

Citylife

Your council update
December 2020

update

On behalf of the city, I would like to thank you for all your efforts during these challenging times.

The battle against the virus is not yet finished and we must keep going, we must continue to follow the guidance and we must protect the vulnerable people in Newcastle. If everyone does their bit our great city will overcome this pandemic and start to recover.

I know how difficult it is to follow the ever-changing rules, but I am proud at the way Newcastle has pulled together to fight coronavirus.

Within this leaflet you will find advice and guidance on where you can continue to get support from the council and our voluntary partners who have done such a magnificent job over the past few months.

The Council also need your views on our draft proposals for council tax next year and setting the budget for the next two years.

As Christmas approaches, we urge everyone to stay safe and continue to follow the guidance to protect yourselves, your loves ones and our great city.

News of COVID vaccines is obviously welcomed but we must remember this virus remains a threat and so we need to act as if it is everywhere – that means washing our hands, covering our faces where required and maintaining social distancing.

You will find the latest advice - including restrictions relating to the Tier Newcastle is in - on our website and social media pages. Please keep up to date.

Finally, I wish you all a healthy and safe Christmas and hope we can get life back to as normal as possible sometime in 2021. Thank you.

Nick Forbes

**Councillor Nick Forbes,
Leader of Newcastle
City Council**



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If you display any symptoms you must stay at home and book a test straight away.



Symptoms

It is important to remember that having just **ONE** of these symptoms could be a sign you have COVID-19.

- **A high temperature** – you may feel hot to touch on your chest or back.
- **A new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three coughing episodes in a day.
- **A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – you could lose it completely, or things may taste or smell different to usual.

These symptoms may be small, you might feel like you can continue to work and don't feel unwell, but if you have any of these you **MUST** get a test and follow self-isolation guidance. You could pass the virus onto someone in your community who becomes extremely ill.

Spirit of Christmas

Newcastle and Gateshead councils have joined forces with charity support body **Connected Voice** to launch the Newcastle and Gateshead Spirit of Christmas appeal.

The appeal aims to raise as much as possible to provide funds to community and voluntary organisations on both sides of the River Tyne to help their efforts supporting families in our communities as we head towards the festive period.

visit uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/spiritofchristmasappeal to find out more and donate.



How to book a test

It is really simple. Just call **119** or visit the **NHS Test and Trace website** as soon as you have symptoms.

Where you can get tested in Newcastle

You can get tested at one of these sites. When you book your test you will be advised on availability. It is advised you book a test in advance and confirm a time - some walk-in tests are available if there are free slots in the session, although this is not guaranteed.

Each site is open between 8am and 8pm every day.

Regional Testing Site (drive through)

Newcastle Great Park and Ride (NE13 9NR)

Local Testing Sites (walk in)

- Etherley Road Car Park (NE6 2UT)
- CCE Car Park, University of Northumbria (NE1 2SW)
- Castle Leazes Car Park, Newcastle University (NE2 4NY)
- Newcastle General Hospital

Whilst you are waiting for your test result you must self-isolate at home and not go out for any reason.

Self-isolation Checklist

If you develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19, or NHS Test and Trace identifies you as a close contact of a positive case, you will need to self-isolate to avoid spreading the virus further.

We know there are lots of things to think about if you are self-isolating so we have created a checklist of things to consider alongside a network of support available across Newcastle.

It is vital that everyone completes self-isolation for the full length of time they are required to. Even breaking the guidance, a day early could mean you pass on the virus to a vulnerable person in your community. Do your bit.

My Self-isolation checklist



Isolation – Understand how long to isolate for. Visit gov.uk/coronavirus for the latest guidance.

Food and essentials – Check you have enough food and essentials. Ask family and friends to visit the shops for you.

Money – Check you have enough money to buy what you need. Check you can pay rent and bills, if not contact them directly and explain your situation.

Work – Speak to your boss about sick pay, furlough and other options whilst you isolate.

Children – Contact school to arrange for free school meals to be delivered home and ask for school work.

Dependents – Ask friends and family to provide care for the people you care for. Call Newcastle Carers **0191 275 5060** for advice.

Health – Be mindful of your mental health. Create a routine, keep busy, stay active, and speak to friends. Never be afraid to ask for help if you need it.

Physical Health – Think about how you can keep fit indoors.

