

DURHAM

Autumn 2024

County News

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Fun and fitness for all

What's new at County Durham leisure centres

A page turning line-up

Durham Book Festival returns

Community action

Meet the team on a mission

Welcome

to the autumn edition of Durham County News

An action-packed summer may be drawing to a close but, as we head into a new season, the pace shows no sign of slowing down here in County Durham.

On pages 16 and 17, we reveal the programme for Durham Book Festival, with Bridget Jones author Helen Fielding and Horrible Histories creator Terry Deary among the highlights.

On pages 8 and 9, you can find out about the fantastic new leisure facilities on offer at the Louisa Centre in Stanley. Don't miss your chance to win a free children's party!

On pages 22 and 23, we celebrate the achievements of our amazing young people at the County Durham Youth Awards.

And on page 12, you can learn more about the work our Community Action Team carries out in towns and villages across the county.

Add NETPark's 20th birthday (page 14), The Story's new programme (page 13) and our fun-filled What's On guide (pages 26-31) into the mix and it's clear we are on track for an exciting and enjoyable autumn.



Councillor Amanda Hopgood,
Leader of the Council

Amanda Hopgood

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Front cover image: A family enjoys a game of ten pin bowling at Peterlee Leisure Centre.

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Are you looking for a new challenge this autumn?

Perhaps you are interested in learning new skills, making friends or giving something back to the local community?

If the answer is yes, then Volunteer Durham can help. Our volunteering service offers a vast range of volunteering opportunities in a range of sectors across the county – from helping out at festivals and supporting the county's archives and collections teams, to delivering library books, leading walking and cycling groups, and helping children and families.

Outdoor enthusiasts can help our staff keep parks, nature reserves and green spaces looking their best or can support with outdoor education, events and guided walks. This includes opportunities to join charitable organisations such as the Friends of Wharton Park, Friends of Hardwick Park and the Friends of Witton Dene.



To find out more about the opportunities on offer, visit www.durham.gov.uk/volunteering

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The entrepreneurs of tomorrow

Young entrepreneurs were put to the test in a competition that gives schoolchildren a fascinating insight into the world of business.

The theme of this year’s County Durham Future Business Magnates was *‘What a wonderful world – can you make it better?’*, and Year 8 pupils from across the county took part.

The overall winner was King James I Academy in Bishop Auckland, with

pupils impressing the judges with their ‘Smart Weigh’ business. The ingenious concept is based on an eco-friendly bin that can weigh food waste, with users then earning points according to how much of the waste is recycled or composted.

Now in its 19th year, County Durham Future Business Magnates is organised by our business support service, Business Durham.

Support with childcare

If your two-year-old child has been receiving 15 hours of free childcare through the Government’s funding for Working Parents scheme, they will automatically switch to 30 hours when they turn three.

Parents and carers who are still eligible just need to continue reconfirming their code as normal and it will become usable to claim 30 hours (the code will remain the same).

If your child is accessing a Play and Learn two-year-old funded place, they will continue to receive 15 hours of childcare when they turn three.

For more information about support with childcare, including the Government’s tax-free childcare scheme, visit www.durham.gov.uk/earlyyears



Wendy crowned Durham Tourism Superstar 2024

A key member of the team behind the live action spectacle *Kynren: An Epic Tale of England* has been crowned Durham Tourism Superstar 2024.

Wendy Wilshere, head of casting and engagement at 11Arches, secured the most public votes in the annual competition, which is organised by our tourism service Visit County Durham,

Initially joining *Kynren* as a volunteer in 2016, Wendy has given up hundreds of hours of her own time to make the production a success. Eight years on and she is now an employed member of the team, working closely with the production's 1,000 volunteers to ensure the show runs smoothly. *"It feels amazing to win, I didn't expect it at all, but it is fantastic,"* said Wendy. *"It is a celebration of all we do at Kynren."*

Wendy will now go forward as Visit County Durham's nomination for the VisitEngland and Mirror Travel National Tourism Superstar contest.



Calling all artists!

Artists who live and/or work in County Durham are invited to submit their work for potential display at Bishop Auckland Town Hall's Open Art Exhibition.

A celebration of local talent and creativity and hosted in the venue's gallery, last year's exhibition showcased 186 pieces of artwork with drawings, paintings, textiles, sculpture, digital art and photography on display.

Artists – including young artists aged 12 to 18 – can submit their artwork until 5pm on **Tuesday 1 October**.



The exhibition will be displayed from December 2024 to February 2025. To find out more and apply, visit bishopaucklandtownhall.org.uk/gallery

Apply for 2025 school places

Applications are now open for primary and secondary school places for the 2025/26 school year.

Parents and carers of children turning five between **1 September 2025 and 31 August 2026** must complete an online application stating which school they would like their child to attend.

Parents whose child attends the nursery unit attached to their preferred school or has a sibling at the school still need to apply. They should also apply for a place in Year 3 if their child attends an infant school which operates separately to their preferred junior school.

Primary school applications close at midnight on **Wednesday 15 January 2025**.

Secondary school applications are also open and close at midnight on **Thursday 31 October**.

Applications can be submitted online at www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions. You will also be able to access a useful guide to help with your application. Paper application forms are available upon request. Contact **03000 265 896**.

Tourism delivers major economic boost

Tourism contributed £1.23 billion to County Durham's economy in 2023, with new attractions playing a key role in helping the county reach a new record.

The latest industry figures demonstrate the county has continued to build on the success of 2022, when it hit the £1 billion milestone for the first time.

Overall, just over 20 million people visited the county last year, an increase of 12.5 per cent. The number of people employed in tourism has also grown, up by 12.4 per cent to 13,178.

Make the move to Universal Credit

Anyone receiving legacy benefits must make the switch to Universal Credit by December 2025.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is currently issuing Managed Migration Notices to people who are claiming legacy benefits, namely:

- Working Tax Credit
- Income based Jobseekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit
- Income based Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Housing Benefit

The notice explains that legacy benefits will end, and that people must make a claim for Universal Credit within three months of receiving the letter.

People will not be automatically transferred and so could be financially worse off if their claim to Universal Credit is late.

In some circumstances, a time extension may be possible due to personal circumstances. This can be requested by calling the number in the letter within the three-month time period specified.

For further advice or for help making a claim, contact **Citizens Advice** on **0800 144 8444**.



Help shape advice services

There is still time to have your say on the provision of information, advice and guidance services across County Durham.

In addition to the services provided by our own Welfare Rights Team, we commission local charities to give free, confidential and impartial advice and support to residents on a range of issues and topics.

Citizens Advice County Durham, Age UK, Durham Carers, East Durham Trust, Durham Foodbank and Community Money Advice are just some of the organisations we work with.

To ensure we continue to meet people's needs, this summer, we launched a consultation seeking views on how these services can be delivered in the future.

The consultation closes at 5pm on **Friday 20 September** and people can have their say online at www.durham.gov.uk/consultation

Paper surveys are available from libraries and Customer Access Points.



Hardwick Park opens new accessible toilet

Families and visitors to Hardwick Park near Sedgefield can now enjoy easier access to amenities thanks to a new Changing Places toilet.

Funding from the Department for Levelling Up and Muscular Dystrophy UK has enabled us to bring the new accessible toilet to the popular park.

With a hoist, changing table, height adjustable sink and shower, the toilet is perfect for families with additional needs and carers accompanying visitors to the park.

To find out more about Hardwick Park, visit www.durham.gov.uk/hardwickpark

Promoting safe travel to school

September is the start of the new academic year, and our road safety team has been sharing top tips on how to get to school safely.

