

An ingenious magazine for an ingenious town
named one of the best places to live in the UK

January 2020

one Darlington

Call for more cops

– page 16



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

01325 406222 (option 7)



FREE 30 Hours

Childcare
for 3 & 4
year
olds of
working
families.

Do you earn less than
£100,000 a year?



Are both parents, or the
sole parent, working
the equivalent of at
least 16 hours per
week at the national
minimum wage?



Is your child attending
childcare or nursery?



If so, they may be entitled to a further
15 hours of FREE childcare a week.



For more information speak to your childcare provider, nursery
or school, or call Darlington Families Information Team on
01325 406222 (option 7) or email pfis@darlington.gov.uk



Welcome to One Darlington

I was delighted to be asked to be guest editor of this edition of One Darlington, especially in the run up to the annual Darlington Cares volunteers fair.

The fair is a great chance for anyone who is interested in volunteering to find out about the opportunities available in the town and for charities and other organisations to find people to offer a helping hand. Find out more about it on pages 8 and 9.

As part of my role as a ranger I have been co-ordinating Darlington Cares work in parks and nature reserves across the town. Staff from some of our major employers, including Cummins and EE, have donated their spare time to help repair and maintain our wonderful green spaces.

Over the past year they have achieved so much with many hundreds of hours spent making the parks a great place to visit for people of all ages.

Next year we have an exciting project lined up where we will be planting thousands of trees across the town's green spaces and there will be opportunities for everyone to get involved.

You can see on page 17 how volunteers have also helped transform one of our nature reserves, thanks to a charitable grant. It's so heartwarming to know that so many residents are giving up their time to help the natural environment so we can all benefit from a greener place to live.

For more volunteering inspiration, as well as other tips for making 2020 a great year, see pages 20 and 21.

As we start a new year, the council is asking for your view on its vision and finances. Your views can make a difference so find out how you can have your say on page 4.

One exciting project set to take shape in the coming months is the new bowling alley at the Dolphin Centre. The family-friendly scheme was given the go ahead last month and you can find out more about it on page 7.

I hope you enjoy this edition of One Darlington and you are inspired to volunteer a little bit of your time this year.



Warren Bearpark

Assistant parks and countryside ranger

Inside this issue

10 Moving on, aiming high!

18 Donors' final gift

20-21 Don't worry, be happy

33 A lot to celebrate

35 Peer mentor scheme praised

One Darlington is published by the One Darlington Partnership, Room 106, Town Hall, Darlington.

Email editor@onedarlington.org.uk
Design and production – Xentrall Shared Services.

Distribution – Swift Advertising NE Ltd. Tel: 0191 2653207.

The next edition will be distributed from 2 March. If you do not receive a copy by 9 March, please call 406058.

An audio version of One Darlington is also available at www.onedarlington.org.uk

Make **YOUR** voice heard!



We are currently consulting on two key documents which will help shape our borough over the coming years. **The Council Plan** sets out our vision between now and **May 2023** and the **Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)** shows how we will spend and invest your money.

We want to know what you think

The **VISION:**

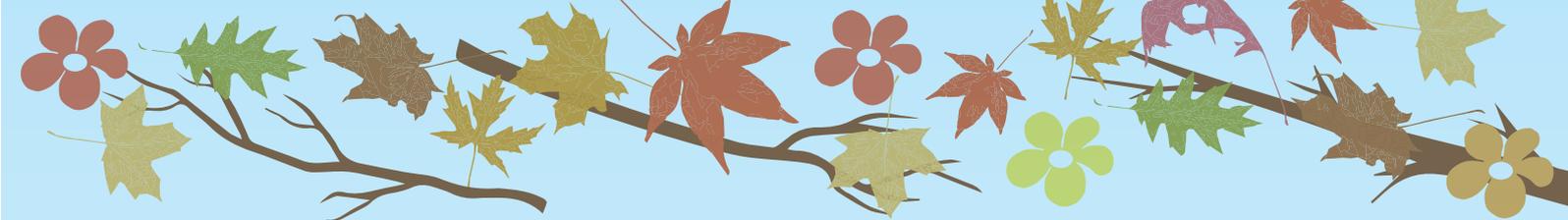
“Darlington is a place where people want to live and businesses want to locate, where the economy continues to grow, where people are happy and proud of the borough and where everyone has the opportunity to maximise their potential.”

Both consultations are now live. The consultation on the MTFP runs until **Thursday 30 January**, and the Council Plan consultation runs until **Friday 7 February**.

Keep an eye on the council's Facebook and Twitter pages for more information.

Visit www.darlington.gov.uk/consultations to have your say.





GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION

**Don't miss out -
sign up ONLINE**

Almost 5,000 people signed up for garden waste collections last year, with about 1,300 tonnes of garden waste collected and recycled as compost.



The service will run again this year, with collections from April to November.

From the end of January, people wishing to continue with the service can complete a renewal form and pay their £35 annual fee online.

There will also be a separate form for those wanting to sign up for the first time.

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

Please ensure you complete the correct form – either for renewal or new sign up. If you have any difficulties paying online please pop into the Town Hall customer services centre – with your credit or debit card – and one of our team will be able to help you through the process.

Life saving pool staff

This month's Spotlight is on the lifeguards who helped save the lives of swimmers taken ill in the Dolphin Centre pool.

Elle Dewar, Colin Collins and Kate Willson start every shift knowing this could be the one where they have to take decisive action to save a life.

All three have been praised for their efforts after being involved in recent emergencies.

Elle, who has worked at the Dolphin Centre for the past two years, jumped into the pool to rescue a woman who had suffered a seizure in the water.

She brought the swimmer from the bottom of the pool to the side while Colin ran to help. After 29 chest compressions, the swimmer started breathing again and was put in the recovery position.

Her family got in touch the next day to thank staff and let them know she had been released from hospital with no ill effects.

The woman later contacted the centre to thank the lifeguards who undoubtedly helped save her life.

Kate was involved in a separate incident, in which a regular swimmer, whose medical conditions are known to staff, got into difficulty.

Kate jumped into the water and rescued him, assisted by swimming teacher Lyndsey Allinson and duty manager Darren Cole.

The man was taken to hospital in a serious condition and released a few weeks later. He has also since visited the centre to show his appreciation.

Vicky Grant, team development manager at the Dolphin Centre, said: "These incidents highlight how vital training is in saving a life and how effective communication gives someone who is taken ill the best chance of survival.

"We are very proud of the bravery shown in these two incidents. The speed in which the situations were dealt with shows teamwork really does save lives."

Elle said: "Obviously, it's something that you hope never happens when you are on duty, or at any other time, but when it does your training kicks in and you do what you need to do to help achieve a positive outcome.

"I'm pleased to have played a part in a story with a happy ending and proud of everyone who did their bit. We have a really strong team and while incidents like this get the adrenaline going, it's something we are well trained to deal with."



From right: lifeguards Kate Willson, Colin Collins and Elle Dewar with pool manager Lee Hutton



Your views on town centre future

Last summer a new strategy for improving and developing the town centre over the next ten years was drafted.

The strategy aims to improve the attractiveness of the town centre; celebrate Darlington's heritage; increase town centre living; support economic growth; improve health and wellbeing and make Darlington a great place to live, work and visit.

Four key areas of the town were identified for the majority of the development work as part of the strategy; the Victorian indoor market, Skinnergate and the Yards, Northgate and Crown Street.

In September we asked for your feedback on the strategy and more than 500 of you shared your views with us. Here's a summary of what you told us:

- More than seven in 10 people would like more shops, with over half wanting more events, festivals and visitor attractions
- When asked what was most important to them about the town centre, more than eight in 10 people said cleanliness and quality of open spaces, with more than seven in 10 saying feeling safe and a variety of shops

- 65% of people felt more leisure facilities should be provided for young people with the majority saying a bowling alley would be what they would most like to see
- Most people felt the focus of the Crown Street improvement work should be on the library and developing it as a visitor attraction
- For Northgate the majority of those who commented felt the focus should be on keeping and improving the shops on offer in that area
- More independent and smaller shops was felt to be the most important thing to focus on for Skinnergate and the Yards.

A detailed breakdown of the findings from the consultation were taken to Cabinet in November. The strategy was approved, so you will start to see development work getting underway over the coming months and years.

Big thanks to everyone who got involved and gave us their views.

Bowling alley strikes right note

Exciting plans to bring a bowling alley to the town centre have been agreed and are ready to go.

The five lane ten pin bowling alley will be on the first floor of the Dolphin Centre, next to the bistro and bar, so there's easy access to food and drinks making it an ideal afternoon out for all the family.

As part of the plans, the soft play area will be improved and extended and a new activity area with pool tables, air hockey and much more will be opened.

It's estimated the work will cost £1.6 million, which will be funded by a combination of council funding and income generated by the new facilities.

We hope the facility will be well used and will encourage more people to come into town.

The work is expected to get underway in the spring and should take several months to complete.

