

# one Darlington

May 2021



# Welcome back!



# Learning & Skills Darlington

## Study Programme

**Study Programmes** are a range of courses for 16-18 year olds that enable them to develop their personal, social and employability skills whilst in an environment that suits their way of learning.

The courses allow young people to gain some real-life work experience with an employer to increase their chances of gaining employment, further training or an apprenticeship.

**For more information visit the Study Programmes page on our website**

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Those who join may be entitled to free lunches and free bus travel with Arriva North East

# Apprenticeship Vacancies

Becoming an apprentice is easy! Employers across the Tees Valley are looking to employ new apprentices in a variety of industries.

### EMPLOYERS NEED YOU!

Apprenticeships allow you to earn whilst you learn. You will be paid at least the Apprenticeship National Minimum Wage (currently £4.30 per hour) as you learn new skills and knowledge through high quality on and off the job training.

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
We've helped employers hire 56 apprentices since January 2020!



**WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? [VIEW LOCAL APPRENTICESHIP VACANCIES TODAY!](#) VISIT [www.darlington.gov.uk/apprenticeships](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/apprenticeships)**

We still continue to offer free Continuing Professional Development (CPD) modules to help those on furlough, or who have been made redundant due to the pandemic. Visit our website for more details.

**CALL 01325 405601**

**TEXT 07932 869325**

**EMAIL [l&s@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:l&s@darlington.gov.uk)**

**WEB [www.darlington.gov.uk/learningandskills](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/learningandskills)**

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

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

Learning & Skills



**Learning & Skills**



07932 869325

# Welcome to One Darlington

**As Covid-19 restrictions are easing, I am really looking forward to seeing you all in our beautiful town centre. My team and I are excited for the future – new shops, bars and entertainment venues opening and, hopefully soon we will be able to put on some more of our fabulous events. The businesses in the town centre have done a fantastic job to create safe and welcoming spaces for you to visit and they look forward to welcoming you.**

When you visit please pop along to the Yards and Post House Wynd to see the colourful work of the Towns Funds project – the area really has come alive.

You will also notice the new lighting features around the town's landmarks, including the clock tower, and I am delighted to announce that town-wide free Wi-Fi is also being installed. Find out more about all of this work on pages 6 and 7.

We were recently invited by the Hidden Disabilities programme to be the national pilot for the 'sunflower friendly town' scheme. Sunflower friendly towns are places that show great understanding toward people who have a hidden impairment and work to make everyone feel welcome. We are delighted to be the pilot for such an inclusive scheme.

If you have ever thought about opening a new business now could be the time! Email partnerships officer at [katie.greenwood@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:katie.greenwood@darlington.gov.uk) if you would like to find out how you could become part of Darlington's future.

The easing of restrictions has only been possible because of the great efforts of Darlington residents in following the rules and getting vaccinated. Find out the latest on our Covid-19 efforts on pages 8, 9 and 10.

Later this month it's Fostering Fortnight, a chance to celebrate the amazing families in our community who foster and for potential foster carers to find out more about this important role. See pages 4 and 5 for more information about how you could change a child's life.



**Alex Nicholson**  
Town centre partnerships and events manager

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The next edition is due to be delivered in early July. If you have not received your copy by mid-July, please call 0800 160 1552.

An audio version of One Darlington is also available at [www.darlington.gov.uk/onedarlington](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/onedarlington)

# #ThisIsFo

**"Granny, can you take a look at this?" one of Joyce's young grandchildren asks in the background as we talk on the phone. Joyce takes a minute and then, with her grandchild settled, we continue our chat about fostering.**



Juggling a busy family, fostering and their day jobs, has been all in a day's work for Joyce and Colin from Darlington for more than 17 years. Now retired, and with three grown up children as well as several grandchildren, the couple continue to work as paid foster carers with Darlington Borough Council.

"We started fostering in 2004," says Joyce, "We were both working, me as a school cook during term time and Colin as a full-time prison officer.

"Our children were in their early teens. Our youngest was just starting secondary school when we took the decision to start fostering with the council. It was a gradual process, something that crept up on us really. Every year at Christmas, when the children were young, we would look at our family and our home and say to each other: if only we could share this with other children who aren't as fortunate.

"What we didn't realise is that this was something that we could do and make a real difference for other families across Darlington in the process. Friends of ours had started fostering, they then adopted and continued fostering. They gave us the nudge we needed, and we have never looked back.

"It was really daunting when we first started out – it was strange getting to know all the terminology and what the social workers did. That has become second nature to us now. When we first started out we received £30 a week, looking after six children. The financial side of fostering is very different now.

"We've been in it for the long haul. We've got to know members of the team really well and made some fantastic friendships along the way. There is so much support and training available through the council. Fostering has given me so many qualifications and I have done things I had never thought I would do.

"One of the biggest rewards has been seeing these children grow up. We've looked after children of all ages, from newborns to teenagers as well as supporting young parents.

"Keeping sibling groups together is an area where the council is always in need of support. We had a sibling group of four, all of whom came to us under the age of eight. Bringing up an extra four children was something we hadn't seen ourselves doing – but we are so glad that we did.

# stering



"We've still got the youngest of the four here on what's known as a staying put arrangement, which enables looked after children to stay with their foster carers once they are over 18. We still keep in touch with many of our foster children after they have left. Our door is always open, this is always their home."

"A big part of the job is making sure that looked after children keep in contact with their family. We need more foster carers in Darlington to help look after local children, so that they can continue with their routines, at school and meeting their friends and have their normal life as much as possible, to help us keep local families together for the long-term. At times it can be hard trying to balance everybody's emotions and feelings, including your own, but it's so worth it."

"Foster Care Fortnight runs from 10-24 May. If you are thinking about fostering but have yet to take the next step, I would encourage you to do it now. Don't be frightened, there is so much support

for you. Not every child that comes stays, and that is a good thing. You sometimes have some bad experiences, but the good experiences far outweigh the bad. I wouldn't change the last 17 years for the world."

## Are you interested in becoming a foster carer?

**If you are still thinking about it and would like to find out more please come along to one of our informal fostering information events.**

**Visit:** [www.darlington.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/fostering)

**Email:** [supportedlodgings@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:supportedlodgings@darlington.gov.uk)  
[fostering@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:fostering@darlington.gov.uk)

**Call:** 406222 (option 5)

# Welcome back to our blooming great town centr

**The bunting is up, the banners are out, and the town centre is in full bloom, ready to welcome you back.**

Town centre traders are ready to welcome customers old and new back to the town centre where they can enjoy the great fresh look, floral window displays and, most of all, a blooming great Darlington welcome.

Outdoor pavement cafes have sprung up around the town where you can enjoy your favourite meals and drinks alfresco while you watch the world go by. As Covid restrictions ease, you will be able to dine in the town's bars, cafes and restaurants. Plan ahead and book a table - it might be busy as people rediscover their favourite places.

Take a look at [www.enjoydarlington.com](http://www.enjoydarlington.com) to see what's on offer and follow #LoveDarlo on Facebook for the latest news, offers and competitions.

Work is now well underway on the first phase of the £22.3m Towns Fund project to breathe new life into the yards. Bright new doors have now been added to the shopfronts, giving the historic area a fresh new look.

Free Wi-Fi in the town centre is coming soon, keeping you connected when you're out and about. Look out for news of this going live any time soon.

Don't forget, there's two hours free parking in council run car parks – you'll still need to get a ticket from the machine.

Work on the historic indoor market continues, see page 25 for an update. It's still open for shopping, so take a look and see what's new.

## Listen out

**As we welcome visitors back to the town centre, the council has updated the speaker system with welcoming voices from the community.**

Six friendly voices – including director of public health Penny Spring, Dr Amanda Riley of Darlington Primary Care Network and Julian Cound from Darlington Hippodrome – were chosen to record new Covid-19 public safety messages, reminding visitors to stick to the latest guidelines while out and about.





e

## What's on

Look out for street entertainers and musicians strolling around the town centre most weekends and make a date for these events:

### Drum Festival, Saturday 5 June

The heart of the town centre will beat stronger to the rhythm of the drums as the popular festival takes to the streets.

