much more, the service will help you on your way to achieving your ambitions this year.

AnnMarie Bainbridge recently completed a level 3 Diploma for the Children's Workforce (Early Years Educator) and is now working as an early years practitioner at Lawson Street Pre-school.

She said: "Due to a worsening health condition, I was physically unable to continue my employment as a healthcare assistant and left work in 2019. During this time, I looked after my grandchild and supported my daughter through her nursing degree. Although I was happy to be able to do this, after three years staying at home, I felt it was the right time to start thinking about my future.

"I'd heard about Learning & Skills from my son's school and approached the service to find out what I needed to do to start a new career as a play specialist.

Learning & Skills



"The information, advice and guidance I received from Laura, one of the Learning & Skills tutors, was really helpful and supportive. On her advice I undertook a number of continuing professional development courses and a level 2 Understanding Autism qualification alongside a level 3 Early Years Educator course.

"The mixture of online learning, self-directed studies and work placements worked really well for me. It gave me the opportunity to meet new people and grow in confidence while offering flexibility to study in my own time and around other commitments. The course tutors, assessors and placement mentors also gave me incredible support, offering a listening ear, advice, guidance and helpful feedback throughout.

"Thanks to Learning & Skills, my confidence, self-esteem and wellbeing has improved and on completing my studies, I was thrilled to be offered a job in the nursery where I was on placement. Working with pre-school aged children is a joy and I have found a career I love, where I am valued and where I can make a difference. I also have the opportunity to grow and develop in my role and which fits brilliantly around my family life.

"I would encourage anyone looking to make a positive change in their life to give Learning & Skills a call. The service they offer has transformed my life and I was delighted to have recently been named winner in the vocational excellence category of the Stronger Communities Awards – an achievement I wouldn't have thought possible only two years ago."

HEET

HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY TEES VALLEY

Improve your energy efficiency

Did you know we're part of HEET – Home Energy Efficiency Tees Valley – which has been awarded funding from the government to upgrade the energy efficiency of homes across the region?

Many postcodes in the area qualify without needing any further checks, as long as properties do not have a gas boiler or central heating system.

A range of free energy efficiency measures are available including insulation, efficient or low-carbon heating systems and solar panels.

To find out more, and whether you are eligible, visit our website at www.darlington.gov.uk/homeenergy or call 0300 373 5807. You will be put through to the team at Hartlepool Council, one of our HEET local authority partners along with Stockton-on-Tees and Redcar & Cleveland Councils.

This work will contribute to our pledge to become carbon neutral by 2040. This pledge covers all service areas, and we want to encourage residents and businesses to join us on our journey towards a greener and more sustainable future. More details are available at www.darlington.gov.uk/sustainable

Our Volunteers Help to Change Elderly Lives in Darlington



Apply Now and Make a Real difference in 2024

e. marketing@darlingtontownmission.org.uk t. 07825 586113

f. [/Darlingtontownmission](https://www.facebook.com/Darlingtontownmission) www.darlingtontownmission.org.uk

A local charity trusted since 1838

Registered Address 3 Idaho Gardens, Darlington DL1 2RG - Reg.charity no. 235572



**Darlington
Town
Mission**
Enriching Elderly Lives



Watchful eye helping to keep you safe



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Work to upgrade our CCTV system, to replace the last of its older analogue cameras, has now been completed helping to keep us all safe.

A total of 74 cameras have been replaced with new equipment offering improved images and better results. The work has also included a move to a wireless transmission network to stream images into the security control centre, which is staffed through the day and night, 365 days a year.

The £513,500 project has been supported by the police and crime commissioner's office, which pledged £25,000 a year for ten years, alongside revenue savings of £33,000 a year, which means the upgrade had no impact on the council's overall budget.

First introduced in the 1990s, the system has grown from a 37-camera network to more than 200 in strategic locations across the borough and the team works closely with police and civic enforcement officers to help reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

CCTV forms part of our community safety team and you can find out more at www.darlington.gov.uk/communitysafety



Strong partnership for a safer town

Following one recent case, certificates of recognition were awarded to CCTV operators Robert Williams and Victoria Maddison and CCTV duty manager Chris Stokoe.