Leaflets highlighting the benefits of walking, safe places to cross and park and stride options, along with advice on public transport and travelling by car are being shared with schools across the county.



The leaflets are aimed at the parents and carers of children who are starting school or moving from primary to secondary school.

At the end of the summer term, the team also delivered a series of road safety activities at Timothy Hackworth Primary School in Shildon. This included challenging pupils to create an eye-catching banner encouraging drivers to slow down and be vigilant of pedestrians.

For more information about road safety in County Durham visit www.durham.gov.uk/roadsafety



New bridge to be installed on historic monument

New concept designs have revealed what a proposed new bridge along an historic railway line could look like.

As part of the continued development of the Stockton and Darlington Railway (S&DR) Walking and Cycling Route, we are proposing to build a new bridge deck over the abutments of the Gaunless Bridge in West Auckland.

Opened in 1825, the Gaunless Bridge was located on the S&DR serving Witton Park Colliery. It was one of the first railway bridges in the world to be constructed from iron.

The current proposals are part of wider plans to promote and improve the whole S&DR route for 2025, the 200th anniversary of the railway.

A consultation event about the bridge took place over the summer where local residents and interested parties expressed their support for the proposals.



Crematoriums retain Green Flag status

Mountsett Crematorium and Durham Crematorium have been recognised for their excellent facilities, high standards of maintenance and calming environments.

Once again, both sites have been awarded a Green Flag, an international award that recognises well-managed parks and green spaces.

We maintain both sites, with Durham Crematorium run in partnership with Spennymoor Town Council and Mountsett Crematorium in conjunction with Gateshead Council.

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More opportunities to move

Plans to modernise and enhance our leisure provision are making good progress. The Louisa Centre in Stanley has now reopened to residents and work continues on our wider leisure transformation programme.

New look Louisa Centre

A revamped Louisa Centre is offering visitors of all ages a range of fun activities and updated facilities.

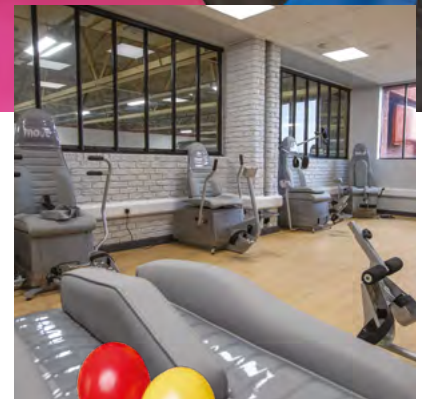
The centre now boasts a larger children's soft play area where toddlers can enjoy their own dedicated space and older children can problem-solve their way through three levels of obstacles.

Other activities coming soon to the Louisa Centre include the chance to scale new heights on a 'clip and climb' climbing wall and the county's first ever TAG Active obstacle course. Think Ninja Warrior, Gladiators and Total Wipeout all rolled into one!

Three new exercise studios are open for instructor-led and virtual studio sessions. Whether you're new to exercising or attend regularly, with over 100 classes each week, there are activities to meet everyone's needs.

For those who need a helping hand, or are recovering from an illness, the centre's Move Hub is fitted with the latest power-assisted equipment to help people move for longer.

And, after building up an appetite, visitors can make the most of the new thrive kitchen, offering healthy food, drinks and snacks.



**Win a children's party
at The Louisa Centre**



For the chance to win a children's party for up to 15 children, including food and use of the party room, simply tell us: **how many obstacle levels feature in the soft play?**

The lucky winner can choose from a soft play, clip and climb or TAG Active party, meaning there are options for younger and older children.

To apply, visit www.durham.gov.uk/DCNcompetitions or send your answer – along with your name and contact details – to Durham County News, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UQ.

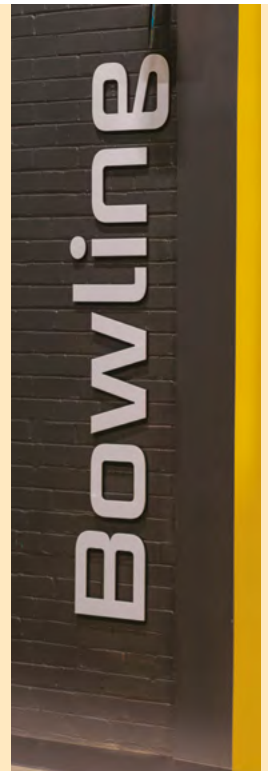
The closing date is **Monday 30 September**.

Age and height restrictions apply depending on chosen activity.

Dates are subject to availability.

Experience is non-transferable and may not be exchanged for cash or other products/services.

Full terms and conditions can be found at www.durham.gov.uk/DCNcompetitions



Great fun and good for you!

Did you know there is a ten-pin bowling alley at Peterlee Leisure Centre?

Whether it's your first time swinging a bowling ball or you are a bowling pro, hours of fun await and you don't need to be a member to join in. The state-of-the-art facilities opened last year and feature immersive Spark technology that allows bowlers to choose graphics to create their very own adventure. Food and drinks can also be ordered from thrive kitchen during the game.

And not only is it good fun, but it's a great form of low-impact exercise, helping to improve grip strength, coordination, balance, cardiovascular health, movement, and mobility. It can also help to build muscle and burn calories.

To find out more and book a game, visit www.thriveleisure.co.uk/bowling

Ongoing regeneration

Plans are progressing for a brand-new leisure centre for **Bishop Auckland**. The new building, which will be located next to Woodhouse Close Leisure Complex on the site of the current Woodhouse Close Library, will feature two swimming pools, a sauna and steam room as well as a modern gym, Move Hub, soft play centre, library, and café.

Refurbishment works continue at **Spennymoor** where a new thrive kitchen and soft play will open later this year alongside a refurbished pool and water play feature.

Teesdale Leisure Centre will also reopen to visitors soon, offering a new Move Hub, soft play and changing village for the swimming pool.

To find out more, download the thrive leisure app, or visit www.thriveleisure.co.uk

County Durham Youth Awards



Jay Jenkins, Outstanding Award

Twelve-year-old Jay was born deaf and registered as sight-impaired at the age of four. He has dealt with varying health conditions throughout his life, including type 1 diabetes.

He was recently diagnosed with Wolfram-Like Syndrome, a rare condition which links hearing, sight loss and diabetes, as well as Sweet Syndrome, a very rare inflammatory skin condition.

Despite the challenges he has faced, including having to get blood tests every two weeks, Jay was nominated by a friend for teaching him sign language, always catching up on any work he has missed due to health appointments and taking part in fundraisers.

Jay was also presented with the **Anne Jackson Award**, an additional accolade created in memory of Anne, a supporter of the Youth Council, which recognises those who show a special commitment to others.

Young people across County Durham who have made a positive difference to the lives of others have been celebrated at our County Durham Youth Awards.

The awards, now in their fourth year and hosted by our Youth Council, celebrate the achievements of young people and youth advocates from right across the county.

Put forward by their peers, teachers, parents, and members of the community, many of our winners have gone 'above and beyond' in the face of some significant personal challenges...



Leia Easby, Outstanding Award

Leia's 11-year-old brother had been very poorly for a while but his death was sudden and unexpected.

When the family left hospital, 14-year-old Leia's parents received a box of items in his memory, yet nothing was given to her. Disheartened, she did not want other young people to experience the same.

So, to help other young people with the process of losing a loved one, Leia has been creating boxes to give to children which contain items to help them deal with bereavement.