### Yarn bombers

Look out for an explosion of knitted colour as floral yarn creations fill the town centre with even more colour and fun in June.

### Darlington 10k

The pounding of feet will be heard as the 10k returns on Sunday 1 August. Follow Darlington 10k on Facebook for more details.

### Pride weekend

Returns on 7–9 August and promises a feast of colour, music and fun around the town.

...and  
finally

The popular Food Festival returns across the August Bank Holiday

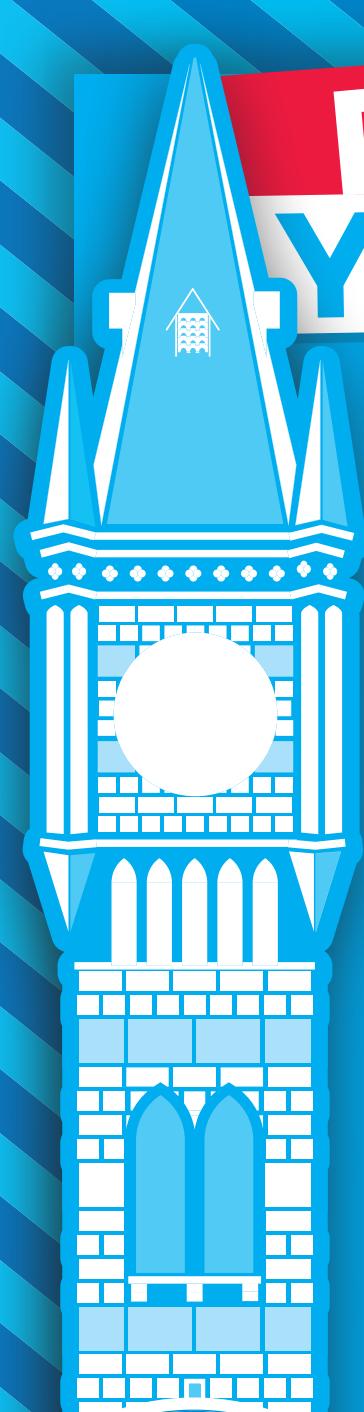
**Do you have a  
blooming good  
business idea?**

If you've always dreamed of being your own boss, why not give it a go in Darlington. With rents as low as £125 a week and a great range of sites (and market stalls) on offer it's an exciting time to take the plunge. Turn to pages 18 and 19 for inspiration.

**Don't miss a thing!**

Keep up to date with what's going on in your blooming great town at [www.enjoydarlington.com](http://www.enjoydarlington.com) and on Facebook #LoveDarlot

**ENJOY  
DARLINGTON**



# Play Your Part

# Coronavirus Update



**As lockdown restrictions are eased across the country, Darlington has extended its community testing scheme to introduce a click and collect service – making it easier than ever to take twice weekly tests.**

The town was the first in the region to roll out a community testing scheme, with its first community testing site opening in December. By the end of spring, over 30,000 tests had been carried out across the town's community testing sites.

Now, it is even easier for residents to access community testing, with the scheme's new click and collect service. Residents have the option to book a collection slot at one of the council's testing sites and collect two boxes of lateral flow tests (14 in total) to take at home.

By making community tests even easier to access, more people will be able to take the tests twice weekly as recommended – which is an essential part of continuing to safely ease lockdown restrictions.

The council is extremely proud of its community testing scheme, which has been recognised as gold standard and was one of the first in the country to make lateral flow tests available on mass.

The new service will go even further to protect our communities and keep Darlington on the right track.

For the latest information on the new service and the council's testing sites, visit our website and social media pages.

**Book your click and collect appointments at [www.darlington.gov.uk/testing](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/testing)**

## Click and collect



You can now visit one of the council's testing sites to collect two boxes of lateral flow tests (14 in total) to take at home.

-  **The Dolphin Centre**
-  **Head of Steam Railway Museum**
-  **Firthmoor Community Centre**
-  **Red Hall Community Centre**
-  **Heighington Village Hall**
-  **Middleton St George Community Centre**

# KEEPING DARLINGTON ON

# How to carry out your collected community tests at home

## Step 1

Book your click and collect slot at [www.darlington.gov.uk/testing](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/testing) or alternatively, if you cannot access the website, you can phone our Support HUB on **01325 405000**.



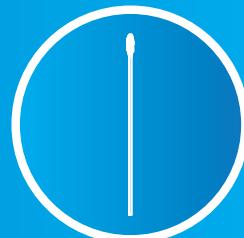
## Step 2

Collect your community tests from one of our testing sites.



## Step 3

Follow the instructions provided with the lateral flow tests provided.



## Step 4

Safely dispose of your completed community tests in the plastic bags provided. Please **DO NOT** attempt to recycle the plastic tests. You can however recycle the boxes.



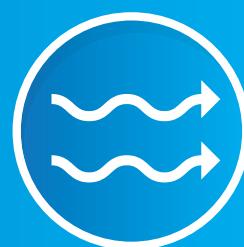
HANDS



FACE



SPACE



AIR

# THE RIGHT TRACK



# Where to get your Covid-19 vaccination

The town's Covid-19 vaccination programme has had a hugely successful start – with almost 90% of eligible Darlington residents getting their first jab by mid-April.

As the offer is extended to more and more residents, you may be wondering where to get yours when it is your turn to have the jab.

There are three main sites in the town to get your Covid-19 vaccination.



## Feethams House

The town's first vaccination site, which is ran by the Darlington Primary Care Network, is at Feethams House in the town centre.

If you are registered with a GP in Darlington and are in cohorts 1-9, you can book to have your vaccination here. If you have had your first dose at Feethams House, you must return to have your second dose here when you are invited.

## Darlington Arena

Alternatively, if you would prefer to have your jab at the town's large vaccination hub, you can book your jab when you are invited at the Darlington mass Covid-19 vaccination centre via the national NHS booking system.

## Cockerton pharmacy

If you would prefer a smaller vaccination site, you can also book an appointment at the Cockerton community pharmacy, via the NHS booking system, when you are eligible.

For more information on the Covid-19 vaccine, visit the NHS website.

## Where you can get your COVID-19 Vaccination in Darlington



Feethams House through the local Primary Care Network (PCN) GP Led Service

If you receive a letter inviting you to a large vaccination hub or community pharmacy but would prefer to have a jab at your local PCN site, be assured your GP services will contact you.

Please do not contact your GP practice.

Vaccination appointments will be updated in line with vaccine delivery.



Darlington Arena Vaccination Centre

Community Pharmacy

It's going to take a while to get everyone vaccinated.

Please be a patient patient and follow the guidance.

[www.nhs.uk/covidvaccine](http://www.nhs.uk/covidvaccine)

# Hipp, hipp, hooray!

## Theatre set to reopen in

# May

DH  
DARLINGTON  
HIPPODROME



**After a challenging year for theatres and the arts across the world, Monday 17 May will see the doors of Darlington Hippodrome open to the public once again.**

Over the last 12 months, a tremendous amount of work has been done by staff to keep the theatre viable through the pandemic and to ensure the venue's future. This includes two successful applications for culture recovery grants from Arts Council England totalling almost £1.5m. These grants have been a lifeline, allowing the theatre to navigate this difficult period.

Having hosted activities both onstage (where possible) and online to keep Darlington audiences healthy in body, mind and spirit over the past year, the Hippodrome is now looking ahead to a brighter future, presenting a season of live theatre, classic cinema, summer events, workshops and classes.

You don't need to see a show to visit the theatre. The Hippo Lounge café will be open from 10am to 2pm Monday to Saturday offering a chance to catch up with friends over a coffee and a light bite. You can also take time out to look around the fabulous exhibitions in the venue's galleries.

There will be a season of classic cinema screenings with titles ranging from Rear Window to The Rocky Horror Picture Show, online streaming events but also the return of live stage performances for all ages including Horrible Histories: Barmy Britain, The Rat Pack Live, Chris Ramsey, Rock of Ages and the annual festive, family pantomime which this year will be Cinderella.