Meet the volunteers

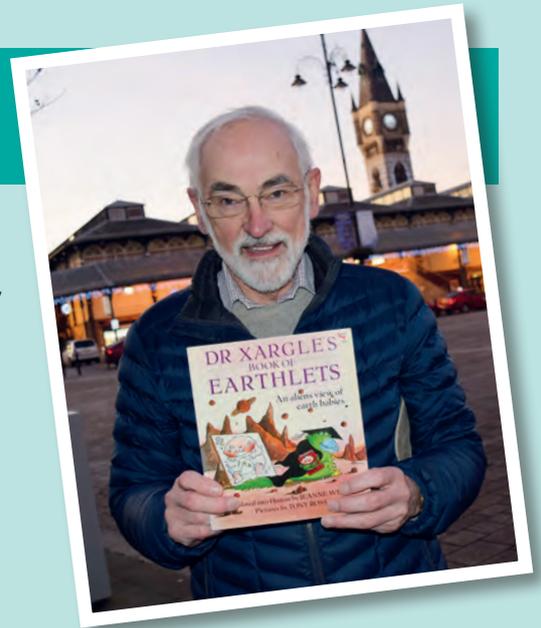
We meet four of the volunteers from two of Darlington Cares flagship projects – **Busy Readers** and **Pick, Pie and a Pint**.

Busy Readers



Kath Wall

volunteers at Reid Street Primary School. She volunteers because she finds it very worthwhile. Her favourite things about volunteering is that it keeps her busy, helps keep her mind active, and she gets to meet new people.



Alan Moon

volunteers at Red Hall Primary School. He enjoys listening to his children and grandchildren read, and he wanted to give back to the community. His favourite thing about volunteering is when it's obvious that he's helped a child. One of his best memories is when he had read to a child and they hugged him because they enjoyed it so much.

Pick, Pie and a Pint



Courtney Johnson

"I work for Nando's and they encourage all staff to volunteer with Darlington Cares. Taking pride in the environment is very important to me. I love the feeling I get when I've picked a lot of litter and tidied up an area."



Lucy Keller

"I volunteer for litter picks. I chose to volunteer because it's fun! It keeps me very active and I like picking up all the litter."



VOLUNTEERING FAIR

Thursday 6 February

10am-3pm

**Sports Hall,
The Dolphin Centre**

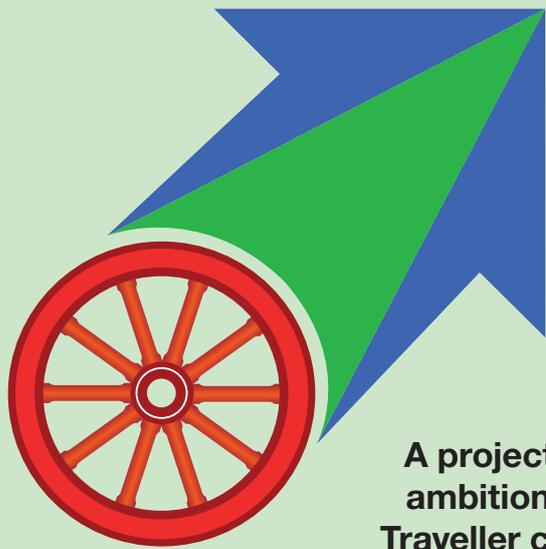
**Come along and see how
you can make a difference
in your community**

**Last
Year**

**57 voluntary organisations got involved
Hundreds of volunteers were recruited!**

#MakeADifferenceDarlo





MOVING ON, AIMING HIGH!

A project aimed at supporting the career ambitions of children in the Gypsy Roma Traveller community is proving successful.

Moving On, Aiming High is aimed at young people aged 11 to 18 and their families. It started in April last year and runs until May 2020.

With support from community leader Billy Welch, the project's first event was a pop-up careers advice session at Rowan West camp. Young people had the opportunity to take part in arts and crafts and think about what they might like to do in the future. They also had the chance to meet with education and training providers including Learning & Skills and Darlington College.

A second pop-up event was held at Firthmoor Community Centre, where young people designed their own t-shirts displaying their career aspirations. As well as showing off creations, they took part in activities like 'career bingo', where they thought about the different types of jobs their family members have'.

Another game looked at the variety of jobs available in Darlington, to show the young people how many jobs are available in industries like childcare and hair and beauty. Childcare workers from the community centre nursery joined in the session and made a real difference, as they were able to share their personal experiences and act as role models for the young people.

Upcoming events include a pop-up school, where young people will have a chance to meet employers, take part in team activities, recognise the many skills they already have and research opportunities for jobs and apprenticeships.



For more information about the project, search for Moving On, Aiming High on Facebook or follow @movingonaiminghigh on Instagram.

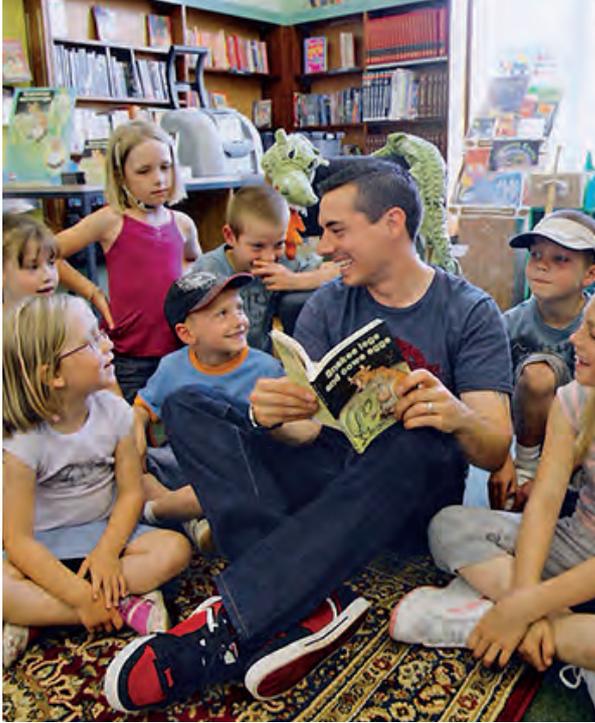
Northgate revamp

An exciting project aimed at improving the environment and wellbeing of people living in Northgate is about to get underway.

Northgate ward is the area around Gladstone Street and North Lodge Park on the outskirts of the town centre, and has one of the highest number of privately rented houses in our borough.

It is an area where there is a higher number of young families with low income, and crime and antisocial behaviour tend to be higher than average.

Research has found that many of the houses in this area are in a poor state of repair and there are a lot of properties which have been empty for a while.



Darlington

BOOKFEST

Think. Create. Inspire



Bookworms of all ages won't be able to resist this year's BookFest at Crown Street library.

The week long extravaganza, which is returning for its second year, is a celebration of World Book Day and will run from Monday 2 – Saturday 7 March.

An exciting range of events involving music, storytelling, performances, animation and gaming will be available for children of all ages.

Confirmed so far is the author of fictional and academic books, Adam Bushnell and children's book illustrator and library favourite, Liz Million.

There's also children's theatre with productions of Little Red Riding Hood and Friends and Big Goldilocks and The Three Bears plus a family friendly Big Little Gig.

It promises to be a hugely popular event so don't miss out and get your free tickets in advance from Eventbrite from 8am on Monday 24 February.



With this in mind, it was felt that by working with partners such as the police, much could be done to improve the houses and the area in general, which in turn would help improve the wellbeing and happiness of residents.

Over the next few months there will be lots going on to help revamp this area. Residents will be offered support and advice to help with things like home security, health issues and education and where necessary enforcement action will be taken to rid the streets of crime and antisocial behaviour. Work will also get underway to improve the houses and streets in this part of town, making it a much more pleasant place to live.

As work progresses we will keep you up to date with how we are getting on so keep a look out in future editions of One Darlington and follow our social media feeds for updates.

Our hope is in a few months' time we will have a safer, cleaner and much improved Northgate for both residents and visitors to enjoy for years to come.

Community grants

Charities, voluntary groups and community projects are being encouraged to apply for a grant to fund their work. Up to £5,000 is available from the County Durham Community Foundation for organisations, based or working in the borough, that have an impact in the community. Organisations of all sizes can apply and applications can be made at any time. To find out more visit www.cdfc.org.uk or call 0191 3876340.

School admissions

The council is consulting on plans to reduce the number of pupils enrolled at Whinfield Primary School for the 2021/22 school year. For details visit www.darlington.gov.uk/consultations. Comments must be received by 31 January. Email comments to schools.admissions@darlington.gov.uk or write to Schools admissions manager, People Services, Town Hall, Darlington DL1 5QT.

Hospice volunteers

Volunteers at St Teresa's Hospice have raised almost £160,000 in just over a year. The volunteers have given up more than 4,000 hours of their time to contribute to the £3m a year needed to maintain the hospice for the people of Darlington, South Durham and North Yorkshire. An event was held in their honour at the hospice to thank the volunteers for their dedication. To volunteer visit www.darlingtonhospice.org.uk/volunteer or call 254321.



Bioscience building opens

Teesside University has shown off its new £22.3 million biosciences centre of excellence to council leader Heather Scott.