Medication – Contact your community pharmacy who will delivery your prescription for free, or you can ask someone to collect them for you.

Animals – Check you have enough pet food and supplies, if required ask someone else to care for your animals whilst you are isolating.



If you need urgent support please visit www.newcastle.gov.uk/citylifeline or call **0191 277 8000** to speak to our Welfare and Wellbeing Team.

There is further detail on the support available in Newcastle on the **next page**. →



Self-isolation support

If you are asked to self-isolate and need extra help, we're here for you. Our CityLife Line service and Welfare and Wellbeing Team are on hand to help you find the support and help you need.

You should always seek help from your friends, family and community first – if you are still struggling please contact Citylife Line.

Visit www.newcastle.gov.uk/citylifeline or call **0800 170 7001** or **0191 277 8000**.

The Team is available Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and every Saturday from 8am –3pm.

They can also help connect you to national services, such as priority supermarket delivery slots for people who are clinically vulnerable and the NHS Responder service. Support is also available for anyone who is classed as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and has been sent a letter providing additional guidance.

Citylife Line offers a directory of support services throughout Newcastle. There is information on where to access food at www.informationnow.org.uk; all the latest health guidance at www.nhs.uk; and much more.

Self-isolation support payments

People on low incomes who are required to self-isolate may be entitled to a support payment of £500 if they are unable to work from home and have lost wages while self-isolating.

To be eligible, you must have been instructed to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace; be employed or self-employed; be unable to work from home and will lose income as a result; and be in receipt of Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit or Pension Credit.

Apply online at www.newcastle.gov.uk/testandtracesupportpayments.

To apply, you will need your National Insurance number, notification to self-isolate from NHS Test and Trace, a recent bank statement and proof of employment. The scheme is currently set to end on January 31, 2021.



How to protect yourself, your community and your city

Keep up those good hygiene habits –

washing your hands regularly especially if you have handled something or are in a new building.



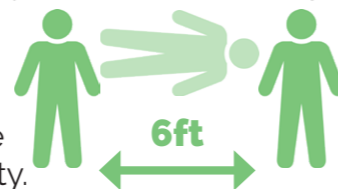
Wear face coverings on

public transport and in shops.



Stick to social distancing guidance –

we have made changes across the city to help you when you are out shopping, visiting cultural venues and in the community.



Most importantly – know the symptoms, book a test if you have any symptoms and self-isolate.

Keeping healthy



It is important that we all do everything we can to stay healthy and happy during the winter. Isolation, localised restrictions and the pressures of the pandemic can push many of us towards things that will have a negative impact on our health and wellbeing. Small reminders, little changes and different decisions will make a big difference to you and your family.

Flu Jab

Just the flu? Not at all.

In an average year the flu virus kills 11,000 people and hospitalises thousands more.



If you are eligible for a flu jab you should access this as soon as possible. This will help protect you, your family and your community from the flu virus. Ask your community pharmacists or GP today.

www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations

Stopping Smoking

Smoking will have a negative impact on your physical health and make you more at risk from experiencing serious illness if you catch COVID-19. Quitting will save you money, protect your family, and reduce your risk of developing many chronic long term conditions including cancer.



Contact **Newcastle Stop Smoking+ Service** on **0191 269 1103** or visit www.changegrowlive.org to start your quit journey today. There are bespoke quitting options to suit everyone.

Drinking over Christmas

Think twice about stocking up on alcohol or drinking through the day. If you have alcohol readily available in your home you are more likely to consume more than the recommended daily allowance. Try and set yourself a limit and stay safe with alcohol this Christmas and New Year. If you are worried about how much you, a friend or family member are drinking visit www.reducemyrisk.tv



Active Newcastle

Keeping active, moving more and enjoying exercise can be difficult during the colder days and darker nights. Active Newcastle have a series of free online exercise ideas, from simple movements you can do around the house to longer workout plans.



It is vital that everyone takes time out of their day to move, it will improve your physical health and give a huge boost to your mental wellbeing. Visit the **Active Newcastle** website and social media to get involved.

Christmas Bubbles

From 23 to 27 December three households can come together to form a Christmas Bubble. You can travel between Tiers to form your bubble and meet inside homes and gardens, places or worships and public outdoor spaces.