Their combined efforts managed to identify and track a suspect as well as link two separate incidents, which resulted in the arrest of a dangerous man in connection with offences of sexual assault and trespass with intent to commit a sexual offence in the town in June last year. He was later sentenced at Teesside Crown Court to 14 years imprisonment and two additional years on extended licence.

Also recognised were members of our trading standards team who worked closely with police to develop Operation Nightstar. This is a proactive intelligence gathering and evidence-led initiative targeted people selling illegal vapes and tobacco who were suspected of being connected to the exploitation of children and vulnerable people.

Meet the quality team

The quality and practice team works to promote and monitor quality within the council's adults and children's services, embedding quality assurance and improvement frameworks throughout both areas.

We work closely with families and carers to capture feedback by engaging with those who use our services to collect valuable quality assurance and improvement information.

We believe that quality is everybody's business and that people should be at the heart of all that we do with regards to professional practice.

What else does the team do?

We support many areas of work, including preparing for the Care Quality Commission assessment of adult social care with inspections beginning in 2024, and preparation for Ofsted inspections of children's services, which began in November 2017 against the current inspection framework.

If you'd like more information about the inspection processes, you can find this via the links or QR codes below.

CQC



<https://shorturl.at/wUVX0>

Ofsted



<https://shorturl.at/anwDR>

Through robust audit activities across the council, the team supports colleagues to deliver good practice ensuring that quality is driven by feedback from people who are supported by our services. Through this process we make sure that the people who use our services feel that they are listened to and are empowered to be involved with their care.

Here are some great comments captured recently via our quality improvement process:

"A is my angel as she is always honest, professional and compassionate allowing me to vent my feelings."

"C helped me access the skills for care training and this has also helped me to consider working in mental health services."

"My social worker focused on me as a person to support my hospital discharge."

"S is a star and ensures my letters are in the font and text size right for me. I would like to say thank you for everything she has done."



We would be interested to hear your views or if you would like to participate in a listening group, please let us know by emailing the team at QualityAssurance@darlington.gov.uk or AdultQA@darlington.gov.uk



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Learning & Skills Darlington

FREE courses for 16-18 year olds - Sign up today!

Learning & Skills Darlington provide pre-employment and pre-apprenticeship courses all year round to 16-18 years olds across Darlington and the Tees Valley, enabling them to develop their personal, social and employability skills and progress into further education or employment. There are also many opportunities for work experience, educational visits, and days out too! No entry requirements are needed!

FREE Adult Maths, English, ICT and Distance Learning qualifications

Are you aged 19+ and you need an English, maths, or ICT qualification to progress at work, assist with your studies or to help you find employment? **Study with Learning & Skills for FREE!** 2 to 3 hours classes per week / online and classroom based sessions / accredited qualifications / free from start to finish.

Do you need to upskill or learn something new?



We offer over 35 FREE qualifications via distance. To see the full offer, visit <https://tinyurl.com/4xezzkxr> or scan the QR code.

Apprenticeships

Becoming an apprentice is easy! With no upper age limit, apprenticeships are available for anyone aged 16+, who is looking to **start a new career or upskill in your current role**. Develop your knowledge, skills and behaviours, through high quality on and off the job training with Learning & Skills Darlington. Employers across the Tees Valley and surrounding areas are looking to employ new apprentices across a variety of industries and sectors. What are you waiting for? View local apprenticeship vacancies today! Visit www.darlington.gov.uk/apprenticeships **Employers:** Are you an organisation wishing to upskill current members of staff or create an apprenticeship position for a new entrant? Contact us to arrange a discussion about funding and various grants available.