The National Horizons Centre, which was officially opened in October, is a teaching, training and research facility in Central Park, near to the train station.

The purpose of the centre is to help grow bio-based industries which are set to transform the UK economy, including biologics, industrial biotechnology and bio-pharmaceuticals. It will bring industry and academia together, to provide the sector with knowledge, skills, talent and facilities to support its development and growth.

The development attracted the single biggest investment by the Local Growth Fund, with £17.5m of support secured via the Tees Valley Combined Authority, along with additional funding from the European Regional Development Fund and Teesside University.



Have your say on dog orders

We know lots of you love your dogs and that's why we want your views on plans to change the rules on dog ownership.

The majority of dog owners are responsible, but we want to make sure everyone follows the rules and ensures their pets, and other people, are safe.

Under the plans, we would replace the existing rules with a Public Space Protection Order.



It would include four existing offences:

-  failure to remove dog faeces
-  not keeping a dog on a lead
-  not putting and keeping a dog on a lead when directed by an authorised officer
-  allowing a dog to enter land from which dogs are excluded (including children's play areas and areas for playing sport).



Two new offences would be also added:

-  walking more than a specified number of dogs (we are suggesting a maximum of four)
-  taking dogs into cemeteries - with some exceptions, for example registered assistance dogs.

If the changes are brought in, it would be an offence to refuse to comply with the rules when challenged by an official such as a police officer or council worker. Failure to comply could lead to a fixed penalty of up to £100 or a fine of up to £1,000.

Full details of what we are proposing and how you can have your say can be found at www.darlington.gov.uk/consultations

You have until the end of January to let us know your views.

We offer help and support to those little ones who have special educational needs



Find out more www.darlington.gov.uk/send



#BestStartInLife

ENJOY DARLINGTON

From a performance by international superstar Jess Glynne to a spectacular Christmas lights switch on, 2019 was a great year to Enjoy Darlington.

Even MORE

The **GOOD** news is there's lots **MORE** to **ENJOY** in **DARLINGTON** this year.

Time to fill your new diary with lots of events.

Look out for the tasty #LoveDarlo Restaurant Week in February to the award-winning Food and Drink and Jazz Festival in May.





in 2020

Celebrate 75 years of Victory in Europe Day and enjoy the return of family favourites, including Darlo by the Sea, Summer of Sound, Darlo Drum Festival, the Festival of Ingenuity, the Community Carnival, and much more.

Plus, look out for the 25th anniversary of the Darlington R'n'B Festival in September!

With wonderful shops, bars, and restaurants, there's always something to **ENJOY** in **DARLINGTON.**

www.enjoydarlington.com and follow #LoveDarlo on Facebook

Join us on the beat

The clock striking midnight on New Year's Eve marks a fresh start for many of us – with a new career often being top of the wish list.

With the start of a new decade, why not make 2020 the year to join one of the top performing police forces in the country?

Throughout the year, Durham Constabulary will be recruiting for a number of positions, including PCs.

Being a police officer is like no other job in the world. We can guarantee it'll be the most challenging thing you've ever done, but also the most rewarding.

You'll be running towards danger when everyone else is running away. You'll see things that nobody else will see and you'll do things you never thought you'd do.

But you will finish your shift knowing you have made a real difference to someone's life - you were there during their hour of need when they had nobody else to turn to. You'll make a genuine difference to your community and you'll help make your town a better place to live.

You'll also be working for an outstanding police force – one that will support you and enable you to grow both professionally and personally.

We will also be offering more apprenticeship roles across County Durham and Darlington, and will be recruiting new Police Community Support Volunteers (PCSVs).

Launched in 2018, PCSVs are volunteers who support frontline policing in neighbourhoods across the area. They take part in foot patrol, help with basic crime enquiries, assist in local incidents and get to the heart of neighbourhood issues.

PCVCs are positive, public-spirited people who can get to the heart of their community and build up good relationships with those who live and work there.

Travel expenses, uniform and training is provided.

More information on when recruitment will open and how to apply will be released on our website later this year at www.durham.police.uk



Community group nets funding to improve fishing pond



David Preston, secretary of the Maidendale Nature and Fishing Reserve Trust with Lewis Stokes of The Banks Group

Volunteers at Maidendale Nature and Fishing Reserve Trust have reeled in a £5,000 grant to clear out their pond for local anglers.

The trust, which promotes conservation at the nature reserve, received the money from Banks Group's Community Fund.

The reserve is regularly used by residents and visitors and holds family friendly events throughout the year. A small bluebell wood and more than 100 whip trees will soon be planted to encourage plant and animal life.

David Preston, secretary of the trust, said: "The pond was getting rather choked with weeds and reeds, as well as looking a bit unsightly. Some of our anglers were losing lines, hooks and floats.

"We couldn't afford to do this work so quickly without the Banks Group's generous support - the area is a lot clearer and neater now, and being able to get on with it has given us all a big boost.

"Clearing out the pond has made an immediate and a long term positive impact on how the reserve is enjoyed, and we've already had lots of positive comments from our regular visitors about how much better it looks."

Free advice to travel greener



Residents along West Auckland Road and Yarm Road are getting free advice to help them travel greener, healthier and cheaper in 2020.

Let's Go Tees Valley travel advisors will be visiting residents in the two areas, who live close to bus stops until the end of the month, handing out information on timetables, rail services, travel cards, and walking and cycling maps.

Andrew Bean, senior travel advisor, said: "Speaking to people about their regular, local journeys and offering tailored advice about travelling without the car is a really important part of our ambition to make the Tees Valley a healthier, greener place to live."

The travel advisors also regularly visit the job centre and are urging people who can't find work because they don't have their own transport to get in touch for help to get to interviews, work or training.

Find out more at www.letsготeesvalley.co.uk

'Good' rating in CQC inspection

We are delighted that following inspections by the Care Quality Commission in July last year, the trust has achieved a rating of 'good'.

Inspections over several days, at both Darlington Memorial Hospital and University Hospital of North Durham, looked at urgent and emergency care, surgery and end of life care - the latter of which was rated as 'outstanding'. The report highlighted many other areas of excellent and outstanding practice, in particular, praising our staff for treating patients with compassion and kindness, respecting their privacy and dignity, and taking account of their individual needs.

We are immensely proud of all our dedicated staff and the care they provide to patients every day and night - all the more remarkable given the increasing demand for our services, particularly those in emergency and unscheduled care.

This is a fantastic achievement for Team CDDFT, our partners and our local residents. We are on a journey to make sure we have great people delivering safe, compassionate and joined-up care, we have a clear strategic direction and are taking forward plans to further transform our services. Our organisational values ensure that we place patients at the heart of all that we do and it is pleasing that this comes through in the report.

Memorial sculpture in honour of organ donation



A memorial has been unveiled at Darlington Memorial Hospital to honour those members of the community who have donated organs.

A stone memorial with brass features has been erected in the hospital's sensory garden, in recognition of the 32 patients who have donated organs since June 2010, resulting in about 100 people receiving either life saving or life transforming operations. Another 200 people have benefited from transplants from donors at our hospital in Durham. Future donors will also be able to be named and remembered on the memorial.

Paul Forster-Jones, non-executive director and chair of the trust's organ donation committee, said: "From our very first donor, Alan Shelton from Darlington, to our most recent donor, a 29 year old woman also from Darlington, these people are an inspiration, giving the most precious gift.

"We remain in awe of the generosity of the donors and particularly the courage of the families to see through their loved ones' wish. Sadly, however it's not enough and still people will die whilst waiting for a transplant, and many others have to endure difficult and sometimes painful and distressing treatment whilst on the waiting list."

Although the law around organ donation changes this year from an opt-in to an opt-out system, it's still important to let loved ones know your wishes as the final decision could still be up to them.

It's simple to join the NHS organ donation register, visit www.organdonation.nhs.uk; call 0300 123 23 23 or text 'save' to 84118.



Armed Forces covenant

Demonstrating our commitment to support the Armed Forces community, we've signed an Armed Forces covenant acknowledging the valuable contribution serving personnel, both regular and reservists, veterans, and military families, make to public services and the wider community. In a joint ceremony, the council also reaffirmed its commitment to the covenant.

The ceremony took place in Memorial Hall at Darlington Memorial Hospital, which is also the location of the town's war memorial, where the names of all local men who gave their lives during the First World War are engraved.

Sue Jacques, chief executive, said: "A number of our staff have been members of the Armed Forces, or are reservists, combining their role with us and serving their country. It's humbling that some of our medical and nursing colleagues have used their amazing skills serving in Iraq and Afghanistan and were also deployed to Sierra Leone during the Ebola crisis, caring for members of our forces and civilians. We're proud of the dedication they show their patients, whether it's here or in a field hospital somewhere else in the world."

Find us
 on social
 media!



@CDDFTNHS

Award successes

At the recent Bright Ideas in Health Awards, Ian Dove, business development manager, was named regional innovation champion, for being instrumental in our pioneering use of digital technology for the benefit of patients.