Before you form your bubble, it is advised you reduce your social contact and ideally have a 7 - 10 day period of self-isolation, so you know you can join friends and family in your bubble as safely as possible. Once the Christmas Bubble period finishes on the 27 December all areas will return to their previous Tier guidance. For full information and guidance on Christmas Bubbles visit www.newcastle.gov.uk/christmasbubble

Build Forward Better

Our medium-term plan for 2021-22 and 2022-23.

The pandemic has had a profound impact on all of our finances including the council's. This year alone it has cost the council £60m and with the health emergency still not over, the costs are expected to rise even higher.

Despite the challenge, by law the council must set a balanced budget for 2021-22. We must also continue to provide vital frontline services like bin collections and social care.

We need to save £40m over the next two years – on top of the £32m we have had to save this year due to the COVID crisis.

We have some difficult decisions to make to balance the books and have published them on our website for consultation.

We want to know to what you think and have launched a consultation exercise so you can have your say on our proposals. You have until 17 January 2021 to comment.

Painful proposals in 2021-22

- Increasing council tax by 1.94% and apply the 3% adult social care precept to help fund the increasing demand in adult social care and long term, complex impact of COVID-19.
- Reducing adult care budgets by £8.4m through remodelling services, ensuring appropriate support and financial management
- Reducing children's social care budgets by £3.8m by safely reducing demand, expanding the in-house child placement offer
- Increase fees and charges for parking, pest control, bulky and garden waste collections and streaming funeral services

You can read our draft plan and proposals in full at www.newcastle.gov.uk/budget

let's talk Newcastle

Have your say

You can have your say by completing a survey on www.letstalknewcastle.co.uk or by writing to **FREEPOST Let's Talk**

What happens next?

We will collate and analyse all comments received, alongside any further announcements that impact on our finances. A revised budget report will be discussed at Cabinet in February 2021 before being debated at City Council on 3 March 2021 when it is expected the plan and budget will be set.



Capital investment

Capital investment - money that cannot be spent on services - improves economic opportunities, creates jobs and boosts the economy. It is vital in stimulating business confidence and attracting private investment into our city enabling us to enjoy a sustained period of growth.

So, as part of our proposals over the next two years, we plan to invest £250m in our schools, care homes, street lighting, roads

and pavements, vehicles and disabled facilities grants. Also, new residential schemes for people receiving social care support. Such investments, funded largely by borrowing, enable us to reduce costs in the long run and protect funding to keep vital public services going as Government grant disappears.

Further capital investment will go into Newcastle Helix, Pilgrim Street, to facilitate a new office block, district centres and Walker Quay for industry.

Green growth to tackle emergency

Failing to tackle the climate change emergency will be more catastrophic than the pandemic, so we will use our medium-term plan to help make Newcastle carbon net zero by 2030.

Between April 2019 and 2020 the council reduced its own CO2 emissions by 4.8% on the back of a 41% reduction from 2010-2019. In September we launched our Net Zero Newcastle Action Plan which sets out over 150 actions the city can take to decarbonize over the next decade while taking advantage of the huge opportunities for green growth in the economy. Using our capital programme to deliver our net zero ambitions is an important feature of the plan. Our plans include works to prepare land within the North Bank of Tyne Enterprise Zone for further inward investment to drive towards a low carbon future through innovation and excellence with offshore wind, providing new jobs for the green economy.




Make your vote count

on Thursday 6 May 2021

How will you vote at the elections in May?



The Electoral Commission

YOUR VOTE MATTERS
DON'T LOSE IT 

In May 2021, we will be heading to the polls again.

Make sure you have your say on matters locally by voting at the Local Government and Police and Crime Commission elections.

Remember you must be registered to vote to have your voice heard.

To register visit

www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Methods of voting:

You might currently vote at the polling station, but did you know that you could vote in the comfort of your home by opting to vote by post? Or if you were unable to attend a polling station in person you may wish for someone you know and trust to cast your vote on your behalf by appointing a proxy.

For more information on postal or proxy voting visit www.newcastle.gov.uk/electionsandvoting

YOUR VOTE MATTERS
DON'T LOSE IT



census 2021

People make
the census



The census is coming and this time you can take part online. You'll get more information nearer the time and there will be help for anyone who needs it.

For more information visit www.census.gov.uk

March 2021

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Census Day