Imogen Rhodes, Junior Superstar

Imogen, aged just seven, has Hypoplastic Left Heart Syndrome, a complex heart condition which significantly impacts how she manages day to day activities.

Imogen recently had her third heart surgery and missed months of school to recover from this. She wrote her own stories whilst in hospital and completed home-schooling during her recovery period.

Now back at South Stanley Junior School, Imogen is a regular fundraiser for the Children's Heart Unit Fund.



Members of our Youth Council who organised the awards.



Beatrice Morrell, Junior Superstar

Eleven-year-old Beatrice had to contend with repeated infections and pneumonia in the autumn of 2023, and had to take more than a month off school. She is currently on the waiting list for a tonsillectomy.

Yet she has still managed to raise money for Muhoroni People's Foundation, which helps families in Kenya have access to healthcare and facilities.

She has raised £800 for the foundation to date by swimming 13 kilometres in 13 days.

The full list of more than 40 winners across six category was as follows:

Group

- Coxhoe Youth Club
- Oxhill Youth Club
- Stanley Young People's Club
- Young Archaeologist Club

Junior Superstar

- Alisha Playfor
- Archie Hayes
- Ava Holloway
- Beatrice Morrell
- Consett Cricket Club
- Imogen Rhodes
- Joey Charlton
- Joshua Miles
- Stevie Jamieson
- Tommy Johnson

Outstanding

- Anastasia Herdman
- Brooke Davies
- Eleanor Lancaster
- Jack Hopper
- Jay Jenkins
- Jorja Robinson
- Laura Merritt
- Leah Laundry
- Leia Easby

Sportsperson

- Bishop Auckland RUFC Under 16 Girls
- Daniel Naughton
- Evie Goodman
- Harry Luther
- Ryan Liddle

Role Model

- Airden Clark
- Alex Cockling
- Archie Conroy
- Beth O'Brien
- Hunter Anderson
- Isabella Alexander
- Isabella Martin
- Kieron McKee
- Lizzie Briggs
- Maya Patterson
- Sonny Laws
- Sophie Fraser

Youth Champion

- Dean Fall
- Donna Northey
- Jane Price

To find out more about the Youth Council and how to get involved, visit: www.durham.gov.uk/YouthCouncil

A team on a mission!

Blitzing neighbourhood problems is all in a day's work for our Community Action Team.

They're a "boots on the ground" bunch who travel round the county finding and fixing the issues that matter most to local people.

It's all part of our Community Action Scheme – here's how it works...



Team line-up

The Community Action Team is made up of staff from our community protection service, planning, neighbourhood wardens and housing teams, who work alongside police and community support officers and fire and rescue teams.

While our team members stay involved throughout the programme, they can also call-up support from other partner organisations to tackle any specific problems or issues.

What happens once the team has left?

An exit strategy is put in place with partners continuing to work on key issues and picking up new ones if they arise. Communities report the positive impact of the team's work can be seen and felt long after they have moved on.

Where are they now?

The team is currently in Newton Aycliffe, after spending 11 weeks in Annfield Plain. Next stop is Deaf Hill, where the team will arrive on 30 September.

Where can I find out more?

You can find out all about the work of our Community Action Team on our website. Visit www.durham.gov.uk/CAT

The plan of action

The team typically spends 11 weeks in each area it visits.

Weeks 1 and 2: This is the fact-finding stage. Team members hit the streets, talking to local people and businesses to find out about the problems they'd like the team to sort out. They also carry out a residents' survey and hold engagement events before drawing up a list of issues and priority actions.

Weeks 3 to 9: This is the action bit. Seven weeks of it to be precise. A highly visible presence is on the ground tackling everything from dumped rubbish and dog fouling to housing problems and anti-social behaviour. The team also holds drop-in sessions, giving people the opportunity to seek advice on issues such as housing, energy efficiency and healthy living.

Weeks 10 and 11: This is a time to reflect. Actions are reviewed and any loose ends are tied up before the team moves onto the next area and starts the process all over again.



Stories the whole family will enjoy

Fascinating folklore, tales from Victorian schoolrooms and an exhibition sharing stories of children from the past are all waiting to be discovered at The Story this autumn.

Located in the recently restored Mount Oswald House on the outskirts of Durham City, The Story is home to five historic collections of ancient archives. And, as the home of the County Registration Service, it's a place where people can get married and register important milestones.

What's more, The Story boasts an exciting programme of activities for all the family, supported by funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Add a free exhibition space, picturesque grounds and café into the mix, and it really is a must-visit destination this autumn.



Back to school

Sunday 15 September, 11am to 1pm and 2pm to 4pm. Free. Booking required. September is always about school, but what did this mean for children in the past? These fun sessions will draw upon The Story's collections to help children imagine what it was really like in a Victorian schoolroom.

Folk Tales

Sunday 20, Tuesday 29 and Wednesday 30 October, 11am to 1pm and 2pm to 4pm. Free. Booking required. Explore fascinating local legends and folklore from across the county, with fun craft activities and storytelling.

To book a place and find out about other family activities, visit www.thestorydurham.org/whats-on

Coming soon...

A new temporary exhibition exploring the experiences of County Durham children and young people at different points in history will open at The Story on **Saturday 2 November**.

From young people who left behind fascinating family records during the 1800s to the glimpses we can see of children in Roman and Medieval periods – *Our County: The Children of Yesterday and Tomorrow* will consider the many young voices that have been lost in time.

The exhibition has been created in partnership with Durham Youth Council, whose members have carefully selected stories that shine a light on lesser-known histories of County Durham children. It will run until Sunday 5 May 2025.



To stay up to date with the latest news and events visit www.thestorydurham.org and follow @TheStoryDurham on Facebook and X.



20 years of NETPark

In a little over 20 years NETPark, or the North East Technology Park to give it its full name, has grown from humble beginnings to become a leading science and technology park. And it's not only making an impact in the UK; products made and developed at NETPark are being exported around the world, with some even making it to outer space.

Owned by the council and managed by Business Durham, NETPark is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. Since opening in 2004, NETPark has blazed a trail at the forefront of innovation, with businesses creating cutting-edge products and technologies.

More than 40 companies now call NETPark home, employing more than 700 people in exciting fields such as advanced materials, nanotechnology and even space technology. These innovative companies are engaged in pioneering work, including the development of radar systems, telecommunications, space communications and the study of compounds affecting ageing, longevity, and neurodegeneration.

They are also advancing technology for energy capture and storage, safeguarding critical national infrastructure from serious cyber threats, and creating applications for the NHS and water infrastructure. These companies not only contribute to the local economy but also trade internationally, showcasing County Durham's expertise on a global stage.

NETPark's success is due to its strong partnerships. Durham University and the Centre for Process Innovation (CPI) work closely with businesses, helping them develop new ideas and turn them into real products.

And the future looks bright for NETPark. A £100 million expansion project is underway, creating space for even more businesses and up to 1,250 new jobs in exciting and innovative fields.

NETPark is also committed to being environmentally friendly. The expansion project focuses on sustainability, aiming to create a clean and green environment for businesses to thrive.



Kromek makes wearable devices capable of detecting biological and radiological threats to human life.



Filtronic supplies parts to Elon Musk's company, SpaceX, for its Starlink platform.



SamplePod, a public/private partnership involving the NHS, is transforming the way in which specimen tubes are transported and traced by health services.

'It was love at first sight, the best feeling ever'

Second-time adopters Steven and Robbie speak about their journey to parenthood ahead of National Adoption Week (21 to 27 October).