Learning & Skills



CALL 405601 TEXT 07932 869325 EMAIL l@s@darlington.gov.uk

WEB www.darlington.gov.uk/learningandskills

[@DarlingtonL_S](https://twitter.com/DarlingtonL_S)

[DarlingtonL_S](https://www.instagram.com/DarlingtonL_S)

[Learning & Skills](https://www.facebook.com/Learning%20and%20Skills)

[07932 869325](https://wa.me/405601)



HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY 27/1

Holocaust Memorial Ceremony

'The Fragility of Freedom'

Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College
7pm, January 24th 2024

CELEBRATING COMMUNITIES



Take a break

Dry January is an opportunity to take a break from alcohol, reflect on your drinking habits, and experience the physical and mental benefits of sobriety. For a total body and mind reset - from clearer skin and a mental health boost, to saving money and time - there's a whole lot to gain this Dry January. To find out more, visit www.alcoholchange.org.uk

Free social media workshop!

Calling all clubs, groups and small businesses who have an interest in sustainability and climate change – get more social in 2024 and take advantage of a free social media workshop. It will take place on Thursday 29 February, 6-8pm at the Dolphin Centre. Places are limited. Search for the event via Eventbrite.

You can quit

The Stop Smoking Hub, which provides support services for people wishing to quit smoking, has introduced vapes as a way of supporting your attempt to quit. If you are 18 or over and want to quit smoking, call 0800 802 1850 or email info@darlingtonstopsmokinghub.org.uk

XL Bully ban

The government has added the XL Bully breed to the list of those banned under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991. From 1 February it will be an offence to own an XL Bully in England and Wales unless you have a certificate of exemption. You can find out more about the ban on our website at www.darlington.gov.uk/xlbullyban

Cold weather clothes needed!



Volunteers at the uniform exchange

Darlington Cares uniform exchange is in desperate need of warm coats and other winter items to share with families across the town.

At this time of year, the uniform exchange in the Queen Street shopping centre hands out coats, hats, scarves, gloves, wellies and shoes to anyone who needs them.

If you have any good quality clothing to donate, please take it to:

- The uniform exchange, Queen Street shopping centre
- In a Spin, 367 North Road
- Cockerton Club
- Eastbourne Park community hub
- Firthmoor Community Centre.



All donations are laundered before being made available in the shop which is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9am-noon and Thursday 12.30-3.30pm.

Donations not only help people in need but also prevent clothing going to landfill and ensure good quality clothing is recycled and reused.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can report anti-social or illegal motorbikes and off-road bikers anonymously.

Call **101** or
email opendurance@durham.police.uk



I'm enjoying
FREE
childcare
*...is your 2
year old?*

Check your child's eligibility for up to 15 hours
a week - just have your national insurance
number to hand and go online
www.darlington.gov.uk/childcarechecker
email pfis@darlington.gov.uk
or call Darlington Families Information Team on
406222 (option 7)



DARLINGTON
Borough Council



Stuie Ellerton and colleague Gemma at SimFly check in and aircraft room

Flying high in Darlington

There has never been a better time to grow or develop your business in Darlington. Boasting a first-class combination of great location, skilled workforce and excellent training facilities, Darlington has everything entrepreneurs and modern businesses need to grow and succeed.

In addition to our thriving town centre economy and the development of several high-quality business parks and facilities suitable for a range of industrial and commercial requirements, a number of smaller, home-grown and quirky businesses are starting, and flourishing in the surrounding area, including SimFly.

Nominated for Start-Up Business of the Year 2023 by the Federation of Small Businesses, SimFly, based near Teesside airport, offers immersive flying experiences for people aged ten and over.

Launched by qualified pilot, Stuie Ellerton, SimFly helps train private and transportation pilots and others pursuing a career in aviation, as well as offering experience days for air travel enthusiasts and corporate team building packages. The company also offers a nervous flyer programme to help ease anxiety for people with a flying phobia as well as hosting a number of career demonstration days for travel and tourism students.

Mr Ellerton said: "Our top of the range flight simulator allows you to fly to anywhere in the world, night or day, in all kinds of weather conditions. We also have a realistic aircraft room, fitted with internal parts from a Boeing 737, including original seating and a functioning galley. Bringing the sights and sounds of aircraft travel to life, SimFly is as close to reality as you can get.