The trust's cardiac arrest prevention team took second place in the 'demonstrating an impact upon patient safety' category, for their work to reduce the number of patients having a cardiac arrest whilst in hospital, by 54%. The work is led by Lisa Ward, early detection and resuscitation lead nurse, and matron Claire Stocks.



Don't worry

Live your best life in 2020 with our guide to getting the New Year off to a positive start!

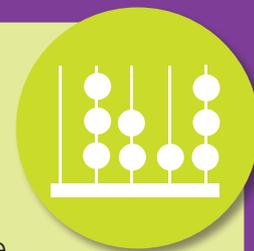
Ok so it's January, its cold and it's dark and if that wasn't enough your bank balance isn't looking too healthy and you can't fit into your pre-Christmas jeans! The festivities are over for another year and there's weeks of long winter nights looming.

You can't blame anyone for feeling a bit flat at this time of year. In fact the most depressing day of the year, also known as Blue Monday, falls on 20 January. However there's loads of positive stuff you can do to banish the January blues and get your year off on the right foot.

Be happy



Budget your money



Christmas is such an expensive time and if you are worried about money don't put off getting advice as soon as you can.

Debt can quickly spiral if you don't take steps to get on top of it, so don't put it off.

Contact Darlington's Citizens Advice Bureau on **0300 330 1195** for help and support in getting your finances in order.

Be kind to yourself



Make it your mission every day to find some time for yourself and do something that brings you joy!

Sounds easy but busy lives sometimes stop us looking after our own health and wellbeing.

The New Year is a great time to get into new habits so why not fit some me time into your daily routine?

Career



It's never too late to start working towards your dream career – remember everyone has to start somewhere to make a change, so whether it's qualifications or experience you need, make sure you have an achievable plan in place to get to where you want to be.

Check out Learning & Skills on the council's website for hints and tips.

Exercise

If you've over indulged this festive season, there are simple changes you can make to get back on track and move more!

Check out what's on offer at the Dolphin Centre by visiting the website or calling 406039.

You could get out and about and enjoy our many walking and cycle routes, for more information visit www.letsgoteesvalley.co.uk



Mindfulness

Mindfulness involves making a special effort to notice what's happening in the present moment without judging anything.

It aims to help you:

- become more self-aware
- feel calmer and less stressed
- feel more able to choose how to respond to your thoughts and feelings
- cope with difficult or unhelpful thoughts.

Find out more by visiting mind.org.uk



Be kind to others

One little act of kindness can make such a big difference to someone, so make it your business to be kind.

Little things like a smile, giving a compliment or holding the door open are a great place to start but there's loads you can do to make a difference in your community, such as getting involved in a litter pick or helping out elderly neighbours.

Find out more about volunteering in Darlington by visiting the council's website or see pages 8 and 9.



Help the environment

It's never been more important for everyone to play their part in looking after the environment and there's lots of small changes you can make:

- Drive less, walk more
- Use a refillable water bottle
- Don't waste water
- Recycle right
- Turn off lights and heating when not in use.



Sleep

Sleep is so important so make sure you plan enough rest in the year ahead.

A good night's sleep can mean you feel less stressed, have a better memory, lower blood pressure, are more likely to maintain a healthy weight and keeps your immune system strong.

What more reason do you need to get snoozing!



Make time to talk

We all have busy lives, and more online and social media access than ever before means it's easy to get distracted instead of making the most of the people around us.

Thursday 6 February is Time to Talk day, which encourages people to talk and listen more.

Find out more at time-to-change.org.uk
We hope we've helped put a spring in your step and you're raring to go for a healthy, happy and successful 2020.



There's lots to enjoy in Darlington. Here's a taster of what's going on over the next few months....enjoy! Visit www.enjoydarlington.com for more events news.

parkrun - every Saturday, 9am, South Park. Free 5k run. To register visit www.parkrun.org.uk/darlingtonouthpark

juniorparkrun - every Sunday, 9am, South Park. Free 2k run for ages four-14. To register visit www.parkrun.org.uk/southpark-juniors

JANUARY

An evening with Alan Titchmarsh - Wednesday 8, Darlington Hippodrome.

The Halle - Thursday 9, Darlington Hippodrome.

Darlington Railway Museum - A review and preview by Leona White-Hannant, Museum Manager Curator - Thursday 9, Head of Steam.

The Magic of Mowtown - Friday 10, Darlington Hippodrome.

Justin Moorhouse: Northern Joker - Friday 10, Hullabaloo.

Strong Enough - Cher tribute show - Friday 10, The Majestic Theatre.

The Elvis Years - Saturday 11, Darlington Hippodrome.



Off the rails, a small personal view in and around trains by artist Bill Oakley - 11 January - Sunday 3 March, Head of Steam.

Pink Floydian - Saturday 11, The Majestic Theatre.



Megaslam wrestling - Sunday 12, The Dolphin Centre.

The Zeppelin Experience - Friday 17, The Forum.

Black Ice (AC/DC) - Saturday 18, The Forum.

Clinton Baptise in the paranormalist returns! - Saturday 18, The Majestic Theatre.

Vegan Festival - Saturday 18, Indoor market and West Row.

Some guys have all the luck - The Rod Stewart story - Sunday 19, Darlington Hippodrome.



Bookstart Rhymetime: Mondays and Fridays at 1.30pm (new time) and Fridays at 10.30am, weekly from Monday 20, Crown Street Library.

The Elo Experience - Tuesday 21, Darlington Hippodrome.

One Night in Dublin - Wednesday 22, Darlington Hippodrome.

Sinderella - Wednesday 22, The Majestic Theatre. Adult panto.

Coppelia - Thursday 23, The Majestic Theatre. Ballet.

Sleeping Beauty - Friday 24, Darlington Hippodrome. Ballet.

The Total Stone Roses - Friday 24, The Forum.

Letz Zepp - Friday 24, The Majestic Theatre.

Who's Next - Saturday 25, The Forum. Tribute act.

Swan Lake - Saturday 25, Darlington Hippodrome.



Darlington Orchestra winter concert - Saturday 25, the Dolphin Centre.

Nutcracker - Sunday 26, Darlington Hippodrome.

Band of Gold - Monday 27 - Saturday 1 February, Darlington Hippodrome.

The George Michael story - Thursday 30, The Majestic Theatre.

Stereo MC's - Friday 31, The Forum.

Rolling Clones - Friday 31, The Majestic Theatre.

FEBRUARY

Arts market - Saturday 1, Indoor market and West Row.

West End night - Saturday 1, The Majestic Theatre.

Menopause the musical: Cruising through menopause - Wednesday 5 - Friday 7, Darlington Hippodrome.

100% Simon Brodtkin - Thursday 6, Darlington Hippodrome.

Harry Potter Night - Thursday 6, Crown Street Library.

U2 2 – Friday 7, The Majestic Theatre.

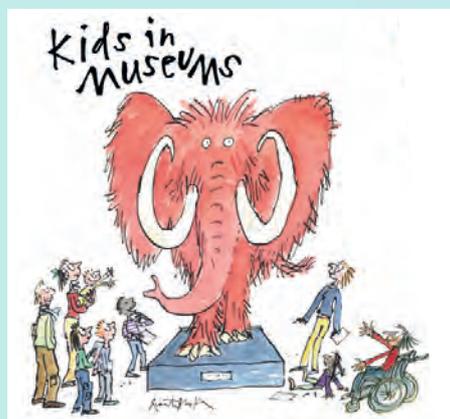
G5 Locomotive Company – A talk by Bernard Morris – Saturday 8, Head of Steam.

The Springsteen Sessions – Saturday 8, The Forum.

An Evening with Sir Michael Parkinson – Sunday 9, Darlington Hippodrome.

The Croft – Tuesday 11 – Saturday 15, Darlington Hippodrome.

Tom Binns: The Psychic Comedim – Thursday 13, The Forum.



Toddler take over day - Friday 14, 11.00am – 12.30pm and 1.30-3.00pm, Head of Steam. Bring your toddler (aged 5 or under) to take over the jobs at the museum. Be a gallery attendant, a collections packer, a cleaner, make a display, issue tickets and secure the building. Maximum of two children per adult. Entrance fee applies.

NERA meeting – a talk by Richard Barber – Saturday 15, 1.30pm, Head of Steam.

The Killerz – Saturday 15, The Forum.

Vampires Rock – Sunday 16, Darlington Hippodrome.

Flo and Joan – Before the screaming starts – Monday 17, Darlington Hippodrome. Entrance fee applies.

Tango Fire – Tuesday 18, Darlington Hippodrome. Dance.

Love Science – transport workshop Wednesday 19, Head of Steam. Fun science sessions. Places must be booked.

Block parties - Thursday 20, Head of Steam. Lego-themed fun. Sessions must be booked.

Stations scamps and crafts - Friday 21. Lego-themed fun. Sessions must be booked.

The Lost Happy Endings – Saturday 22 and Sunday 23, Darlington Hippodrome. Family theatre.

The Clashed – Saturday 22, The Forum.

Predictable – Saturday 22, The Majestic Theatre. Psychological magic.