Steven and Robbie had been together six years when they started the adoption process in 2020 after attending an information event.

Steven said: "We completed the adoption process and just 24 hours after being approved at the panel meeting, Josh was born. It was love at first sight, the best feeling ever. In January 2023, we started the process again, and were matched with Samantha, a newborn baby girl.

"I'd recommend adoption to everyone. The initial phone call is hardest. There's always an element of doubt, but no one wants to you to fail, they want to help you and want what is best for the child.

"There are two things you need during this process – honesty and open mindedness. It's not an easy process, but it is worth it. We didn't know what to expect during the process, but it brought us closer as a couple".

Adopt Coast to Coast, the regional adoption agency for the council, and Together for Children (Sunderland), is calling for more people to explore adoption as a way to start or grow their families.



Take the first steps

If you've been thinking about adoption but aren't sure where to start, our adoption information events are the ideal introduction. Events last around an hour and are held online so you can join us from wherever you are. Upcoming events take place at **10am on Saturday 28 September** and **7pm on Wednesday 9 October**. To find out more and book a place, visit www.adoptcoasttocoast.org.uk/adoptnews/online-information-events/

Meet the children

Adopt Coast to Coast has children of all ages and backgrounds who need loving families. Some may have additional needs; others need a family where they can live with their brothers and sisters.

Cameron

Cameron* is a two-year-old boy with blonde hair and brown eyes. He is timid but curious and a pleasure to look after. Cameron likes being outside, playing with his toys, going to the park and on walks. He also enjoys going to nursery. Cameron needs a family who will be patient and understanding with him.



Ella and Tori

Ella and Tori* are sisters. Ella is five years old with blonde hair and brown eyes and Tori is four years old with blonde hair and green eyes. Ella is very friendly with a smile that lights up a room. Tori is a very affectionate little girl who is always smiling and talks very loud and very fast. Ella likes being outside and loves getting pushed on the swings at the park. Tori loves playing in the garden, jumping in puddles and showing off her trampoline moves. Both girls need a family who can offer daily reassurances and positive messages as well as plenty of attention.



*Please note, names have been changed for privacy and safeguarding reasons.



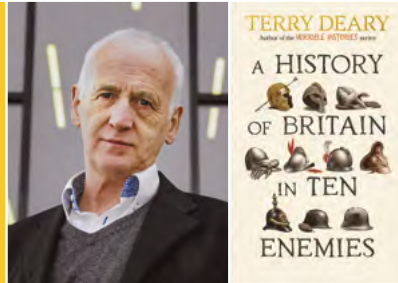
A page turning line-up

Join us for the latest chapter of Durham Book Festival, which returns to Gala Durham and Clayport Library from **Friday 11 to Sunday 13 October**.

We're delighted to welcome journalist, novelist and screenwriter **Helen Fielding** to Gala Durham.



Helen will offer a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the world's most famous singleton, Bridget Jones. *Bridget Jones's Diary* was so hugely successful it spawned three further bestselling books, three blockbuster movies – with a fourth in filming – and a whole new literary genre. We look forward to Helen sharing some insights into her much-loved character.



Sunderland born **Terry Deary**, the bestselling author behind the phenomenal *Horrible Histories*, will talk about his first book for adults, *A History of Britain in Ten Enemies*. Terry argues Boudica would be forgotten if it weren't for the Romans, that Elizabeth I would count as a minor royal without the Spanish Armada, and Margaret Thatcher just a mean 'milk-snatcher' if it weren't for the Argentines.



Acclaimed Durham author **Pat Barker** will treat audiences to a dramatic live reading of her new book, *The Voyage Home*, accompanied by new music from The Shining Levels.

The Booker Prize-winning author will also be in conversation with writer Adelle Stripe to discuss the highly anticipated follow-up to *The Women of Troy* and *The Silence of the Girls*.



On Saturday 12 October, we welcome the New York Times' best-selling author of 28 novels, including *Wish You Were Here* and *My Sister's Keeper*, **Jodi Picoult**. Jodi will discuss her latest novel, *By Any Other Name*, which explores the theme of identity and the ways in which two women, centuries apart – one of whom might just be the real author of Shakespeare's plays – are forced to hide behind another name to make their voices heard. The story moves between Elizabethan England and modern-day Manhattan.



Rebecca F. Kuang is the American novelist behind the page-turning phenomenon *Yellowface*. Rebecca will discuss her number one global sensation and Reese Witherspoon Book Club pick that everyone is talking about.

Yellowface maps the misadventures of failed novelist June Hayward, whose life unravels as she steals the manuscript of her rival Athena Liu, and considers themes of diversity, racism and cultural appropriation.

Featuring acclaimed authors and a series of workshops for aspiring writers across the weekend, Durham Book Festival promises something for everyone.



Can't make it to Durham?

You can live-stream all Durham Book Festival events taking place at Gala Durham. If you don't want to miss one of your favourite authors, watch along at home for just £5 per household.

Find out more at www.durhambookfestival.com

Jackie Kay, the former National Poet for Scotland, discusses her new poetry collection, *May Day*, in a special event produced in partnership with the Poetry Book Society on Friday 11 October.

The chorus of protest songs traces her childhood in Glasgow, the women's rights and gay liberation campaigns of the 1980s and the Black Lives Matter movement of the present day.

Little Read

Young readers can pick up a free copy of *I Am Brave* at libraries across the county as part of this year's Little Read. Written by **Caryl Hart** and illustrated by **Zoe Waring**, *I Am Brave* celebrates the different ways children tackle the difficult things in life. Whether it's choosing to do something different to their friends, or struggling to make friends in the first place, the story highlights how there are all sorts of ways to be brave every day in the things that we do and say.

Join us for a **free story time** with the author and illustrator on Saturday 12 October, 11am-11.45am at Clayport Library. It's ideal for families with children over the age of three.

Get Writing!

Aspiring writers can take part in a series of workshops at Clayport Library over the festival weekend.

- ★ In partnership with Arvon and Children's Books North, explore adventurous non-fiction with acclaimed writer **Dan Richards** who specialises in art, travel and adventure.
- ★ Why not put cunning schemes to the test in a crime writing workshop packed with practical exercises with author **Cathi Unsworth**?
- ★ Learn how to overcome obstacles and avoid procrastination in an Arvon workshop on writing sustainably and look at how you can set effective goals and build resilience with writer, coach and consultant **Bec Evans**.

WIN a signed copy of *Bridget Jones's Baby: The Diaries!*



To celebrate the return of Durham Book Festival, we are giving away a signed copy of *Bridget Jones's Baby: The Diaries*. For a chance to win, simply tell us how many Bridget Jones films have been released so far.

To apply, visit www.durham.gov.uk/DCNcompetitions or send your answer – along with your name and contact details – to Durham County News, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UQ.

The closing date is **Monday 30 September**.

Full terms and conditions can be found at www.durham.gov.uk/DCNcompetitions

For details of the full festival programme, visit www.durhambookfestival.com

It's never too late to learn

From school leavers and parents to those seeking a career change – there are education and employment support opportunities available for everyone in County Durham.

Support for school leavers

Help is at hand for young people who are still wondering what to do after finishing school or college this summer.

DurhamWorks has helped thousands of young people in County Durham progress into education, employment, or training, even offering home visits where needed.

Support includes:

- ✓ Help searching for jobs and training opportunities, creating a CV, completing an application and developing interview skills
- ✓ Providing access to a range of courses and training opportunities to help improve skills
- ✓ Seeking funding to help with work-related costs, such as initial transport costs, childcare costs, and work clothes

The team also provides help to address barriers that can prevent young people from progressing, such as self-confidence, social anxiety, transport, and benefits and can signpost to specialist services where appropriate.