"We are a unique business in the North East and as a local lad, I'm proud to be able to host my business here. There's been loads of investment in recent years and Darlington is definitely a town on the up, offering exciting opportunities for local entrepreneurs.

"Since we launched in 2021 we have had over 1,000 customers and have seen the number of visitors increase year on year. This includes private and regularly visiting clients as well as local schools, colleges and universities whose students are all hopeful for a career in the aviation sector.

"I am looking forward to continuing to grow my business in the town and would encourage others considering launching or relocating their business to contact the council's Invest in Darlington team who can provide advice and guidance to help you move, start, grow and expand your business."

Does your dog have star quality?



DARLINGTON
Borough Council



Charlotte
and Otto
with dog
warden
Andy
Wood



We're on the hunt for some handsome hounds and pretty pooches to feature in a special video as part of our Bag It Bin It campaign to tackle dog fouling.

We've already enlisted the help of local Crufts winner, miniature pinscher Otto and his owner Charlotte Westerman, and we're inviting you to send us your pictures of your dog for a chance for him or her to be one of our video stars.

Simply email a photo to editor@onedarlington.org.uk along with your dog's name and your contact details or look out for our post on Facebook to enter online.

Members of our DOGwatch group, which promotes responsible dog ownership, will choose their favourites and the owners will be invited to send a short clip of their dog (around 20-30 seconds) having fun on their favourite local walk. There will also be a treat for the dogs!

The deadline for entries is Friday 9 February.

To find out more about DOGwatch and other issues relating to dogs, visit www.darlington.gov.uk/dogwatch



NEVER

PUT BATTERIES IN ANY OF YOUR BINS



40,000 tonnes of batteries are bought in the UK every year but less than half are recycled properly.



In 2022, a Street Scene team was forced to tip waste onto a road in Firthmoor after a blaze in the back of the wagon caused by an electric drill battery.



Many batteries are built into devices such as scooters, phones and vapes and they all need safely disposing of.



Many shops have battery recycling collection points or you can take them to the tip on Whessoe Road.



Lithium ion batteries are widely used as they are light and contain more energy, but this makes them more dangerous. Fires caused by lithium ion batteries are self sustaining and very hard to put out.



If you are taking batteries to the tip please make sure they go in the right container, please ask a member of staff if you are unsure.



If batteries are thrown away with general rubbish they are crushed in the bin wagon which causes highly flammable chemicals to leak out and fires can start either in the wagon or at the treatment plant. One serious fire a day is caused in the UK because of batteries.

Disposable vapes should be put in the small mixed WEEE container.

Laptops, mobile phones and other electrical equipment with fixed batteries (such as drills, screwdrivers and other DIY equipment) should be put into the small mixed WEEE container as a whole unit.

There is a dedicated container for lead, acid and gel batteries.



Darlington Xtra Awards



Recognising and celebrating the achievements of newly-qualified and newly-trained staff in children's and adults services is crucial in attracting and keeping the best people.

The recent Darlington Xtra Awards were the perfect opportunity to do just that, whilst also being a chance to deliver some powerful training and development.

Those attending the awards were treated to performances from theatre groups Beyond Caring, showcasing their work around care homes, families and older people, and Access 27, informing and training staff around young people and domestic abuse.

Staff also received certificates from assistant directors Joss Harbron and Chris Bell, in recognition of their progress and achievements.



BEAT your finance blues

**Are you struggling financially?
Feel like you are stuck in a maze?**

You are not alone, support is available, even if you work.

Contact the Benefit Entitlement Action Team (BEAT) who will help and support you to claim any money you are entitled to.

Visit www.citizenadvisedrc.org.uk or call 266888

Pop in to talk to someone in person,
between 10am and noon,
Monday - Friday, in the CAB Office,
The Core Building ,
Church Row, DL1 5QD



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

**citizens
advice**



TEES VALLEY

Teesside Airport Staff Walking on Air After Scooping Double Awards Win

Passengers have voted Teesside International Airport as the Best UK Airport for Leisure Travel at the country's biggest travel awards.