The Johnny Cash roadshow – Man in Black tour – Tuesday 25, Darlington Hippodrome.

The Sound of Springsteen – Wednesday 26, Darlington Hippodrome.

Joe Brown – Thursday 27, Darlington Hippodrome.

Dance to the Music – Friday 28, Darlington Hippodrome. Dance show.

Northern live – Do I love you – Saturday 29, Darlington Hippodrome.

Quadrophenia Night feat The Atlantics – Saturday 29, The Forum.

Wool Festival, Saturday 29, indoor market and West Row.

MARCH

Farmers' market - Sunday 1 and then first Sunday of every month, West Row.

That'll be the day – Monday 2 and Tuesday 3, Darlington Hippodrome. Musical tribute.



Bookfest – Monday 2 – Saturday 7, Crown Street Library (see page 11 for more details).

Dad's Army radio show – Monday 2, Darlington Hippodrome.

Come what may – a tribute to Moulin Rouge - Wednesday 4, Darlington Hippodrome.

BalletBoyz – Deluxe – Thursday 5, Darlington Hippodrome. Dance.

Matt Forde: Brexit, pursued by a bear – Thursday 5, Hullabaloo. Comedy.

Seven Drunken Nights – The story of the Dubliners - Friday 6, Darlington Hippodrome.

Fastlove – Saturday 7, Darlington Hippodrome. Tribute show.

Made in Tennessee – Saturday 7, The Majestic Theatre. Country music.

CONTACTS

Darlington Hippodrome box office open 10am-8pm (6pm on non-performance days); Cornmill Centre ground floor open 10am-4pm Monday to Saturday; call 405405 10am-8pm Monday-Saturday (6pm on non-performance days); or visit www.darlingtonhippodrome.co.uk

ENJOY TEES VALLEY

There's lots to see and do across the Tees Valley. Visit www.enjoyteesvalley.com for full details.

All information is printed as provided. Please check with venue before travelling.

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

Head of Steam – Darlington Railway Museum – call 405060, visit www.head-of-steam.co.uk or email headofsteam@darlington.gov.uk Entrance fees apply in most cases.

Darlington libraries – call 349610.

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

Recycle right – we are

The council is a responsible recycler - none of the waste we collect for recycling is sent abroad for processing. By only collecting materials that can be recycled, reused or treated in the UK we are working to ensure that the items you sort are actually recycled and don't end up in foreign landfill sites or dumped in our oceans.

Being responsible means we can't collect all the recyclable materials we would like to, as the UK does not have the infrastructure to recycle all the waste we produce. For example there are lots of different types and grades of plastic – we will only collect those higher quality plastics which can be treated and recycled in the UK. We ask you to put the other so called 'problem plastics', which can't be treated in the UK, in your general household waste.

But it doesn't stop there! The vast majority of the waste you throw away in your normal bin is treated in a special plant and turned into a fuel (called SRF) which is used in cement production both here and abroad. This means even those items we can't recycle will be turned into something else and as little as possible of your household waste ends up in UK landfill. None of our problems are sent abroad for another country to deal with.

We have a moral duty to know what is happening to the recycling you collect.



LOOK OUT FOR NEW STICKERS ON YOUR RECYCLING BINS IN THE
By 2025 we want 50% of your household waste to be reused, recycled or composted. By

Be a responsible recycler!



It's important that we tell you how to recycle right and what items we can recycle. The market in recycling is like any other economic market – the value of items goes up and down and sometimes this means we have to stop collecting a certain type of waste as we can't find anyone to buy it from us and recycle it.

Markets and prices change and sometimes it becomes too expensive to collect certain types of recycling in the UK.

Black plastic is a good example of this. In the past, companies could make a profit from recycling black plastic in the UK and we were able to accept it in our recycling system. However, the black plastic market became unprofitable and the company who had previously recycled your black plastic decided they could no longer do it. Instead,

they separated the black plastic from the other high quality plastics and sent it to a plant to turn it into fuel (SRF). We are very lucky to have one of the few UK plants that can turn waste into fuel here, on our doorstep, so it made economic and environmental sense to stop sending our black plastic to a company miles away to turn into fuel when we could do it closer to home. That's why we asked you to stop putting black plastic in your recycling bin and instead throw it away with your normal rubbish so it can be turned into SRF here.

This is just one example of how changing markets in recycling affect what we will ask you to collect.

We always try to keep you informed of these changes via our website, this magazine and social media. We will continue to look for new opportunities to improve our service even more.

NEXT FEW WEEKS SHOWING YOU EXACTLY WHAT GOES WHERE!

recycling right you can help us achieve this aim and continue to be a responsible recycler.

#5 😊 Faces

www.darlington.gov.uk/50faces

Maki differ

Sarah Travis

Business growth and investment officer



I've been at the council for about 17 months – so still quite new I suppose! I love my job and find it really interesting and varied. My role is to support businesses in Darlington as well as new businesses who are thinking about setting up here.

This can involve anything from helping them find the right premises to securing grants and funding to help establish and grow their business. I also offer general business advice as well as being a point of contact for certain services the council offers such as planning and business rates.

The size of the businesses I work with varies from small independents up to large international companies and everyone has different needs and support requirements. It's a great feeling to know you have helped a business move onto the next level of growth or given some support that has meant they are able to achieve their aspirations.

All of the staff here are helpful and supportive. Our teams help each other, which ultimately helps the businesses we are looking to support. Organising this year's Business Week was a great achievement for me. We had more than 500 attendees across 26 events and more than 600 people attended the recruitment fair we held – some of them have got a job already. It's great knowing you've been part of something so positive.

For videos of Sarah and Ellie – and to read more – visit www.darlington.gov.uk/50faces

ng a ence

equality

diversity

Ellie Walker

Equality and diversity training officer

I've only worked for the council for a few months – but so far, so good! I used to work in the communications team, but left to try my hand at teaching.

Although I enjoyed teaching, I wanted a new challenge, so was over the moon when this role came up. Not only did it give me the opportunity to work in an area I feel passionate about but it also meant I could come and work for DBC again!

My new role is all about helping council staff to increase their awareness and understanding of diversity and equality, so they can offer the best possible service to all residents, regardless of their background. Making sure everyone knows what their responsibilities are around equality, diversity and respect is so important and I feel really motivated to do a good job. I also get to work with a lot of our partners, like the police and NHS, so it's a great opportunity to learn more about what other organisations are doing to promote equality and diversity.

One of the things I love most about my job is that I get to meet and work with so many different people right across the council. I'm a real people person so this element of my role suits me down to the ground. No two days are the same, which keeps things interesting!

I live in Darlington, so the town and its people are really important to me. I feel really lucky that I can make a difference where I live.

Find out more about our everyday superstars
www.darlington.gov.uk/50faces

Make DarloMillions your New Year's resolution

If you've vowed to take a closer look at your finances this year, help could be at hand. There's millions of pounds in unclaimed government support in Darlington, and some of this could be rightfully yours. Most people don't realise they're eligible, but the average amount claimed is £2,750.

We caught up with Mike Robinson, from Darlington Citizen's Advice Bureau, who helps oversee work on the DarloMillions project:

What would you recommend as a New Year's resolution?

"I think people should check if they're getting the right amount of benefits. Many people find they've not got enough to live on, and yet there's benefits out there to help people on a low income or who have health problems."

Do you have any stories about people being surprised that they could claim?

"Yes, many! One example was a client we saw at our carers' centre session. A carer came in to get advice about benefits for the people she was looking after. She also checked her benefits and found she was entitled to claim. She had not realised she could claim help as a carer as she worked. We find a lot of people don't realise you can still get help under Universal Credit even when you work."

What would you say is the biggest misconception about claiming benefits?

"A lot of people think benefits claimants are getting more than they need – in fact, the opposite is true. There's a tremendous amount of underclaiming. I think that's because a lot of people don't realise that they can claim even when in work, or when they are already claiming other benefits. If you know anybody who has disabilities, even if they work, suggest that they check what they're owed."

Do you have any advice on how people can find out if they can claim?

"We find a lot of people get advice from family and friends – so make sure to look out for yours. You can get in touch by calling us on 734999, email darlomillions@darlingtoncab.co.uk or use our online benefits calculator. It only takes five minutes to check."

What can somebody expect when they come to see you about their benefits?

"We'll do a full benefits MOT. Most of the benefits you're entitled to are the ones you don't know about. We'll check to see if you're getting all that you're owed."

What is the most underclaimed benefit?

"Disability benefits, particularly personal independent payments, are our most underclaimed benefit."

Do you or CAB visit any community centres?

"We work closely with Darlington Carers Support, King's Church Foodbank, and we do a session at Firthmoor. We'll also arrange home visits for clients who are housebound, which is particularly helpful to some of our older residents."



To find out if you, or someone you know, is entitled to claim visit www.onedarlington.org.uk/darlo-millions and use our online calculator. For advice or help to make a claim, email darlomillions@darlingtoncab.co.uk or call 734999.