To find out more:

Visit www.durhamworks.info,

Email DurhamWorks@durham.gov.uk

Call 03000 262 930.



Maths and English skills for parents

Multiply

Parents and carers have been joining their kids in the classroom as part of a scheme to help them support their child's learning.

The Multiply and Communicate Maths and Literacy Cafés provide engaging and interactive sessions aimed at helping parents and caregivers improve their children's maths and English skills.

The sessions, funded by UKSPF, are held within schools, providing a relaxed environment where the adults can enjoy a tea or coffee while participating in activities linked to their child's curriculum.

Featuring fun games and practical activities, the sessions aim to create a positive approach to education, connect families through learning and dispel nervousness associated with maths and English.

To find out more, contact multiply@durham.gov.uk

Learn something new this autumn

Whether you want to boost your job prospects, learn a new skill, help the kids with homework or turn a hobby into something more, DurhamLearn offers free classroom-based and online courses on a range of subjects across the county.

New courses are starting in September 2024.

Visit www.durham.gov.uk/durhamlearncourses



Affordable homes where they are needed

Our £100 million project to deliver hundreds of new affordable homes across County Durham has taken a major step forward, with the appointment of a delivery partner.

We're planning to deliver 500 affordable homes in communities all over the county, for the benefit of local people, and those with a housing need.

It comes as the government is encouraging councils across the country to build more homes amid a national housing crisis. This is seeing not enough properties being built to meet demand – including the need for affordable homes – and many families struggling financially in the wake of recent spikes in inflation and interest rates.

We've now appointed Bishop Auckland firm T Manners to help deliver new homes in County Durham. These houses will be built mainly on land already in our ownership, with the first phase seeing up to 65 properties created across two sites.

The programme will also deliver a significant boost for the economy, with investment in County Durham of around £100 million. It will protect existing jobs and create new ones in the construction industry and associated supply chain.



Representatives from the council and T Manners, which will help deliver the homes.

Selective Licensing of privately rented properties

Since April 2022, private landlords have been required to obtain a licence to legally rent their properties in selected areas of the county.

About 42% of the private rented sector is covered and you can check if a property is included at www.durham.gov.uk/selectivelicensing



The licence fee is a maximum of £555, per property, for the length of the five-year scheme.



For more information, please contact:
Telephone: **03000 268 000** (press option 2)
Email: selectivelicensing@durham.gov.uk

Selective
Licensing

Warm and well this winter

It's important to look after yourself and others during cold weather. Here are some seasonal health tips to help you stay well and build activity when the temperatures begin to fall.



Staying warm, well and hydrated

These simple tips can help keep us all warm and well in the colder months ahead.

- ✓ Stay active, remember to dress for the weather and wear shoes with good grip when outside
- ✓ Drink at least six to eight mugs of liquid a day, especially warm drinks during cold weather
- ✓ Keep your home between 18°C and 21°C during the day and at least 18°C at night



For more help, including energy tips and money advice, visit www.durham.gov.uk/warmandwell

Be Wise, Immunise

One of the best ways to protect yourself and those around you from winter illness this year is to get your winter vaccines, including flu and Covid.

The flu vaccine is available to people who are:

- ✓ pregnant
- ✓ children (aged two to 16)
- ✓ in clinical risk groups
- ✓ aged 65 years and over
- ✓ care home residents
- ✓ carers and health and social care workers
- ✓ close contacts of people with compromised immune systems

The Covid vaccine is available to people who are:

- ✓ adults aged 65 years and over
- ✓ residents in a care home for older adults
- ✓ aged six months to 64 years in a clinical risk group

This winter, the UK will also be rolling out a vaccine for respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). RSV typically causes mild, cold-like symptoms, however, it

can lead to severe lung infections like pneumonia and infant bronchiolitis.

The RSV vaccine will be available to people who:

- ✓ are pregnant
- ✓ turn 75 on or after 1 September 2024
- ✓ are already aged 75 to 79 on 1 September 2024



Your GP should contact you about flu, Covid and RSV vaccines. If you don't hear from them and think you are eligible, please contact them directly.

How can your pharmacy help?



Got an itch? Tummy trouble? Ticky cough?
Then head to your local pharmacy.

Pharmacists across the county can offer advice and treatment for many common conditions, including:

- ✓ Sinusitis (12 years+)
- ✓ Sore throat (5 years+)
- ✓ Shingles (18 years+)
- ✓ Earache (1 to 17 years)
- ✓ Impetigo (1 year+)
- ✓ Infected insect bites (1 year+)
- ✓ UTIs (non-pregnant women aged 16 to 64)

They can also help with other issues, such as aches and pains, colds and flu, skin care and more.

Just pop along to your local pharmacy and talk to a health care professional about your illness. They will offer advice and treatment if needed.

For more details, and a tool to help you find your nearest pharmacy, visit www.thinkpharmacyfirst.health



Look out for your neighbours

This is so important, especially during the winter. If you are concerned about someone, call Social Care Direct on 03000 267 979.

Watch out for signs of hypothermia, such as shivering, cold and pale skin, slurred speech, fast breathing, tiredness and confusion. If you think someone is suffering from hypothermia, call 999 immediately.



10 tips to prevent falls

Falls are a common, but often overlooked, cause of injury.

Around one in three adults over 65 and half of people over 80 will have at least one fall a year.

Older people are more likely to end up in hospital as the result of a fall and if they fall once there's an increased chance that they'll fall again.

It can also cause a person to lose their confidence, become withdrawn, and feel as if they have lost their independence.

Monday 16 to Friday 20 September is **Falls Prevention Week**. Here are 10 tips for preventing falls in the home:

1. Mop up spillages immediately
2. Remove clutter, trailing wires or frayed carpets
3. Use non-slip mats and rugs
4. Make sure rooms, passages and staircases are well-lit
5. Organise your home so that climbing and stretching are kept to a minimum
6. Get help to do things you are unable to do safely on your own
7. Don't walk on slippery floors in tights or socks and avoid loose-fitting clothes that trail and trip you up
8. Wear well-fitting shoes or slippers that are in good condition and support the ankle
9. Take care of your feet and trim toenails regularly
10. Try strength and balance exercises

For more information on falls prevention, visit www.durham.gov.uk/falls

Remember – good handwashing helps stop the spread of lots of winter germs!



200 plus ways to tackle climate change

We're committing to more than 200 actions as part of our ambitious plans to tackle climate change.

Our Cabinet has agreed the council's third **Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP3)** to help achieve our targets of reducing council emissions by at least 80 per cent by 2030 – and net zero emissions for County Durham by 2045.

CERP3 builds on the first two plans, which have already helped us to achieve a 63 per cent reduction in carbon emissions since 2008/9.

It sets out 239 actions for the next three years to help us meet these targets and do everything we can to protect the planet, including:

- ✓ The continued decarbonisation of council buildings
- ✓ The roll out of electric vehicles within our fleet
- ✓ Reducing miles travelled to deliver services through new ways of working
- ✓ The introduction of wind turbines at our Hackworth Road depot
- ✓ Increased biodiversity on our open spaces



Countywide actions include public transport improvements, supporting local food growing initiatives, the expansion of renewable energy schemes from our partners and improving access to green job skills and qualifications.

Current projects are also helping the council to make significant monetary savings through more efficient lighting and the production of our own renewable energy. The Street Light LED Replacement Programme, for example, has already saved millions of pounds in unused energy costs and will continue to make further savings.