**For full information visit  
[www.darlingtonhippodrome.co.uk](http://www.darlingtonhippodrome.co.uk)  
or call the box office on 405405.**

# Latest stop on transformation journey



**Ian Williams**  
Chief executive

A new council senior management team is coming in next month, with Ian Williams taking the reins as chief executive.

After a spell as director of economic regeneration, Ian becomes the council's most senior member of staff on 1 June.

**Other members of the senior team are:**



**Elizabeth Davison**  
Group director of operations



**James Stroyan**  
Group director of people



**Dave Winstanley**  
Group director of services

Ian Williams said: "The new senior management team will be instrumental in helping to transform the council, and we are all looking forward to getting started in the roles and making Darlington successful."

**Keep an eye out for other big changes coming around the start of June – and over the coming months.**

# 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. There are no ward surgeries at the moment but you can still email or call your local councillor. Find out more at [www.darlington.gov.uk](http://www.darlington.gov.uk)

## Emailing councillors

To email your councillor, their email address is [firstname.lastname@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:firstname.lastname@darlington.gov.uk)

For example, if you want to email Heather Scott, type in [heather.scott@darlington.gov.uk](mailto: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 contact details.

## BANK TOP AND LASCELLES

**Helen Crumbie (L)** Tel: 07743 191014. **Wendy Newall (L)** Tel: 251574. **Darrien Wright (I)** Tel: 07724 384264.

## BRINKBURN AND FAVERDALE

**Scott Durham (C)** Tel: 07805 505156. **Rachel Mills (C)** Tel: 482906/07786 077189. **Lisa Preston (C)** Tel: 07793 662154.

## COCKERTON

**Paul Baldwin (I)** Tel: 07515 814007. **Jan Cossins (L)** Tel: 241124. **Eddie Heslop (L)** Tel: 354457.

## COLLEGE

**Bryony Holroyd (G)** Tel: 07570 776553. **Matthew Snedker (G)** Tel: 07780 807059.

## EASTBOURNE

**Jonathan Dulston (C)** Tel: 07775 555251. **Kevin Nicholson (I)** Tel: 07791 807629; **Steven Tait (I)** Tel: 07825 303036.

## HARROWGATE HILL

**Ian Bell (C)** Tel: 07581 300111, [ian.bell2@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:ian.bell2@darlington.gov.uk); **Jon Clarke (C)** Tel: 07875 057253. **Lynn Paley (L)** Tel: 07963 706171.

## HAUGHTON AND SPRINGFIELD

**Chris McEwan (L)** Tel: 283262. **Andy Scott (L)** Tel: 253707, [andrew.scott@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.scott@darlington.gov.uk); **Nick Wallis (L)** Tel: 07960 247554.

## HEIGHINGTON AND CONISCLIFFE

**Gerald Lee (C)** Tel: 314622. **Paul Crudass (C)** Tel: 374537.

## HUMMERSKNOTT

**Charles Johnson (C)** Tel: 463712.

## HURWORTH

**Christy Chou (C)** Tel: 405998. **Lorraine Tostevin (C)** Tel: 333382.

## MOWDEN

**Pauline Culley (C)** Tel: 250482. **Alan Marshall (C)** Tel: 359138 or 07807 523106.

## NORTHGATE

**Sajna Ali (L)** Tel: 405998. **Eleanor Lister (L)** Tel: 254091.

## 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](mailto:annemarie.curry@darlington.gov.uk).

## PARK EAST

**Cyndi Hughes (L)** Tel: 480975; **Libby McCollom (L)** Tel: 07910 369887; **Michael Nicholson (L)** Tel: 240750.

## PARK WEST

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

## PIERREMONT

**Stephen Harker (L)** Tel: 380039. **Linda Hughes (L)** Tel: 07904 772387; **Mary Layton (L)** 491802 or 07460 980776.

## RED HALL AND LINGFIELD

**Hilary Lucas (L)** Tel: 249215.

## SADBERGE AND MIDDLETON ST GEORGE

**Brian Jones (C)** Tel: 332820. **Doris Jones (C)** Tel: 332820. **Deborah Laing (C)** Tel: 07747 863297.

## STEPHENSON

**Ian Haszeldine (L)** Tel: 496548. **Mike Renton (C)** Tel: 07495 697592.

## WHINFIELD

**Jamie Bartz (C)** Tel: 07554 645651. **Andy Keir (C)** Tel: 07597 297654.

## 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](mailto:peter.gibson.mp@parliament.uk)



**Paul Howell (Sedgefield MP)** can be contacted by email at [paul.howell.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:paul.howell.mp@parliament.uk)

# WHEN AROUND WATER...

...STOP AND THINK



## STOP AND THINK!



### LOOK FOR DANGERS:

- Read signs
- Do you know what is under the water?

### STAY TOGETHER:

- Don't go near water alone
- Always let someone know where you are

## WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

- Call 999 or 112
- If safe to do so, use  what3words
- If you fall in float on your back
- If someone falls in throw them a float/line



County Durham and Darlington  
Fire and Rescue Service

## BE WATER AWARE

# Enjoy the great outdoors... but don't spoil it for others!



**More and more of us are getting out and about to enjoy our parks and open spaces as the weather improves and lockdown rules are eased.**

Unfortunately, we've seen an increase in antisocial behaviour as well as piles of litter, beer cans, bottles and broken glass left behind – creating a hazard for other people, wildlife and the environment.

Our Street Scene staff and volunteers have joined forces to clear rubbish but we're asking you to think about others when you're enjoying yourself and to make sure you clean up your rubbish and put it in a bin or take it home.

Civic enforcement officers are working closely with the police and the CCTV team in a bid to tackle antisocial behaviour.

Patrols are taking place in problem areas and anyone found to be causing antisocial behaviour will be dealt with and, where appropriate, parents will be informed.

If you are concerned about antisocial behaviour call Durham police on 101 or the council's civic enforcement team on 406999.

You can report litter and fly-tipping using our online form at [www.darlington.gov.uk/reportit](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/reportit)

# Get b boost



**Any exercise in the great outdoors can boost our mental health and wellbeing as well as help to reduce stress, lose weight, feel less isolated and aid restful sleep.**

**talking changes**  
Self-help, counselling and talking therapies service to deal with common mental health problems such as stress, anxiety or depression.  
0191 333 3300 Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm  
[www.talkingchanges.org.uk](http://www.talkingchanges.org.uk)

**ADULTS**

**MANHEALTH**  
Male peer support groups helping men manage their mental health.  
FREE Weekly ManClub sessions.  
01388 320023 [www.manhealth.org.uk](http://www.manhealth.org.uk)

**we are withyou**  
Support around alcohol and substance misuse.  
Tel: 01325 809810  
Email referrals to: [withyou.darlington@nhs.net](mailto:withyou.darlington@nhs.net)  
[www.wearewithyou.org.uk](http://www.wearewithyou.org.uk)

**TALK TO US**  
If things are getting to you

Accessible, experienced and customised support for all ages focussed on helping people achieve good mental health and wellbeing  
07572 888084 Monday – Friday 9am-5pm [www.darlingtonmind.com](http://www.darlingtonmind.com)

Loss and Bereavement Helpline and Counselling service  
07377 910227 [supportline@darlingtonmind.com](mailto:supportline@darlingtonmind.com)

Free, confidential and impartial young people's, parent's and families support line  
07572 888084 Monday – Friday 1.30 – 4.30pm  
[crew@darlingtonmind.com](mailto:crew@darlingtonmind.com)

**citizens advice**  
Providing free and confidential advice on a range of money, legal, housing and welfare issues.  
0300 330 1195  
[www.darlingtoncab.co.uk](http://www.darlingtoncab.co.uk)  
Monday – Friday 10am – 4pm (Wednesday 6pm)

**700 Club**  
Charity supporting individuals, families and couples who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless  
01325 366397 [www.700club.org.uk](http://www.700club.org.uk)  
Monday – Friday 8.30am-4.30pm

**Call on us...**  
in a mental health emergency.  
0300 0200317  
The phone line is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and offers callers a series of options which will divert them to the appropriate local service.