CHANGE A FUTURE



Provide supported lodgings with Darlington Borough Council

Supported lodgings is for young people aged 16-25 who have left care but don't feel ready to live independently. Supported lodgings provide accommodation in a home environment. You would be required to offer a safe and stable home so a young person can mature and develop their skills necessary for independent living.

As a supported lodgings provider you would receive a weekly allowance and we would also expect the young person to make weekly contributions.

Our supported lodgings providers and young people are fantastic, hear what they have to say:

"I've enjoyed sharing the exciting and important time in a young person's life when they are deciding on a future direction. Helping a young person prepare for their future is hugely rewarding." – Angela

"I first heard of supported lodgings at a drop-in session at Gladstone Street. I thought I could help and I strongly believe all young people deserve the chance to get important life skills. The support and training meant I never felt alone." – Sue

Foster with Darlington Borough Council

Our children's services support children and their families to ensure every child can thrive. There are times when a child can't live with their family, and our foster carers provide essential care in these situations.

Becoming a foster carer with us is very rewarding. Foster carers, social workers and other professionals work as a team to support one another and to ensure the needs of the children are met. Our fostering and supported lodgings team provide regular training and support to ensure our carers have the skills and confidence to provide high quality care.

Foster carers come from a range of backgrounds and experiences. We welcome applications regardless of relationship status, employment status or whether you have your own children. What's important is that you can offer a safe and nurturing environment as well as having the energy and enthusiasm to give children your support.



For more information on supported lodgings and fostering, including frequently asked questions, visit www.darlington.gov.uk/fostering

Email fostering@darlington.gov.uk or call 406222



No rough sleepers, but help is always available

Efforts to help the homeless are working with a recent survey finding no one sleeping rough in Darlington.

Checks were carried out in the town centre, West Park, Cockerton and around the hospital on two nights in September and November last year.

Further checks will be carried out this month and in March and help offered to anyone who needs it.

To find out more visit
www.darlington.gov.uk/homelessness

If you know where there is a rough sleeper email details to housingoptions@darlington.gov.uk

Concerned about someone sleeping rough? Call Streetlink 0300 500 0914 (24 hours).

Homeless tonight and need help? Go to the Town Hall, or call 01642 524552 out of hours.

Worried about losing your home? Call 405333 to make an appointment with the housing options team.

We need your help to keep back lanes clear of rubbish

We joined forces with the fire service last year to tackle fires and fly tipping by urging residents not to leave bins and rubbish in back lanes.

We targeted a number of streets- sending out letters explaining when bins are collected, how to store your bins and how to get large amounts of rubbish taken away.

We will be sending more letters in the coming weeks and visiting homes to reinforce the message that dumping rubbish will not be tolerated and action could be taken against people who ignore the guidelines.

To stop your bin being targeted by arsonists or identity thieves make sure you only put it out on collection day and bring it back in as soon as possible after it's been emptied.

Visit www.darlington.gov.uk/streetscene to check your collection day and see page 32 for more information from the fire service.





Tees Valley Airshow cleared for Take Off!

After two years in limbo, I am delighted to announce the Tees Valley Airshow is set to return to Teesside International Airport once again.

In previous years, the event has not only attracted people from Darlington and the wider Tees Valley, but has helped bring thousands of tourists to the area for a fantastic family friendly day out.

It has been sadly missing from our events calendar since 2017 so, when I heard of Skylive Air's plans to bring it back to our local airport, I knew I had to do everything I could to make it a triumph.

We helped to secure and deliver a raft of successful high-profile events in Tees Valley in 2019, a Take That concert, BBC Radio 1's Big Weekend, the Great North CityGames, and Jess Glynne at Darlington's Mowden Park.

The Airshow is another vote of confidence in our region's airport, which I took back into public ownership earlier this year. Just recently it has seen a 14-year high in passenger numbers travelling to Amsterdam, as well providing the first holiday flights from Teesside in five years.

In previous years, the airshow has seen a display by the Red Arrows, a Eurofighter Typhoon, the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight along with other aerobatic displays. The shows, taking place in 2016 and 2017, attracted thousands of people.

And later this year, we'll see the fly-bys and static displays return, along with a classic car show, Army displays and a fun fair, as well as live music and stalls.

This is a great opportunity to make the Tees Valley Airshow a firm fixture in our region's calendar once again – and I look forward to seeing thousands of local people there.

Ben Houchen | Tees Valley Mayor

Tees Valley Airshow

Tees Valley Airshow is sponsored by the Tees Valley Mayor, Combined Authority and Enjoy Tees Valley.

- Tickets are £5 in advance
- £10 on the day
- Parking; £5.

More information and tickets visit:
www.teesvalleyairshow.co.uk



Make recycling right your New Year's resolution!

Our crews regularly attend blazes where rubbish and wheelie bins have been deliberately set on fire.

These fires delay our crews from getting to emergencies and can quickly get out of hand and lead to much bigger fires.

You can help to reduce the fire risk by following some simple steps:



Make it thin to fit the bin – flatten packaging and squeeze the air out of plastic bottles so they fit in your recycling bin or bag and don't spill out



If possible put your bins out on the morning of your collection and bring them back on to your property as soon as possible after they've been emptied



Think about where and when you dispose of your rubbish and recycling. It may be waste to you, but its fuel to an arsonist



If you regularly have more recycling than will fit in your bin, contact the council and they will get you another bin free of charge. Try not to leave extra recycling next to your bin. If possible, store it until the next collection day or take it to the household waste recycling centre on Whessoe Road which is open every day except Christmas Day and New Year's Day (weather permitting).



County Durham and Darlington
Fire and Rescue Service



Thomas Watson Auctioneers marks 180 years in business this year.

Situated on Northumberland Street, close to the town centre, the business has hosted auctions of collectables, arts and antiques since 1840 when Thomas Watson set up shop. Thomas, a colourful character, moved here from London and was a grocer before taking up auctioneering.

Current owner and auctioneer Peter Robinson said: “My grandfather Fred took over the business from the Watson family in 1950. Auctioneering was our business and we used to host outdoor auctions every week near Feethams roundabout. Everything from bikes to chickens and timber; you name it, we sold it.

“We have changed with the times and, unlike some, we have benefitted from the recent explosion in online shopping. Our customers can make bids from Australia, Italy, China, anywhere in the world with an internet connection. We also have lots of regular customers who come to the sale and then pop into town for shopping; so I like to think we help other local businesses as well.

“TV programmes and online auctions have also created fresh interest in buying at auctions. We have regularly been featured on programmes such as Bargain Hunt and Antiques Road Trip; helping to put Darlington on the map.

“We host an auction every two weeks on a Tuesday with viewing days over the weekend and the Monday before sale day. We also offer a free valuation service to give an idea of what an object might sell for. People can pop in for a valuation during opening hours, Monday to Friday, except on a busy auction day.”

Plans are underway to celebrate the anniversary and will centre around raising money for St Teresa’s Hospice.

For more details, visit www.thomaswatson.com



Owner and auctioneer Peter Robinson

Health in Haughton matters

Haughton residents are enjoying a range of fun activities thanks to funding from the County Durham Community Foundation.

Haughton Residents' Association has linked up with the council's Move More team to encourage people living in the area to get active.

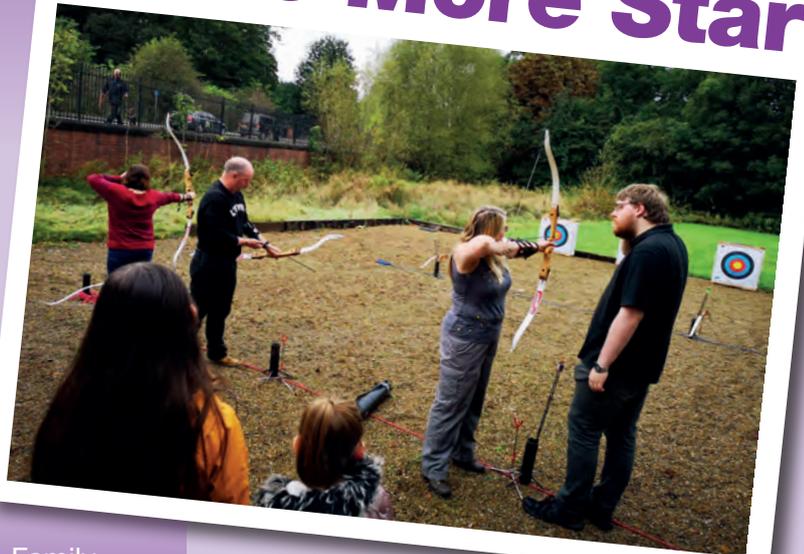
Activities on offer include the couch to 5k running programme, family archery sessions, orienteering and low impact classes for over 50s.

The project has been working with both adults and children and new activities will be on offer soon.

Health in Haughton Matters participants are this month's Move More Stars.

For more information email paul.foreman@darlington.gov.uk or visit the Haughton Matters Facebook page.