EV charging boost

A major new scheme to improve electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure in County Durham is underway.

We're working in partnership with Zest to identify an additional 250 charging locations across the county, with the first phase of charging points being installed this month.

By providing more charging points, it is hoped the project will encourage more people to choose electric vehicles, especially the 40 per cent of residents who don't have a driveway.

The project is backed by £7 million from the government's Local EV Infrastructure (LEVI) scheme, while Zest will also invest more than £7 million to provide and operate the charging points, systems and long-term running of the service.

For a list of installed and proposed charge points, visit www.durham.gov.uk/electricvehicles

Celebrate our climate champions



The County Durham Environment Awards 2024 will open for entries on 9 September.

Now in their third decade, the annual awards recognise individuals and organisations for their hard work and commitment to the environment through sustainable innovation, design and volunteering.

Categories include green business, volunteer of the year and environmental community action.

If you know a group, school, business or individual advocating for the environment, you can nominate them at www.countydurhampartnership.co.uk



New recycling points for coffee pods



Coffee machine pods can now be recycled at four locations across County Durham as part of a trial scheme.

We're offering coffee pod recycling bins at Horden, Potterhouse Lane, Stainton Grove and Tudhoe household waste recycling centres.

The scheme, in partnership with specialist coffee pod recycling service Podback and HW Martins, allows you to drop off both aluminium and plastic pods at the four HWRCs.

Residents don't need to empty out the coffee before recycling them, but the aluminium and plastic pods do need to be separated and placed into the correct bin.

For more recycling tips and information about our household waste recycling centres, visit www.durham.gov.uk/reducereuserecycle

Don't throw your batteries in the bin



We're reminding residents not to bin old batteries to help reduce the risk of fires.

Disposing of them with the rest of your household waste can lead to a fire when they're collected because of the friction that can be caused by the batteries scraping along the side of the lorries.

Unfortunately, some refuse wagons have caught fire because of this recently.

Batteries can be disposed of safely though – simply take them to the recycling pods which can be found in most supermarkets or drop them at any of our household waste recycling centres.

Find out more at www.durham.gov.uk/whatgoeswhere

Play your part

Don't forget to do your bit to reduce the impact of climate change and cut down on your plastic waste.

Sign up to our award-winning single use plastics pledge: www.durham.gov.uk/singleuseplastics

COUNTY DURHAM
SINGLE USE
PLASTICS
PLEDGE

Meanwhile, on the high street...

Helping our high streets to thrive is a key part of our Towns and Villages programme. We take a closer look at a project that is doing just that, while also supporting small businesses across the county.

It's a sunny Saturday afternoon in Durham City and **Northern Stores & Deli** is bustling with people browsing the shelves of locally produced food and admiring the array of handmade gifts on sale. Others are catching up over a cup of tea and a slice of cake in the café.

Located in the former H&M unit at Prince Bishops Place shopping centre, Northern Stores & Deli was founded by Discovering Durham, a community interest company that brings together small independent producers from around the county. It is one of many organisations to have benefited from the **Meanwhile Uses Fund**.

The scheme, which is funded through our Towns and Villages programme, aims to enhance the vibrancy of high streets by allowing vacant buildings to be used for temporary retail, hospitality and leisure ventures in between tenants. This not only reduces the number of empty shops but allows businesses to test the water by taking on short-term leases.

The scheme also encourages the development of shared retail spaces, and offers funding to help cover rents, business rates and utility charges.

At Northern Stores & Deli, Meanwhile Uses has supported the creation of three full-time jobs and has indirectly helped more than 10 businesses with products on sale at the shop.

Matthew Booth, director of Discovering Durham CIC, said: *"The support from the Meanwhile Uses scheme has been crucial for Discovering Durham CIC. Accessing the grant was remarkably straightforward and the ongoing support from the council's community economic development team has had a significant impact on small businesses across County Durham."*



Step back in time

Just a short walk away is another venture that has benefited from the Meanwhile Uses Fund. In July, **Beamish, The Living Museum of the North** opened a pop-up emporium in Prince Bishops Place, where customers can browse traditional gifts and souvenirs, see museum collections and take part in hands-on activities, including an Edwardian selfie studio.

As well as enriching Durham City's retail offer, the emporium is supporting Beamish's work to preserve the region's heritage for future generations and help today's communities through its health and wellbeing programme and learning activities.



The perfect gift

In Newton Aycliffe, the Meanwhile Uses Fund helped the owners of **Just The Perfect Gift** to bring their hand-crafted, personalised gift business to the town centre.

June and Robert Howarth took over the old Occasions gift shop on a short-term lease in February and received grants to help cover service charges and utility bills. The business has proven a great success, and they are now extending the lease.



The Meanwhile Uses Fund has helped more than **20 businesses** so far, and secured more than **£100,000** of private investment in towns and villages across the county.

www.durham.gov.uk/townsandvillages

More help for high streets

The Meanwhile Uses Fund is just one of the ways we are enhancing the vibrancy of our town and village centres.

Retail Start Up Grants

Funded by the **UK Shared Prosperity Fund**, our Retail Start Up Grants support retail and hospitality businesses in their first six months of trading, providing grants to help cover costs such as rent, business rates, service charges, utilities and insurance.

Businesses that have received grants include: **Cork & Coffee** in Seaham, **White Room** in Stanley, **NuMe** in Shildon, **Notch** in Durham City, **TIDE** in Seaham, **Morano** in Chester-le-Street and **TEN Barbers** in Tow Law.

Targeted Business Improvement Scheme

The Targeted Business Improvement Scheme offers funding to help improve business premises and bring derelict buildings or underused retail units back into use.

Treats, a long-established Durham City café, recently received funding to help it expand into a new property.



The owners have transformed a long-term empty unit on Silver Street into the café's new home, safeguarding 12 jobs and creating an additional four full time positions.



For more information about the support on offer to retail and hospitality businesses in County Durham, visit www.durham.gov.uk/retail

Stage set for an unforgettable half-term

A tea-guzzling tiger, an international bubbleologist and everyone's favourite fireman are just some of the quirky characters preparing to entertain families at County Durham theatres this October half-term.

Gala Durham

Monday 28 October, 2pm and 4.30pm, Tuesday 29 and Wednesday 30 October, 11am and 2pm

The Tiger Who Came to Tea

Don't miss this stunning stage adaptation of Judith Kerr's classic tale of teatime mayhem, packed with oodles of magic, sing-along songs and clumsy chaos.

£14, £50 family ticket (minimum of two children under 16).

03000 266 600

www.galadurham.co.uk



Empire Consett

Tuesday 29 October, 1pm and 3.30pm

Fireman Sam Live: The Great Camping Adventure

When two famous animal explorers arrive in Pontypandy, Norman decides to follow them into the mountains, where he discovers a rare red squirrel. But one of the explorers decides to take the glory for themselves, leaving Norman stranded in a cave. Can Fireman Sam save the day?

£16.50 (£15.50 concession), £58 family ticket (minimum of two children under 16).

03000 262 400 www.empireconsett.co.uk

Bishop Auckland Town Hall

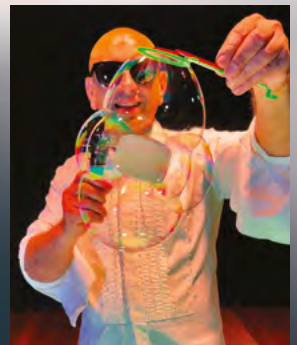
Friday 1 November, 1pm and 3.30pm

The Ultimate Bubble Show

Help Ray, an international bubbleologist and Guinness World Record holder, in his quest to complete the bubble game and make the ultimate bubble. This fast-paced show is full of high energy and surprises as Ray uses various different gases to create incredible bubble sculptures, effects and magical displays.