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Free, confidential and impartial young people's, parent's and families support line  
07847 933799  
Monday – Friday 10 -12  
[listeningpost@dacym.co.uk](mailto:listeningpost@dacym.co.uk)

Talk to someone you trust, a family member or friend. People in school or college like the Mental Health Lead or the 'SENDCo' will be also be able to help.

**How are you?**  
If you are struggling to cope or feeling overwhelmed there are plenty of services there to help you.  
Talk to someone about how you are feeling  
It's OK to ask for help

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**  
Local services to support those experiencing or at risk from domestic violence

**Family Help**  
[www.familyhelp.org.uk](http://www.familyhelp.org.uk)  
Monday - Friday 9am-5pm  
01325 364486

**harbour**  
[www.myharbour.org.uk](http://www.myharbour.org.uk)  
03000 20 25 25 (24 hours)

**BEREAVEMENT**

St Teresa's Hospice  
Giving life  
Pre and post bereavement support as well as counselling for people with life limiting illness and their carers  
01325 254321  
[enquiries@darlingtonhospice.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@darlingtonhospice.org.uk)  
For more information about services: [www.darlingtonhospice.org.uk](http://www.darlingtonhospice.org.uk)

# Back to nature to your mental health

Being in open green spaces is great for our mental health and wellbeing, and as Covid-19 restrictions ease, meeting people outside will help as germs disperse much more quickly outdoors in fresh air.

During the pandemic, many of us have turned to nature to help us get through, and going for walks has been one of the top coping strategies.

Spotting wildlife is a great way to spend some time and it is claimed that listening to nature can have a calming effect, helping to reduce stress and anxiety.

Taking time to be around nature has powerful health and wellbeing benefits whether it's a relaxed stroll, power walk in the park or a run, cycle ride or scooter to and from school!



## Get connected and feel better today!

**Mental Health Awareness Week (10-16 May) is an ideal opportunity for us all to consider how we and our loved ones are really doing.**

If you, or someone you know, is not quite themselves don't suffer in silence alone - reach out, take action, talk to someone you trust; a loved one, friend, relative, teacher or your GP. Sharing a problem is often the first step to feeling better.

If your mental or emotional state quickly gets worse or, you are worried about someone you know, help is available.

For more information, visit [www.darlington.gov.uk](http://www.darlington.gov.uk) and search mental health support, or visit [www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk), [www.darlingtonmind.co.uk](http://www.darlingtonmind.co.uk) and [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)



## There is always help if you, or someone you know, is struggling

Reach out and give them a call or pass on a number to someone in need. Remember, it's OK not to be OK. Talking helps and always be kind.

In an emergency call **999**. For medical advice call **111** or search **111** online.

Developed by the council's public health team.



# A new dawn,



**With businesses reopening and shoppers returning to the high street, a new dawn beckons in the town centre and beyond. We take a fresh look at what local traders are up to:**

**The Stage Door** has opened in the up-and-coming Buckton's Yard after owner Michael Fenwick transformed the former derelict shop into a café, bar and performance space. Michael said: "We've had a great reception so far and gained a few regulars. We're really looking forward to getting our events up and running and to see lots of smiley faces enjoying our live music and performances."

Clark's Yard is welcoming newcomer **The Little Quaker Distillery**, which houses a distillery, gin emporium and tasting room - with the latter set to be revealed later this month. The venture is a dream of husband and wife team, Paul and Leanne Colman. "It was born out of a desire to escape the daily grind, and a mutual love of all things gin. We can't wait to host groups in the tasting room and share our story," said Paul.

Independent fashion retailer **Leggs** in Skinnergate has restocked its partywear after adapting their clothes range to suit last year's trends. Rebecca Everson of Leggs said: "I feel like a kid in a sweet shop. We are so excited to have people back in store."

Stylists at **Head Quarters & Beverages** in West Auckland Road have been busy dishing out post-lockdown trims since launching the salon last month. HQ managing director Richard Bland said: "Hairdressing has been hit really hard by Covid so we are thrilled to be able to offer 30 jobs across the region."



# a new day...

**House of Fraser** in High Row has revamped its second floor with the addition of Sofa.com, which has on display a range of sofas, chairs and beds, with free fabric samples to help style your home.

The **Hole in the Wall** pub, in Horse Market, has developed a Thai menu and created an outside space for customers to enjoy dining. Manager Dave Johnson said: "Thai food is something the pub was known for years ago so we're going back to our roots. We've had a brilliant response from customers. 2021 – we're ready to rock and roll."

**CGX** has arrived in Northgate to take over the old McDonald's building, and will sell a large range of new and used electrical items.

Wine merchant **Frivolity Bottle Shop**, in West Auckland Road, has resumed its wholesale operation after being hit hard when pubs closed. Owner David Tindale said: "Our saviour came from the good people of Darlington who switched to us rather than national wine merchants and supermarkets."

Andy Raine of **Andy's Candy Bar**, in Duke Street, delivered thousands of sweets free of charge to help lift spirits during lockdown and is glad to see the town back on its feet. He said: "It's all about goodwill and adapting to change. We're thrilled that the tide is turning."

**Craig Shields' Fruit and Veg** in the Victorian Market Hall, will continue to offer free local delivery – a service he set up to help vulnerable members of the community. "We'll be there for whoever needs us", said Craig.

Alex Nicholson, the council's town centre partnership and events manager, said: "I am over the moon to welcome new businesses to the town and to see many others thriving. We're looking forward to the full reopening in June and have plenty in store. Watch this space."



# Helping local businesses

**More than £37 million has been paid out to thousands of local businesses to help them survive the difficult trading conditions caused by the pandemic.**

Teams across the council have worked around the clock to deliver the support provided by central government. The grants were offered in stages across different lockdowns and to a range of businesses that saw their takings tumble and doors close as restrictions came into force.

Even more businesses qualified for support as the criteria was expanded to allow for mobile businesses such as hairdressers, dog groomers and walkers, event specialists and wedding photographers to claim.

In addition, one-off grants of £500 were offered to self-employed licensed taxi drivers, registered childcare providers and approved driving instructors.

## Here's a snapshot of the support given so far:

- 1,735 small business grants worth **£17,350,000**
- 364 retail, hospitality & leisure grants totalling **£6,520,000**
- 105 discretionary grants amounting to **£1,170,000**
- 5,682 local restriction support grants totalling **£12,023,296**

**Total grants: £37,063,296**

Alongside financial help, businesses have also taken advantage of free online training as well as help with marketing and promotions through the council's #LoveDarlo Facebook page and Enjoy Darlington website.

Email: [business.support@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:business.support@darlington.gov.uk) for details of the help on offer.



**As we move out of lockdown restrictions, many businesses will be considering what they can do to grow their business or diversify to keep ahead of the competition.**

Tees Valley Business is a one-stop shop for all your business growth support needs, whether you're an established business, an SME looking for further support, or right at the start of your journey.

See below for an overview of what they provide.

### Growth fund grant programme

This can provide a contribution of up to 55% in support of eligible capital and revenue-based projects that lead to business growth. For details visit: [www.growteesvalley.co.uk](http://www.growteesvalley.co.uk)

### Skills for growth programme

Identify your business's skills gaps and access the employee training needed to grow your business. From work experience and work placements, to traineeships, apprenticeships and graduate placements, there is a lot of support available to develop your team.



# Businesses through the pandemic



## Peer networks

This scheme offers free, practical support from other local businesses with up to nine hours of free specialist support. The programme is fully-funded and includes one-to-one support on areas including finance advice, sales, marketing, digital and technology.

## Free EU business support

Doing business with Europe has changed and the EU exit support team is on-hand with free support. Even if you do not trade internationally, there are still things you need to consider. For example VAT and supply chain impacts, employing people from outside the UK, business travel, trading online, patents and trademarks.