Move More Star



Family archery sessions led by Intro To Archery

Healthy Darlington
eat well, move more, live longer



HOLOCAUST
MEMORIAL
DAY 27/1

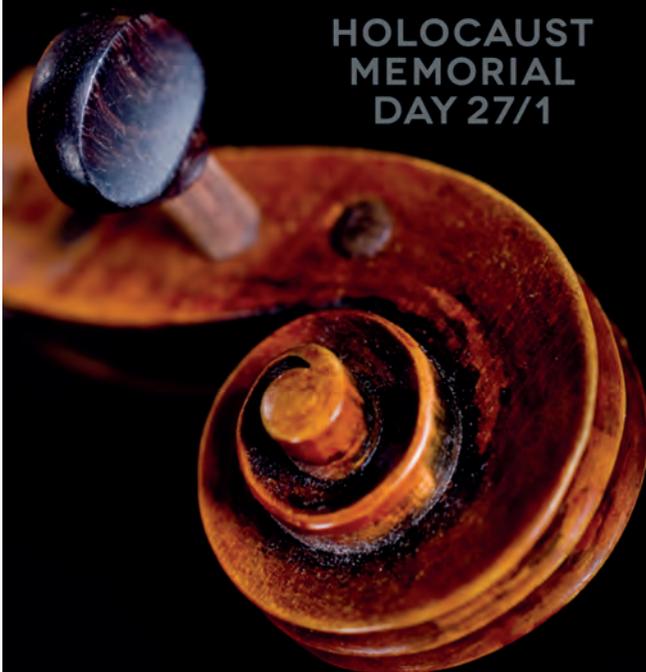
Holocaust memorial ceremony

This year's Holocaust memorial ceremony takes place at Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College on Monday 27 January at 7pm.

The theme of the event, which will be led by the Very Reverend Andrew Tremlett, Dean of Durham Cathedral, is 'stand together'.

Students from the college will take part in the ceremony, alongside members of Celebrating Communities, who have organised the event.

Celebrating Communities encourages people in Darlington to meet and spend time together at a variety of events celebrating peace, unity and diversity. It is striving to make Darlington a place where respect, cooperation and trust exists between people of all different communities. Find out more at www.CelebratingCommunitiesDarlington.wordpress.com



Innovative schemes lead the world in policing



Steve White, acting PCVC, with members of the community peer mentor team and volunteers

Two projects, supported by the Durham Police crime and victims' commissioner, have been awarded prestigious international accolades.

The community peer mentor project competed against 54 finalists from across the globe, to win a highly commended prize at the Inaugural World Class Policing Awards. The project works with residents to establish the root cause of particular issues, helping people to engage with their local community and find the support they need. It has successfully reduced demand on frontline policing while empowering vulnerable and isolated people affected by mental health issues, crime, neighbour disputes and antisocial behaviour.

Jim Cunningham, peer mentor coordinator, said: "Receiving this award is a true reflection of the outstanding work by our dedicated and hardworking team, along with our amazing and talented volunteers, to support vulnerable and isolated people."

Meanwhile the Checkpoint project won the 2019 Goldstein Award for problem solving in policing. This innovative programme aims to cut reoffending by addressing underlying problems such as alcohol and drug addiction. Results show that the reoffending rate for people who complete Checkpoint is 16% less than those who are dealt with by more traditional criminal justice methods. This means there have been hundreds fewer victims of crime in Darlington.

Steve White, acting police crime and victims commissioner, said: "It is fantastic that a scheme designed, developed and grown in County Durham has been awarded this prestigious award. This fantastic scheme really is leading the way in revolutionising how low level offending is managed, not only here but across the country.

"Both of these schemes are classic examples of the innovation which can be found within Durham Constabulary, and the positive impact that can be had by addressing the root causes behind why people do the things they do."

Throughout January, the police crime and victims' commissioner will be seeking your views on police funding and council tax levels. Please look out for details on our website and social media.

Council Cabinet Column



I hope you all had a great Christmas and I'd like to wish you all a very happy New Year. If you are still considering making a New Year's resolution I would urge you to think about volunteering. You don't have to give up a lot of time to make a real difference to someone's life and there are so many opportunities across the borough to get involved.

I am delighted that the Darlington Cares volunteering fair is taking place next month. It showcases how many people and organisations are already working in the borough to make our communities stronger. But there is always more that we can do to support those around us. For the last 15 years I have volunteered for a local charity and I have been both energised and proud to see the contribution we can all make to other people's lives.

Community is very important to me and I would urge everyone to do their bit for the people and places where they live. It's all about the little things - looking out for your neighbours, picking up litter and generally taking pride in our fantastic town. If we love and care about where we live then our neighbourhoods will become safer and more attractive for everyone. This year I will be working with the voluntary sector to bring people together, helping communities to help themselves by working together.

I have been a member of the council cabinet for almost nine months now and I believe, as a council, we have shown a new energy and purpose as we look to a future when our town will be transformed. We have set a lot of things in motion over the past few months and you will soon see new projects and initiatives starting that will help the town to grow and flourish. We are very proud of our town and we believe everyone has the potential to succeed with the right support in place.

In the coming months we will be looking at the town centre, the economy and other key areas to ensure that we are in the right place to deliver the best possible future for everyone who lives, works and visits our town. We will be asking for your views on much of what we have planned and I look forward to meeting many of you and hearing your ideas throughout the year.

Councillor Jonathan Dulston

Cabinet member for stronger communities



Ward surgeries

Your councillor is there to listen to you and find out about the issues affecting life in your ward. You can email, telephone or meet your councillor at regular ward surgeries.

Find out more at www.darlington.gov.uk

Emailing councillors

If you wish to email your councillor, their email address is **firstname.lastname@darlington.gov.uk**

For example, if you want to email Heather Scott, type in heather.scott@darlington.gov.uk

The only exceptions are Andy Scott (Haughton and Springfield), Ian Bell (Harrowgate Hill) and Anne-Marie Curry (North Road). Their email addresses are shown with their ward surgery details.

BANK TOP AND LASCELLES

Helen Crumbie (L) Tel: 462642; **Wendy Newall (L)** Tel: 251574. King William Street Community Centre – Fri 17 Jan and 21 Feb – 5-6pm. Cleveland Bridge Social & Athletic Club – Sat 11 Jan and 8 Feb – 12-1pm. **Darrien Wright (I)** Tel: 07724 384264. Dance Wright Studio, Ridsdale Street – Thu 9 Jan and 13 Feb – 5.30-6.30pm.

BRINKBURN AND FAVERDALE

Scott Durham (C) Tel: 07805 505156; **Rachel Mills (C)** Tel: 482906/07786 077189; **Lisa Preston (C)** Tel: 07793 662154. The Brinkburn pub – Mon 13 Jan – 6-7pm. The White Heifer That Travelled – Mon 10 Feb – 6-7pm.

COCKERTON

Paul Baldwin (L) Tel: 362690; **Jan Cossins (L)** Tel: 241124; **Eddie Heslop (L)** Tel: 354457. Windsor Court – Tue 14 Jan and 11 Feb – 10-11am. Cockerton Library – Thu 9 Jan and 13 Feb – 6-7pm.

COLLEGE

Bryony Holroyd (G) Tel: 07570 776553; **Matthew Snedker (G)** Tel: 07780 807059. Abbey Junior School – Thu 9 Jan and 13 Feb – 6-7pm.

EASTBOURNE

Jonathan Dulston (C) Tel: 07944 344646; Firthmoor Community Centre – Wed 29 Jan and 26 Feb – 3-4pm. **Kevin Nicholson (I)** Tel: 07791 807629; **Steven Tait (I)** Tel: 07825 303036. Firthmoor Community Centre – Mon 20 Jan – 5-6pm and Mon 17 Feb – 1-2pm.

HARROWGATE HILL

Ian Bell (C) Tel: 07497 404448, ian.bell2@darlington.gov.uk; **Jon Clarke (C)** Tel: 07875 057253. Whessoe Parish Hall – Wed 8 Jan and 12 Feb – 6-7pm. By appointment only using contact details above. **Lynn Paley (L)** Tel: 07963 706171. Harrowgate CIU Ltd – Wed 8 Jan and 12 Feb – 6-7pm.

HAUGHTON AND SPRINGFIELD

Chris McEwan (L) Tel: 283262; **Andy Scott (L)** Tel: 253707, andrew.scott@darlington.gov.uk; **Nick Wallis (L)** Tel: 07960 247554. Salvation Army, Thompson St – Wed 8 Jan and 12 Feb – 6-7pm. Asda foyer – Sat 1 Feb – 10-11am.

HEIGHINGTON AND CONISCLIFFE

Gerald Lee (C) Tel: 314622; **Paul Crudass (C)** Tel: 374537. St Mary's Church Hall – Sat 1 Feb – 10-11am.

HUMMERSKNOTT

Charles Johnson (C) Tel: 463712; **Paul Howell (C)** Tel: 07464 688865. By appointment using contact details above.

HURWORTH

Christy Chou (C) Tel: 405998; **Lorraine Tostevin (C)** Tel: 333382. Hurworth Grange Community Library, Hurworth Road – Thu 6 Feb and 5 Mar – 6-7pm.