£10.

03000 269 524 www.bishopaucklandtownhall.org.uk



Gala Durham



Saturday 5 October, 8pm

The Tiger Lillies

Grammy nominated, Olivier winning, post-punk pioneers The Tiger Lillies present a witty new show exploring the meaningless and absurdity of existence. One of the foremost avant-garde bands in the world, The Tiger Lillies shows are dark, peculiar and varied, with moments of black humour and immense beauty. Their unique sound is a mixture of pre-war Berlin cabaret, anarchic opera and gypsy music. **£25.**



Wednesday 16 October, 7.30pm

Ballet Black: HEROES

Now in their 22nd year, Cassa Pancho's Ballet Black return to Gala Durham with a new double bill, *Ballet Black: HEROES*.

Award-winning choreographer, Mthuzuzeli November contemplates the purpose of life in *The Waiting Game*, his exciting and energetic work about the meaning of life, infused with a dynamic soundtrack featuring the voices of the Ballet Black artists.

In *If at First*, Sophie Laplane, the Franco-British artist and choreographer in residence at Scottish Ballet, showcases a subtle heroism and a quieter triumph over adversity, in a struggle that unites us all.

£25 (£20 concession and £18 Gala Members).

03000 266 600 www.galadurham.co.uk



Empire Consett



Empire Consett reopens this autumn with a full programme – from live music and comedy to musical theatre, tribute acts and so much more.

Wednesday 30 October, 7.30pm

Queenz: Drag Me To The Disco

Get set for an electrifying, live vocal, drag-stravaganza where Dancing Queenz and Disco Dreams collide for the party of a lifetime. After two trailblazing years of touring the country and a run in London's West End, the gals are ready to drag you to the dance floor in this unmissable celebration of powerhouse popstars and dazzling disco divas. **£28.**

03000 262 400 www.empireconsett.co.uk



Bishop Auckland Town Hall



Saturday 9 November, 7.30pm

The Cramlington Train Wreckers

From the team behind smash-hit plays *Wor Bella*, *Hadaway Harry*, *Carrying David*, *Mr Covan's Music Hall* and *The Great Joe Wilson* comes another incredible, forgotten story about the North East. *The Cramlington Train Wreckers* tells the story of the Northumberland miners who accidentally derailed the Flying Scotsman at Cramlington during the General Strike of 1926. Almost a century later, their fascinating tale is about to be told. **£16.**



03000 269 524
www.bishopaucklandtownhall.org.uk

Bishop Auckland Town Hall and Empire Consett



Bishop Auckland Town Hall
Friday 4 October, 7.30pm

Empire Consett
Saturday 12 October, 7.30pm

Othello

Award-winning Durham-based Elysium Theatre Company brings Shakespeare's immortal tragedy of love and jealousy to life in this dazzling new production. With Cyprus under threat from a Turkish invasion, The Duke of Venice sends his best general, Othello the Moor, to defend the island. Will Othello's love for his new wife Desdemona survive the scheming of his malevolent officer Lago?

£17 (£15 concession).

03000 269 524
www.bishopaucklandtownhall.org.uk

03000 262 400 www.empireconsett.co.uk

Beamish Museum

Saturday 7 and
Sunday 8 September

North East Horticultural Society and Beamish Museum Annual Show



Beamish, The Living Museum of the North has teamed up with the North East Horticultural Society for this popular annual event, which will see a vast array of vegetables, flowers and crafts put forward for judging.



Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 October
Harvest Celebrations

Experience traditional harvest celebrations and learn more about the significance of harvest time, with bountiful displays and entertainment across the museum.

0191 370 4000 www.beamish.org.uk/whats-on

The Bowes Museum

Saturday 19 October to
Sunday 2 March

Framing Fashion

Framing Fashion: Art and Inspiration from a Private Collection of Vivienne Westwood features some of the designer's most recognisable creations from the mid-80s to mid-90s. Fashion and art collide in this not to be missed celebration of the golden decade of design.



Wednesday 30
October, 1pm
**Charcoal
Workshop**



Take inspiration from The Bowes Museum's current exhibition *Kith and Kinship: Cornish and Lowery* in this two-hour charcoal workshop led by artist Zoe Allen. After examining the works in the exhibition, explore different mark-making techniques before moving on to create your own landscape. Suitable for children aged 15 and over.

Included within admission.

01833 690606 www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk/whats-on/



Friday 25 October to Sunday 3 November
The North Pennines Stargazing Festival

Various locations

Did you know the Durham Dales has some of the darkest skies in England? The North Pennines Stargazing Festival has been running since 2017 and is a chance for people to celebrate the night sky and discover more about the area's nocturnal wildlife. There are events for people of all ages across the Durham Dales, North Pennines and beyond.

To view the full programme and find out more, visit www.northpennines.org.uk/north-pennines-stargazing-festival/

Friday 6 to Sunday 15 September

Heritage Open Days



Various locations

Heritage Open Days is an annual celebration of history and culture, with thousands of volunteers organising events taking place across the country. It is a chance to see hidden places and try out new experiences for free. From a guided tour of Escomb Saxon Church, which dates back to the 7th century, to finding out about civic life through the centuries at Durham Town Hall, there are lots of events to choose from in County Durham.



www.heritageopendays.org.uk

Please note: venue opening is subject to change, please check before you visit.

Tuesday evenings, September to April, 7pm

Sacrison Everyman's Club

St John's Court, Front Street, Sacrison, DH7 6JA

Enjoy talks by guest speakers on a variety of subjects and catch up with old friends and new over tea and biscuits at Sacrison Everyman's Club. There is a **joining fee of £10** and a **weekly subscription of £2**, which cover modest fees, expenses or donations requested by the invited speaker. Upcoming speaker topics include 'Wild Botswana', 'The King of Swing Glenn Miller' and 'Characters of Consett'. For more information, contact Chairman Neil Liddle on 07950 440 265.

First Friday of the month, 1pm

Buddy Cups North East

Neighbourhood Coffee House, Hotel Indigo, Old Elvet, Durham City, DH1 3HL

Buddy Cups North East is a breast cancer support group based in Durham covering the North East. Buddy Cups is open to all those whose lives have been affected by breast cancer, together with their supporters. The group provides a chance for people to connect, make friends and support one another. For more information, contact BuddyCups@gmail.com



Second and last Friday of the month, 10am

Derwentside University of the Third Age (U3A)

The Venue, Wear Road, Stanley, DH9 6AH

This friendly group meets twice a month and is a great way to make friends and learn new things.

On the second Friday of the month there are quizzes, bingo and other fun activities, and on the last Friday of the month there are guest speakers covering a variety of topics. Everyone who is retired or semi-retired is welcome. For more information, contact Laurie on 07812 462 749.