Call the free 24hr helpline on 01642 662778, or email [eubusinesssupport@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk](mailto:eubusinesssupport@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk)

## SME energy efficiency scheme

Reduce energy use, cut carbon emissions and

save money. The scheme can support you with a fully-funded energy efficiency audit and expert advice. Grants are also available to help fund the installation of LED lighting, upgrading to heat pumps or investments in renewable energy. For details of what Tees Valley Business can provide, visit [www.teesvalleybusiness.com](http://www.teesvalleybusiness.com)

## TEDCO business support

The support team has launched a new programme called Evolve Digital. If you're a small local family business you can access a three month online course to help you get the most out of using new technology to grow and develop your business. Email [hello@tedco.org](mailto:hello@tedco.org)

## Climate change toolkit for businesses

The council has devised an online toolkit to help local businesses. The web page offers information and tools to help business owners to become more aware of the potential impact of climate change. See more at [www.darlington.gov.uk/sustainable](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/sustainable)



# If in doubt, leave it out!



We know that recycling can be complicated but if you're unsure whether something can be recycled please put it in your normal bin rather than hoping we can recycle it.



If you put something in your recycle bin that can't be recycled, it could contaminate the whole wagon meaning your whole neighbourhood's recycling efforts go to waste.



We have to pay for contaminated waste to be treated so your good intentions to recycle as much as possible could actually be costing us money that we could be spending on other services.



All the waste you throw in your household bin is taken to a treatment plant and most of it is processed to make refuse derived fuel which is used in various industries. This means the majority of your household waste, even when it can't be recycled, avoids landfill.

## So, please if in doubt, **leave it out!**

To find out more about recycling visit [www.darlington.gov.uk/recycleright](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/recycleright)

## Calling all residents on

### RECYCLING SCHEME B

**If you are on scheme B you will have a green box, a green caddy and a blue bag for your recycling. Would you prefer a wheeled bin?**

They are easy to move and bigger so you can recycle more!

**Only if you can get a wheeled bin to the front of your property on collection day and would like to replace your box, caddy and bag** please email [streetscene@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:streetscene@darlington.gov.uk) or call 405111 and we will deliver one free of charge to your home!





# Protecting our pets

## Police in Darlington have a new tool to tackle dog thefts.

Officers now have access to several Halo microchip scanners, thanks to funding from Darlington Borough Council.

The devices will be available to all neighbourhood and response officers, allowing them to identify any lost or stolen dogs they find during warrants, or while attending routine jobs.

Nationally, offences of dog thefts have seen a rise since the start of the pandemic.

But, in 2020, 23 dogs were reported to police as stolen across County Durham and Darlington, compared to 40 reported as stolen the previous year.

Recently, officers have carried out warrants at a number of properties, resulting in several dogs being reunited with their owners.

Inspector Dean Haythornthwaite, from Darlington Neighbourhood Police Team, said: "We are aware of the community's concerns surrounding dog thefts. Pets are part of the family, so when they are stolen it can be absolutely heart-breaking.

"With help from the council, we believe these devices will help us to reunite more lost or stolen dogs with their rightful owners and allow officers to pursue those criminals involved."

## Does my dog need to be chipped?

**Yes – it is a legal requirement for a dog in the UK to be microchipped. If a dog is not chipped, then the owner can face a fine of up to £500.**

You can ask the following to microchip your dog for free:

- Blue Cross
- Dogs Trust
- Battersea Dogs and Cats Home

You can also contact your local vet but they may charge a fee.

## What do I do if my dog is stolen?

**Call police on 101 or call 999 in an emergency situation.**

Contact your microchip provider, they will register that your dog is missing.

Visit [doglost.co.uk](http://doglost.co.uk) – a free service that aims to reunite lost or stolen dogs with their owners.



# It's here... we're going bowling!



**A new ten pin bowling alley opened its doors at the Dolphin Centre in May.**

DC Bowl, a new five-lane, state of the art ten pin bowling alley is on the first floor, next to the bistro and bar.

With daytime, early evening and late slots available for groups of up to six people per lane, delicious food and a fully licenced bar on site, DC Bowl offers a family-friendly experience that's sure to leave you bowled over.

Forget your fear of wearing someone else's shoes: although the price includes shoe hire, at DC Bowl, if you want, you can wear your own, just make sure they have non-marking soles – no heels, sandals or open toed shoes, please.

The new indoor facility is proudly delivered by the council, in response to calls from residents for a bowling alley in the town.

As well as the bowling alley, the Under the Sea themed soft play, which has been extended with new interactive features, will reopen this month.

Bookings for bowling and the soft play area can be made via the Dolphin Centre website [www.healthydarlington.co.uk](http://www.healthydarlington.co.uk) Please note, Covid-safe measures are in place.



# Fresh ideas at the market

**Young entrepreneurs are set to show their talents at Darlington's first ever Young Traders Market on Saturday 19 June.**

Young people aged 16-30 will be given the chance to showcase their businesses for free and trade at the market for the day. A select few may even be put forward to trade at the Young Traders Regional Final in Newcastle on 10 August.

The first phase of works are now almost complete in the historic Market Hall as part of Market Asset Management (MAM) and the council's plan to deliver a modern, mixed-use market to serve the local community and attract visitors old and new. Work has included the installation of six street food units along with a bar and entertainment area, which will open into the evening and serve street food from around

the world. Music and entertainment from local bands will feature, as well as family-friendly events and activities.

A new entrance from West Row and public toilet facilities will be created and a biomass boiler system is being installed to provide renewable energy to the building.

Throughout the works, Market Hall businesses continue to trade six days a week offering the best fresh produce and more besides. As restrictions ease, look out for the return of popular events including the Farmers and Vegan Markets, Record Fair and the Pease Pudding event.

For the latest markets news, follow Darlington Market on Facebook. For details of business opportunities, email [darlington@marketlettings.co.uk](mailto:darlington@marketlettings.co.uk)





# Have your say on transport

**We are working on a plan for the future of transport across Darlington and want your views on how we can provide a system that works for everyone.**

Whether you drive, cycle, walk, catch the bus or train, use a taxi or car share, we want to make sure that all forms of transport are as accessible as possible so you have a real choice about how you get around.

As detailed in the last edition of One Darlington, we have worked hard over the last year to improve our transport system and we want to build on that in the coming years.

## The Darlington transport plan aims to

- encourage good health and wellbeing and have a positive impact on the environment
- maintain and improve access to services
- improve safety for everyone
- provide an efficient transport system that meets the needs of businesses, visitors and residents.

The way we use our town centre is changing and we want the transport system to support people who will be living in new homes as well as workers and visitors. For the first time we are producing a separate town centre transport plan to address these issues.

## Some of our ideas for the town centre are to

- limit unnecessary traffic
- provide a car club so residents have access to a car when they need it, rather than owning one
- provide parking for residential developments
- retain a balance of short and long stay car parking
- provide disabled parking near key destinations
- provide electric vehicle charging points
- retain bus routes through the town centre and improve passenger waiting facilities
- improve coach facilities
- improve the connections between the town centre and the railway stations
- improve cycling and walking routes and provide information to guide people around the town
- put taxi ranks in appropriate locations to support the day and evening economies
- provide a plan for deliveries that meets the need of businesses and residents and is environmentally friendly.

We are working up the details of the transport and town centre plans and will be asking for your views in the coming weeks. Please get involved!

See [www.darlington.gov.uk/transport](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/transport), local press and social media for information on how to have your say.

## Become a volunteer and make a real difference to elderly lives

Volunteering with us is a great experience for you.

We need more volunteers of all ages in helping our Missioners to provide a vital lifeline of companionship and practical help for so many elderly people in Darlington.

We currently have volunteer vacancies for a secretary, assistant treasurer, publicity officer, fund raisers and visitors.

Become part of a dedicated team who offer support to the elderly living with loneliness and isolation.

**Send Applications to**

[marketing@darlingontownmission.org.uk](mailto:marketing@darlingontownmission.org.uk)

You can also find out more about the valuable work we do by visiting our website.

Thank you.



## Happy Snappy Photo Competition

Win £200



Our exciting summer photo competition is open to everyone in Darlington. Why not get all the family involved... get snapping now. You don't have to be an expert just enthusiastic!