The airport picked up the gong at the British Travel Awards – the largest survey of consumer opinion on everything to do with leisure travel. The awards cover the whole holiday sector, with travel companies, cruise lines, travel agents, hotel brands, airlines and airports all in the running.

The transformation of Teesside Airport, including its renovation, new routes, and punctuality – plus becoming the first airport in the UK to scrap the 100ml liquid limit in security – have made a huge impression on passengers, who voted in their thousands to make Teesside top of the list.

This is the latest award success, after scooping UK & Irish Airport of the Year at the TTG Travel Industry Awards. The airport also netted a Highly Commended honour when up against global competition in the International Airport Review's Airport Experience Award, and another Highly Commended

at the Airport Operators Association UK Airports Health & Safety Week.

This has rounded off another successful year for Teesside, which has welcomed the most passengers for 11 years in just the first nine months of 2023. Tickets for 2024's summer season – including Alicante, Bulgaria, Corfu, Dalaman and Majorca are on sale now, with Faro set to go on sale soon.

The first unit – Unit D – at the airport's £200million Business Park South has now been built, along with the 1.5km link road. A further 27,000sq ft hangar is under development to boost capacity

for aircraft maintenance and storage to attract more businesses to the site.

And the airport's Aviation Academy recently threw open its doors to aviation students from Teesside University, so they can put the knowledge and skills they are learning in the classroom into practice at an operational airport.

Whether it's leisure, business or for the future of local people, the multi-award-winning Teesside Airport will be flying high for 2024.



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Business boost for climate change



Businesses across Darlington are working together to help tackle climate change and we want more people to get involved.

Last year saw the creation of the Darlington Employers Environment Partnership (DEEP), the brainchild of Darlington Building Society (DBS). Supported by businesses and organisations across the town, including the council, the aim of the group is to share good practice and develop links around net zero targets.

David Bews, chief risk officer for DBS, said: “Our aim in launching this initiative was to form an alliance with other key local employers, enabling us to share good practice around net zero. It’s a challenge we all face, and we’re delighted to see the momentum building so quickly.”

The group is managed through Darlington Cares, a not-for-profit organisation, hosted by the council to support community needs. They will provide administrative support and track the progress of the group.

Alongside DBS and the council, organisations already signed up include Cummins Engines, Redde Northgate, Corstorphine and Wright, North Star Housing, BHP Law, Newlands Group, County Durham Community Foundation, Teesside University, Serco and JBA Engineering.

If your business would like to get involved email Seth Pearson at Darlington Cares seth.pearson@darlington.gov.uk



Trees for businesses

Tees Valley Combined Authority is leading on a new initiative - Trees on Tees - with the aim of planting a million trees.

This is a partnership between the combined authority and the five Tees Valley councils, including Darlington as well as the Tees Valley Nature Partnership, the Woodland Trust and the Forestry Commission.

If your business is planning to become carbon neutral or wants to make changes to help tackle climate change, planting trees can offset your carbon emissions. Trees improve our natural environment, offer shade and better surroundings at work, improve air quality, increase biodiversity and help prevent flooding and soil erosion.

Thousands of trees were donated to residents, businesses and community groups during Tree Week late last year.

If you want to get involved with planting trees or hedges on your own land, volunteering, or donating to support tree planting, please visit www.teesvalley-ca.gov.uk or email trees@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk

The team can offer help and advice on funding, site suitability, ecological concerns, carbon offsetting and link your business with other groups and landowners.



Help and support for business

There's lots of help and support for any business thinking about taking steps to reduce their impact on the environment. Reducing energy costs and carbon emissions can go hand in hand, helping you save money and the planet!

Details of help and support including free training and advice on funding opportunities across the Tees Valley is available through the council's business support team. Their regular free newsletter details grants, training and other advice on climate related issues and general business support.