MOWDEN

Pauline Culley (C) Tel: 250482; **Alan Marshall (C)** Tel: 359138. Mowden Junior School – Mon 3 Feb and 2 Mar – 6.30-7.30pm.

NORTHGATE

Sajna Ali (L) Tel: 405998; **Eleanor Lister (L)** Tel: 254091. Corporation Road Primary School – Wed 8 Jan, 5 Feb and 4 Mar – 6-7pm.

NORTH ROAD

Hilary Allen (LD) Tel: 480277; **Nigel Boddy (LD)** Tel: 07583 174104; **Anne-Marie Curry (LD)** Tel: 07531 304050, annemarie.curry@darlington.gov.uk. St Thomas Aquinas Church – Wed 22 Jan and 26 Feb – 6-7pm. Morrisons North Road café – Wed 8 Jan and 12 Feb – 1-2pm.

PARK EAST

Cyndi Hughes (L) Tel: 480975; **Libby McCollom (L)** Tel: 07910 369887; **Michael Nicholson (L)** Tel: 240750. The Forum Music Centre – Tue 7 Jan and 11 Feb – 6-7pm. St Columba's Church, Clifton Road – Fri 17 Jan and 21 Feb – 6-7pm. St Augustine's Parish Centre – Tue 7 Jan, 4 Feb and 3 Mar – 6.30-7.15pm.

PARK WEST

Bob Donoghue (C) Tel: 07767 294194; **Heather Scott (C)** Tel: 468547. 9 Ayton Drive – Fri 17 Jan and 21 Feb – 5-6pm. By appointment only using contact details above.

PIERREMONT

Stephen Harker (L) Tel: 380039; **Linda Hughes (L)** Tel: 07904 772387; **Mary Layton (L)** Tel: 350560. Reid Street Primary School – Wed 8 Jan and 5 Feb – 6-7pm.

RED HALL AND LINGFIELD

Sam Howarth (L) Tel: 07807 709845; **Hilary Lucas (L)** Tel: 249215. Red Hall Community Centre, Headingley Crescent – Wed 8 Jan and 12 Feb – 6-7pm. Heathfield Primary School – Wed 22 Jan and 26 Feb – 6-7pm.

SADBERGE AND MIDDLETON ST GEORGE

Brian Jones (C) Tel: 332820; **Doris Jones (C)** Tel: 332820; **Deborah Laing (C)** Tel: 07747 863297. By appointment using contact details above.

STEPHENSON

Ian Haszeldine (L) Tel: 496548. St James the Great – Wed 8 Jan and 12 Feb – 6-7pm. **Mike Renton (C)** Tel: 07495 697592. St James the Great – Wed 29 Jan – 6-7.30pm. Wesley Court – Wed 26 Feb – 6-7.30pm.

WHINFIELD

Jamie Bartch (C) Tel: 07554 645651; **Andy Keir (C)** Tel: 07597 297654. Whinfield Primary School – Sat 1 Feb – 10am-noon.

MPs' SURGERIES:

Full details of both MPs' surgeries were still to be confirmed at the time of going to print.



Peter Gibson (Darlington MP) can be contacted through his constituency office at Amity House, 5-7 Coniscliffe Road, DL3 7EE. Call 462283.



Paul Howell (Sedgefield MP) plans to hold surgeries at venues across the constituency. He will set up an office in Newton Aycliffe.



Ben Houchen – Tees Valley Mayor
Cavendish House, Teesdale Business Park, Stockton-on-Tees, Tees Valley, TS17 6QY
Tel: 01642 524401
Email mayor@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk

Clubs and Societies

If you've always meant to take up a new interest or hobby, now's the time. Take a look at the latest clubs news and visit our web page to see what's on offer at www.darlington.gov.uk/clubs



Mental health support

A support group for men who are struggling with their mental health is going from strength to strength.

ManClub was launched in Darlington last January and due to the success of the first group, a second started in October. Free sessions now run on Mondays and Fridays 6-8pm, at the Quaker Meeting House on Skinnergate.

The drop-in sessions are run by ManHealth, a not for profit group funded by the National Lottery and run by men who have experience of mental illness.

Paul Bannister, director of ManHealth, said: "Demand for our service has grown over the last year. It is great that we are there to support men, but sad that there is a need for a service such as ours. We encourage men to come along and listen and share their issues and concerns, and be supported by other men who understand how they may be feeling. All sessions are run in a safe, non-judgemental, confidential environment and there is no requirement for a referral. There's no pressure to talk and sessions are free."

ManHealth also provides training to address health inequalities affecting men.

For more information visit www.manhealth.org.uk or give them a call on 01388 320023.

Are you musical? There's a unique chance to blow your own trumpet, or tuba or French horn, as Darlington Orchestra is looking for brass instrument players to join its 40-strong ensemble.

The group plays a range of music, from classical to modern pieces, and hosts regular concerts during the year. See them in action at the Dolphin Centre Central Hall on Saturday 25 January.

Musicians are welcome to come along to a rehearsal held every Tuesday during term time at St Thomas Aquinas church hall on North Road from 7-9pm.

To find out more call 251383, email admin@darlington-orchestra.org.uk or pop along one Tuesday night. Read more at darlington-orchestra.org.uk

Branksome & Cockerton Residents Association meets every two months. Its aim is to bring people together to enhance the quality of life for those working and living in the area. Everyone is welcome. There are regular guest speakers giving advice and updates. For details search for the association on Facebook.

Darlington U3A meets on the second Friday of the month, 10.15am at Bondgate Methodist Centre. It promotes continuous learning in later life for fun, rather than for any formal qualifications. For details call 62020, email k.clulee@ntlworld.com or visit <https://u3asites.org.uk/darlington>

**If you would like us to feature your club or society,
email communications@darlington.gov.uk**

Functional Skills



Functional Skills are the fundamental English, Maths and ICT skills that you need for your working and personal life.

Take the opportunity this New Year to improve your skills for the workplace or to help you gain employment. Achieve a recognised Entry Level, Level 1 or Level 2 qualification (equivalent to a GCSE) and learn in a supportive and friendly environment.

Visit our website for more information www.darlington.gov.uk/learningandskills

Distance Learning



Complete qualifications away from the classroom.

- Children s and Young People s Mental Health Awareness
- Mental Health Awareness
- Dealing with Challenging Behaviours
- Autism Awareness
- Safeguarding and Prevent

PLUS MUCH MORE!

FREE COURSES

CALL 01325 405601

TEXT 07932 869325

EMAIL I&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%20%26amp%20Skills)



Learning & Skills

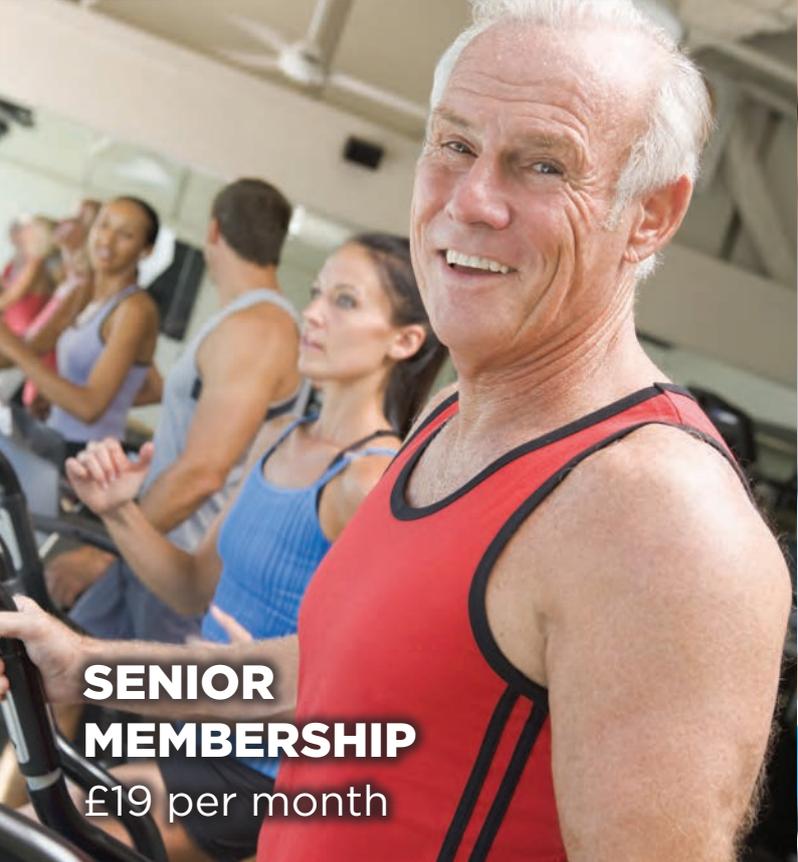


GET RESULTS

AT THE DOLPHIN CENTRE



FULL MEMBERSHIP
£24.95 per month



SENIOR MEMBERSHIP
£19 per month



STUDENT MEMBERSHIP
£15 per month

For more information visit www.healthydarlington.co.uk



or call **01325 406000**

**ENJOY
DARLINGTON**