There are five categories: People, Sport, Fashion, Nature and Lockdown.

You can enter a photo into one or every category. There are two age groups, adults and under 16s with prizes and certificates for the winners of each category.

Overall winner's prize is £200.

Starts on 17<sup>th</sup> May  
with closing date  
31<sup>st</sup> August 2021.

For T&Cs please  
visit our website.  
Good luck



This article is kindly sponsored in loving memory of our late "Friend" Irene Sefton

A local charity trusted since 1838

[www.darlingontownmission.org.uk](http://www.darlingontownmission.org.uk)

Missioner 0794 3251357

E [dtm@darlingontownmission.org.uk](mailto:dtm@darlingontownmission.org.uk)

F [/DarlingtonTownmission](https://www.facebook.com/DarlingtonTownMission)



## Doors open at South Park Café

**South Park Café will be reopening its doors later this month.**

The café, has already reopened its pavement café and takeaway service for park visitors, and from Monday 17 May its indoor seating area will also reopen (subject to government restrictions).

The café is a popular pit stop for park visitors and the council has now decided to keep it in-house,

with staff looking forward to welcoming visitors as restrictions ease.

The café offers a wide range of refreshments including barista-style coffee, tea and cold drinks as well as cakes, hot and cold sandwiches and children's picnic boxes.

It will be open Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm and Saturday-Sunday, 8.30am-4pm.

# Work to start on new cycling and walking route

**Work is expected to start next month to improve a major walking and cycling route to the town centre.**

Following a public consultation, revised plans were drawn up for the walking and cycling route on Woodland Road, Outram Street and Duke Street.

This is the first phase of a project to create a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists from West Park to the town centre, via Cockerton.

Feedback on the initial design was collected from residents, businesses and other interested parties and the designs have been amended to address some of the issues identified.

The plans were broadly welcomed as a good way to improve safety in the area with people saying they would be more likely to walk and cycle on the new route.

The £1.7m government funded project will see a 20mph speed limit on Duke Street which will become one way.

Winston Street West car park will reopen to increase parking in the area and there will be extra green spaces and tree planting.

Raised cycle paths will be installed along the route to make it as safe as possible for cyclists.



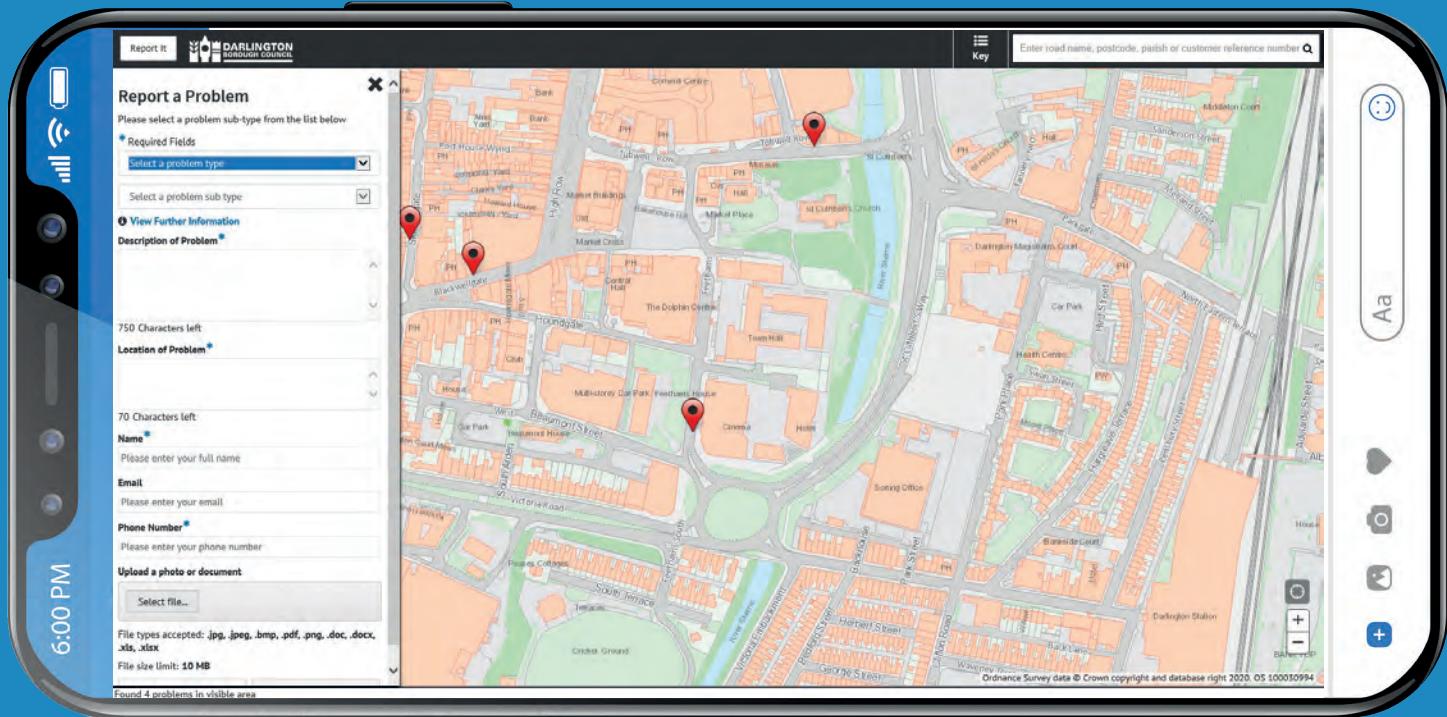
The new plans can be seen at  
**[www.darlington.gov.uk/woodlandroad](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/woodlandroad)**



It is hoped work will be completed by April next year. The council's town centre management team will be hosting a series of events and activities and will be working with businesses in the area to support them during the construction.

# SAVE TIME, DO IT ONLINE

DO IT  
ONLINE



We're working hard to improve the condition of our roads, and that's why we're introducing a new 'Report It' feature to our website, accessible via PC, tablet or smartphone. With this you can report highway defects in a way that's quick and convenient to you. Report faults from anywhere, anytime, and check progress on our new app – we'll also keep you up to date on your report and you can see if anyone else has reported the issue!

This new system will let you report highway problems like potholes and uneven pavements as soon as you see them. It's simple to use – just plot the issue on the map on your phone, select the type of fault, and you can upload a photo. You can also send us your email address and we'll keep you updated with what's happening with your report.

Once the issue is on our 'Report It' system, it'll be sent directly to the appropriate highways inspector who can send you a response and order the repairs as necessary. Your report will also leave a pin on the map so you can see if anyone else has reported the same problem.

In recent years we've dramatically reduced the number of potholes needing repair from around

10,000 a year to around 6,000. This new system will make it quicker and more efficient to find and fix pot holes.

We are still testing this new system, but we hope that it will be live by June so keep an eye out for more news.

'Report It' is not intended for urgent issues such as knocked down street lights. For emergencies, we ask you to call 405222.