Sign up for the monthly issue by emailing business.support@darlington.gov.uk or call 406305.

We also host lots of business advice on our webpage at www.darlington.gov.uk/sustainable





DARLINGTON
Borough Council



External wall insulation on The Dysons' home

Warmer, more energy efficient homes for tenants

Wendy Dyson and her husband David are among our latest tenants to enjoy a warmer, more energy efficient home, thanks to a programme of upgrades supported by government funding.

The council was awarded over £275,000 from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund which was matched with around £317,000 from our housing revenue account to upgrade some of our housing stock with a range of energy efficiency measures including external or cavity wall insulation, double glazing, composite doors and solar panels.

In all 23 homes across the town have been upgraded to help keep tenants' energy bills down, and the Dysons couldn't be happier with the results at the home they've lived in for the past 26 years.

"We've had doubled glazed windows installed, as well as new front and back doors which we got to choose, solar panels and external wall insulation with a brick effect finish," explains Mrs Dyson.

"We've been really happy with the contractors and the work they've done, and we like how it all looks. The new windows mean we don't get

condensation as much and we can already feel the difference, it's a lot warmer and we don't need to have the heating on for as long so we don't pay for as much energy."



Mr Dyson relaxing at home

Other improvements carried out included new canopies, ventilation and upgrades to guttering and roofing with work completed on homes in Bates Avenue, Spring Court, Redworth Road and Berwick Road.

In July 2019, the council declared a climate emergency and we are committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2040. Schemes like this help us work towards the government's energy efficiency and net zero carbon targets and provide our tenants with homes that are energy efficient, affordable, comfortable, and safe. This is only the beginning of our plans to upgrade and make our homes more energy efficient and meet climate change targets.

To find out more about our properties visit www.darlington.gov.uk/housing

Music helps give youngsters in care the best start



L-R: Stephen Wiper (Creative Darlington), Katie Doherty (musician and Blue Cabin artist), Carol Bowden (musician and Blue Cabin associate artist), Joseph Robb (the council) and Lucy Ridley (Blue Cabin associate). Photographer: Jamie Sproates at Theatre Hullabaloo.

Babies and children under five who are in care are set to benefit from free music-making resources to help give them the best start.

The free bags of music-making equipment will be given to youngsters across the borough. The bags contain instruments, finger puppets and recordings of nursery rhymes and songs to help carers and children sing and make music together.

The bags are part of a larger project, This is the Place, funded by Youth Music, Creative Darlington, County Durham Community Foundation and the council. The project includes musical workshops for children and their carers, and events at cultural venues giving them the chance to experience the town's cultural offer, perhaps for the first time.

It is delivered by North East charity Blue Cabin in partnership with staff from the council's fostering and supported lodgings team, while Theatre Hullabaloo hosts events and performances for babies, children and their carers.

Jenny Young, director of Blue Cabin, said:

“Research has shown that music can play a really important role in the first few years of a child's life, it can help with communication between adults and children, and it can help even very young babies form a bond with their carers.

“We're delighted to have been able to work with the council to help care-experienced children and babies, and their carers discover these benefits, and the latest step in this is providing these resources for babies and children to use at home.”



To find out more visit the Blue Cabin website at www.wearebluecabin.com

Garden Waste Collection

Don't miss out!
Sign up online

Garden waste collections will start again in April and run until December.

You will be able to renew or sign up and pay your annual fee of £45 online from the end of January. Please do so as soon as possible to benefit from the scheme. **Sign up by Friday 15 March to be included in the first collection.**



What **CAN** and **CANNOT** go into your garden waste bin?



YES please

Grass cuttings
Hedge trimmings
Twigs/small branches
Flowers
Weeds
Leaves
Prunings



NO thanks

Bags or plastics
Stone, rubble, soil, turf
General waste
Food waste
Animal waste
Japanese knotweed
Ragwort

For more information, to renew or sign up and pay your annual fee, visit www.darlington.gov.uk/gardenwaste



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Please ensure you complete the correct form for renewal or new sign up.