ONGOING EVENTS



Monday to Friday, 9am-9pm

Ferryhill Indoor Bowls Club

Lambton Road, Ferryhill, DL17 8TB

Are you looking for a hobby or a fun way of keeping fit? Ferryhill Indoor Bowls Club welcomes people of all ages, with coaching sessions taking place at 5pm on Friday evenings throughout the year. **A two hour bowls session costs £4.** For more information, contact club secretary Colin Larcombe on 01740 651 010 or colin.sec.ferryhillbc@talktalk.net

SEPTEMBER



Saturday 14 to Sunday 15 September

Stanhope Agricultural Show

Unthank Park, Stanhope, DL13 2PQ

This wonderful agricultural show offers a great day out for all the family, with exciting attractions in the main arena and traditional show classes, trade stands and more. **£10 (children £5).**



Saturday 14 to Sunday 15 September, 10am-4pm

Ushaw Brick Show

Ushaw Historic House, Chapels and Gardens, DH7 7DW

Feast your eyes on a fantastic array of intricate LEGO® creations at the very first Ushaw Brick Show. This exhibition features a wide range of displays and trade stands to entertain enthusiasts and intrigue the curious. **Free with annual admission or day pass.**

Thursday 19 September, 2pm

The Women of the Durham Coalfield



Wingate Library, Front Street, Wingate, TS28 5AA

Join local author, historian and family history researcher Margaret Hedley for an illustrated talk on the *Women of the Durham Coalfield*. The talk focuses on Margaret's book, *Hannah's Story*, which looks at the lives of women married to miners during the 1800s. **Free but booking is required.** 03000 269523 wingate.lib@durham.gov.uk



Saturday 28 September, 10.30am

Riverbanks History Walk

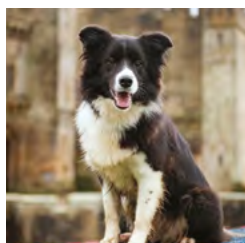
Durham Cathedral, DH1 3EH

Discover the secrets and hidden heritage of Durham Cathedral's woodland and riverbanks on this fascinating 1.5-mile history walk. **£7.50.** Visit www.durhamcathedral.co.uk

Sunday 29 September

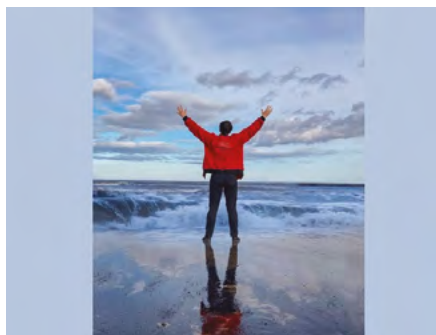
Bark in the Park

Raby Castle, Staindrop, DL2 3AH



Bark in the Park is back! Expect tail-wagging fun, dog competitions, local market traders and more at this paw-some event in Raby Castle's picturesque Deer Park. **Tickets required.** For more information, visit www.raby.co.uk/events/bark-in-the-park

OCTOBER



Friday 4 October, 7.30pm

Facing The Waves

The Venue, Wear Road, Stanley, DH9 6AH

Introducing a new musical to help celebrate the RNLI's 200th anniversary, *Facing The Waves* features the stories of those who risk everything to help others. Set in Whitby, it is a tale about the reality of living in a coastal town. **£8 (£7 RNLI members).** To book, search 'Facing the Waves Stanley' at www.ticketsource.co.uk



Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 October, 11am-6pm

Chester-le-EATS: Food, Drink and Music Festival

Seat Unique Riverside, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3QR

Chester-le-EATS is revving up for its third dazzling year, with organiser Durham Cricket describing the event as the grandest gastronomical gala of 2024. Prepare for an unforgettable family adventure with a 1980s twist featuring a mouthwatering spread of food, chilled drinks, gifts and live music. **Free.** www.durhamcricket.co.uk/chester-le-eats



Sunday 6 October, 10am-3pm

Fungus Foray

Bowlees Visitor Centre, Newbiggin, DL12 0XF

Join mycologist Gordon Beakes for a closer look at fascinating fungi! An ideal introduction to the basics of fungi identification and their role in the environment. Sturdy footwear and waterproofs recommended. **Bring a packed lunch.** **£10.** To book, search for 'Fungus Foray Bowlees' at www.ticketsource.co.uk

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**Wednesday 30 October,
10am and 1pm**

Wharton Witches and Wizards

Wharton Park, Durham City, DH1 4FJ

Budding witches and wizards are invited to a Halloween-themed workshop featuring a range of magical activities at Wharton Park. Suitable for all ages. Children must be accompanied by an adult and fancy dress is optional but encouraged. **£10 per child.** Online booking is required at www.durham.gov.uk/parkevents



Sunday 10 November, 10am Photography Special – A Journey Through the Seasons

**Weardale Railway, Stanhope Station,
DL13 2YS**

All aboard for a unique experience with the opportunity to photograph scenic locations along the Weardale Railway. The event lasts approximately four hours with many opportunities to shoot panoramic views, nature and industrial heritage. **£40 (£30 child) including a drink and cake.**

www.aucklandproject.org/event/weardale-railway-photography-train

**Wednesday 9 to Saturday 12
October, 6.45pm-9.15pm,
Sunday 13 October, 6.30pm-9pm**

Space by Luxmuralis

Durham Cathedral, DH1 3EH

In an experience lasting 45-minutes, visitors will enter the cathedral in darkness through the North Door, before journeying around the building, encountering vibrant projections accompanied by an immersive soundscape. **£11 adults, £5 children and wheelchair users and people with limited mobility, free for carers and infants under three.**

www.durhamcathedral.co.uk/visit-us/things-to-see-and-do



**Thursday 31 October, 10am, 11am,
1pm and 2pm**

Halloween at Hardwick

Hardwick Park, Sedgefield, TS21 2DN

Halloween at Hardwick will see children and their grown-ups make their way around haunted woodland zones completing spooky activities and challenges along the way. Fancy dress is optional but encouraged. **£10 per child.** Children must be accompanied by an adult and online booking is required at www.durham.gov.uk/parkevents



**Saturday 12 to Thursday 31 October,
10am-4pm**

Pumpkin Picking

**Tweddle Farm, Filpoke Lane, Blackhall
Colliery, TS27 4BT**

Visit one of the North East's most popular pumpkin patches, with garden games, fairground rides, photo opportunities and much more. **Entry £10.95 (£9.95 children).** Pumpkins cost **£4.50.**

**Saturday 19 to Sunday 20 October,
10am-5pm**

Lanchester Art Group Exhibition

**The Community Centre, Newbiggin
Lane, Lanchester, DH7 0PB**

Enjoy an exhibition of more than 250 paintings, many of which are for sale. Refreshments will be available.

Admission £1 (children free).

NOVEMBER

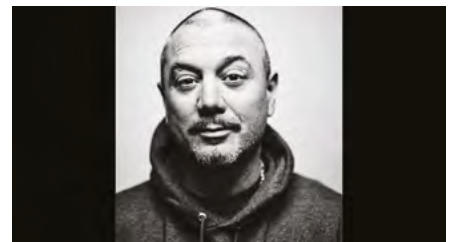


Sunday 3 November, 1.30pm-3.30pm

Harry Panto 3

**Spectrum Leisure Centre, Willington,
DL15 0JA**

Join the pupils of Frogwarts as Harry embarks on his third amazing adventure. Presented by Talegate Theatre Productions, this stunning performance is guaranteed to entertain. **£4.** Contact 01388 747000.



Thursday 14 November Huey Morgan – The Fun Lovin' Criminal

The Witham, Barnard Castle, DL12 8LY

Experience an Evening of Music and Conversation with Huey Morgan – musician, radio and television broadcaster, author and DJ, Huey is many things at once. Huey came to prominence as the frontman and driving force of the eclectic American Rap/Rock outfit Fun Lovin' Criminals. **From £30.** www.thewitham.org.uk

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activities at

www.thisisdurham.com/whats-on

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