In addition to this new system, there are loads of online tools to help you – find a list of them at [www.darlington.gov.uk/do-it-online](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/do-it-online)

REPORT  
IT  
ONLINE



DARLINGTON  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

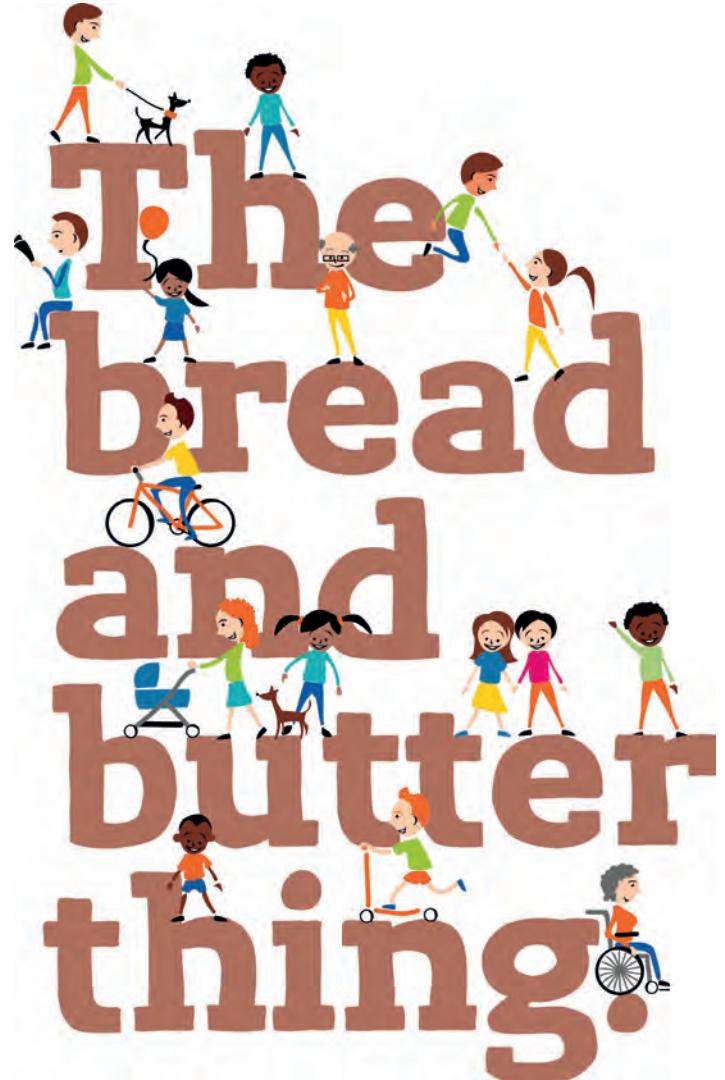
# Introducing Darlington's affordable food service

The Bread and Butter Thing (TBBT) is a charity which makes life more affordable for people on a low income, builds stronger communities and reduces food waste by repurposing surplus food into a weekly affordable food service at locations across town.

Launched in March 2020 at Corporation Road Primary School, with financial support from Cummins, Darlington Building Society and the council, the charity has received a warm welcome, supporting other vital community work including delivery logistics for the school uniform exchange and supporting vital free school meals, funded through the generosity of the local community.

TBBT's affordable food service means that for just £7.50, members' shopping bags are filled with a minimum of £35 worth of items. Each week members get a bag of fresh fruit and veg, chilled items for the fridge like meat or dairy products and also a bag of staples such as pasta, rice and snacks. The food varies from week to week depending on what's available from suppliers but it's always good quality and always value for money.

Last year, TBBT served over 3.2m meals to its 14,000 members across the north of England working with suppliers including Morrisons, Asda, Co-op and Iceland.



## It's not just about the food...

We work in collaboration with local partners and national networks to create bespoke packages of support for our local communities - offering advice and practical solutions for dealing with debt, managing utilities, accessing mental health support and available grants and funding.

In addition, TBBT is creating new jobs in the area and is currently recruiting two new team members. The service is also reliant on the dedication and enthusiasm of its volunteers with over 300 people giving their time to the charity each week, which won the Queen's Award to Voluntary Service last year.

Anyone interested in applying for a job or volunteering

- at the new hubs, the warehouse or as a driver - can find out more and get in touch through our website [www.breadandbutterthing.org](http://www.breadandbutterthing.org)

People come to TBBT for all kinds of reasons - for some it is the difference between meals and hunger; for some, it's about the community that TBBT creates through its weekly deliveries; for some it offers variety and diversity of food that they can't normally access. Others want to make a positive impact on the environment and welcome the opportunity to use surplus food that would have gone to waste.

Whatever their reason, we're here for you.



# Signing up is easy...

**Membership is free – the weekly fee of £7.50 is only payable when you collect your food. You do not have to use the service every week – use us only when you need us.**

## How it works

Our food comes from high street supermarkets, major food manufacturers and farms. We collect it and take it to our community hubs where it gets unloaded by volunteers who pack it.

The bags are then collected by our paying members. There's usually between £35-£40 worth of food in the bags. Members pay £7.50. We have bags available for every size of family and there are veggie options too.

## Become a member

Sign up by texting 07537 416040

Send an email to [hello@breadandbutterthing.org](mailto:hello@breadandbutterthing.org)

Fill in the form on the website  
[www.breadandbutterthing.org/members](http://www.breadandbutterthing.org/members)

## "It's been a lifeline to me"

"I've been a member since the hub started in Firthmoor. It's a real highlight getting the posh brands, stuff I would never be able to buy in the supermarket and the ready meals are fantastic. I put them in the slow cooker and they taste amazing. I can honestly say it's always value for money and I know that I am saving by using TBBT."

"The money I've saved helps towards the bills massively and I've bought more stationery and things to keep my daughter entertained whilst we are stuck indoors."

"I had the first Covid jab last week, I actually cried with relief as the last year has been so hard. I am so looking forward to getting back out, being able to join the gossip in the TBBT queue and enjoy the community spirit that it creates, where we are all chatting about the food we are getting and catching up."

"TBBT has been a lifeline to me and my family - the work you do is amazing and I'd like to say thanks so much to the staff and volunteers that go out of their way for people like me."

**Katrina, TBBT member**

## Hubs in Darlington:

Harrowgate Hill Primary School	Thompson Street West, DL3 0HZ	Monday	2.15pm
Skerne Park Community Centre	Coleridge Gardens, DL1 5 AN	Monday	12noon
Eastbourne Park Community Hub	Eastbourne Park, DL1 4AY	Tuesday	3.30pm
Windsor Court	Newton Lane, DL3 9HF	Tuesday	1.30pm
Corporation Road Primary School	Corporation Road, DL3 6AR	Wednesday	2.15pm
Red Hall Primary School	Headingly Crescent, DL1 2ST	Thursday	1.30pm
Firthmoor Community Centre	Burnside Road, DL1 4SU	Friday	1.30pm

# We're nothing without you...

In the latest instalment of our #50Faces series – in which we profile some of the council's behind the scenes heroes – we hear how showcasing Darlington and its communities is a passion for housing team member... **MATTHEW HUFFORD**

Matthew works as a community engagement officer in the housing team, a role he's been in for the last six months after previously being in customer services.

He said: "My role varies, but I'm essentially the link between the housing team and council tenants. With Covid-19 I haven't been able to meet tenants in the way I would have liked, but as soon as restrictions are lifted I will be very hands on, going out and engaging with the wonderful communities in Darlington.

"A typical day for me can be anything from managing the housing Facebook page to finding out how best we can serve you. It's varied and challenging but extremely enjoyable and will only get better when I can get out and about.

"But my role is nothing without you. We need feedback from council tenants to tell us what is working well and what we need to improve, and one of my goals for 2021 is to introduce new people to the tenants' panel so they can have a say in how we move forward.

"I grew up and live in Darlington and my passion is to showcase the town and its diverse communities."

For more information about the tenants' panel and housing services visit  
**[www.darlington.gov.uk/housing](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/housing)**  
or follow DBChousing on Facebook.

You can hear more from Matthew, and others from the #50Faces series at  
**[www.darlington.gov.uk/50faces](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/50faces)**



# Move More moves online!

The Move More team has offered online sessions in recent months, including keep fit and HIIT. This edition's Move More Star is dedicated to all the participants of those sessions.

Annie Mollart, who attends the keep fit sessions twice a week, said: "I missed the regular keep fit sessions at the Dolphin Centre, and Zoom has worked very well for me. It always makes me feel better physically and mentally."

Carol Charlton, who normally attends sessions at Heighington village hall, said: "I really missed attending weekly keep fit sessions. I lost the opportunity for structured exercise and I missed the social interactions which I feel was detrimental for my mental health and physical wellbeing. I feel a lot more positive with these online classes."



To find out what activities the Move More team offers throughout the town and online, call 405400 or email [movemore@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:movemore@darlington.gov.uk)

# Reading is good for your health!

**Reading can boost your mental health, and staff at Darlington Library have created some special reading well bags for readers of all ages.**

Each bag includes some books to borrow as well as health information and, thanks to the support of Robin Blair, of JJ Blair and Sons in the Market Hall, a pack of flower seeds to encourage you to get outdoors and try some planting.

Staff have also added a range of 'reading well' books to the library's online book collection.

You can login from home and borrow a range



of titles designed to help with mental health and positive wellbeing.

Free access to these, and many other books, magazines, newspapers and audiobooks, can be found on the library's website and app, or download the Borrowbox or Libby apps and sign in with your Darlington library card.

The library is also continuing home deliveries for members aged 60 or over.

For more details about our library services, or to join the library for free, call 349610 or visit [www.darlington.gov.uk/library](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/library).



# Local Plan update



DARLINGTON  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**A programme of online public hearings is set to get underway later this month as part of the independent examination of Darlington's Local Plan by planning inspector William Fieldhouse.**

The council submitted the Darlington Local Plan to the Secretary of State for formal public examination on 22 December 2020. As part of the examination, public hearings are being held to assess its legal compliance 'soundness'. This includes whether the plan has been positively prepared, is justified, is effective and is consistent with national policy.

The hearings will start on Tuesday 25 May at 9.30am and will be open to invited participants (those who have made representations in previous plan consultations). Due to uncertainties about what coronavirus legislation and guidance will apply at the time, and capacity issues at the Town Hall, the hearing sessions will be held virtually. All of the sessions will be broadcast on YouTube and can be viewed live or within a few weeks of the broadcast.

**Week 1: Tuesday 25 and Wednesday 26 May**

**Week 2: Tuesday 15 to Thursday 17 June**

**Week 3: Tuesday 22 to Thursday 24 June**

More details on the Local Plan inspection and any changes to the schedule of hearings, can be found at [www.darlington.gov.uk/local-plan-exam](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/local-plan-exam)

Following the hearings, the examination will issue a report which will either recommend modifications to the plan or find that the plan is sound. Any changes to the plan will be subject to six weeks' public consultation before going to councillors for approval, hopefully by the end of the year.

The plan will be reviewed every five years.

Darlington's Local Plan covers the period up to 2036 and sets out how, and where, future new homes and jobs that are needed will be located, along with policies to guide development, including the protection of the natural and built environment.

The purpose of the Local Plan is to ensure that development takes place in sustainable locations, supported by community facilities and infrastructure, helping the council to restrict building proposals in less suitable locations.



House of Commons  
London, SW1A 0AA

## Dear Constituent,

As your local Member of Parliament, I am here to represent you and the community of Darlington.

I believe it is extremely important to be as accessible as possible in order to be able to best help with any problems or concerns that my constituents have. As such I hold weekly advice surgeries on an appointments basis, this approach allows me to provide immediate help and ensures that my constituents do not have to rush through their concerns.

I often make a start on casework matters prior to an appointment to try and resolve concerns quickly, this also allows me to seek any appropriate advice or obtain clarification on technical points, in advance of meeting. Please do get in touch if you need any help, support or advice.

Peter

Get in touch



BY POST  
**34 Duke Street**  
**Darlington**  
**DL3 7AQ**



BY TELEPHONE  
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**PETER GIBSON MP**

Member of Parliament for Darlington



SOCIAL MEDIA  
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CUT OUT AND SAVE THE DETAILS

# Investing £9 million in Darlington

Northern Powergrid, the company responsible for the network that powers everyday life for 8 million customers across the North East, Yorkshire and northern Lincolnshire, is carrying out a £9 million investment programme to improve the reliability of the power network serving Darlington, both now and in the future.

We're working at various locations across the town to replace 48km of high voltage underground electricity cables dating back to the 1950s with a more modern and sustainable alternative. This new cabling will be capable of meeting any future increase in the demand for power as the town develops, the population grows and more people swap their cars for electric vehicles.

## Working in your community

Work started in late January 2021 and runs until early 2024 along the route shown.



## Priority Services Membership

Making you our priority



Our **free** Priority Services Membership provides access to a range of services and advice in case there's ever a power cut, giving you, or someone you care for, extra support and peace of mind. You might need this for many reasons such as:

- if you rely on electricity for medical reasons or have a serious illness
- if you're disabled or have difficulty moving around at home
- if you're elderly or living alone
- if you have children aged 5 or below
- if you're living with a mental health condition
- if English isn't your first language

Fill out an application form at [northernpowergrid.com/care](http://northernpowergrid.com/care) or call us on 0800 199 2996 (Text Relay Users dial 18001 first). Text Phone users call 0800 028 9507 and, if English isn't your first language call 0800 389 8204.

For more information about this investment visit [northernpowergrid/darlington](http://northernpowergrid/darlington),  
email [generalenquiries@northernpowregrid.com](mailto:generalenquiries@northernpowregrid.com) or call 0800 011 3332

**POWER CUT?  
CALL 105**



# News in brief

## The Big Ask

The children's commissioner is asking four to 17 year olds to have their say on things that matter to them.

Responses to the national survey will be used to plan changes to make children's lives better.

Find out more and have your say at [thebigask.uk](http://thebigask.uk) by Wednesday 19 May.

## Have your say on post 16 transport

The council wants to hear your views on the transport arrangements for people aged 16 years and above who are in education or training.

To have your say on the 'post 16 transport policy statement' visit [www.darlington.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/schooltransport) before Monday 24 May. To request a paper copy call 406333.

# Businesses help to support carers



### Employers are being urged to support staff who are juggling work and caring for a loved one.

It is estimated that as many as one in seven people have to balance their jobs with the needs of caring for a relative and 600 people a day leave work because they can no longer cope with their job and caring responsibilities.



Thanks to funding from the council, a carers in employment co-ordinator, Diane Williams, has been appointed by Durham County Carers Support to help Darlington businesses support their staff.

Diane said: "There are so many benefits for employers and employees in tackling the issue head on. If employers can help their staff remain in work then it allows them to retain their dignity and feeling of self-worth, it stops them feeling isolated and it means they don't have to claim benefits. In return employers don't have to find and train new staff, don't lose experience and expertise and are helping the community – it's a win win."

For more information visit [www.dccarers.org](http://www.dccarers.org) or call 0300 030 1215.

The council has also joined forces with 11 other North East councils to find out what support carers need.

# Local support for Parkinson's disease



**Parkinson's disease is one of the fastest growing progressive neurological conditions in the UK with 145,000 people living with the disease. Most people associate Parkinson's with a visual tremor, but it is more complex with issues causing rigidity, slowness of movement and total freezing episodes.**

Debbie Robson, pictured above left, is the treasurer of the Darlington support group. She said: "I was diagnosed with Parkinson's 13 years ago at the age of 39. I had a busy career working as a manager at the hospital and managed to work for another ten years after my diagnosis before taking early retirement.

"Our group usually meets on the second Wednesday of the month, 2-4pm, at Elm Ridge Methodist Church Hall, Carmel Road South. There is a small charge of £2 but this includes refreshments. We have guest speakers, entertainment and day trips as well as friendly support and advice for sufferers and their family/carers.

"Due to Covid restrictions we cannot meet up at the moment but hope to restart later in the year."

For more details, email [debbie\\_robson@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:debbie_robson@hotmail.co.uk) or call Margaret Nesom on 07505 542471.

## New club with community at its heart

**A new club for people aged 18-30 is set to spring into action to help the local community.**

Darlington Rotaract Club is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Darlington and aims to give young adults the chance to address the needs and concerns of their community. Members decide how to organise and run their own club, manage funds, and plan and carry out activities and local community projects.

Projects planned for this year include a spring litter pick challenge to pick 100 bags in 100 days and the creation of a small park area.

To find out more visit the team at their stall in Darlington town centre on Saturday 19 June, search for Darlington Rotaract on Facebook or email [darlorotaract@gmail.com](mailto:darlorotaract@gmail.com)



**Share news about your club! Please email [communications@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:communications@darlington.gov.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](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/childcarechecker), email [pfis@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:pfis@darlington.gov.uk) or call Darlington Families Information Team on **01325 406222** (option 7)



