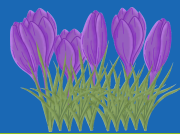


Caring Matters



February/March 2026 - The newsletter of Carers Northumberland



Welcome to the February/March edition of
Caring Matters...



In this issue you'll find

- Free support for those who wish to quit smoking.
- An update on the changes to the Pharmacy First Service
- Free therapies for carers
- Dates for your diary and much more.

Welcome to our first issue of 2026!

We are so excited for to share our plans for the coming year with you. You may remember we mentioned in our last issue that there may be some changes to our carer support groups, well we are happy to let you know our groups will now be known as CHATs.

We listened to feedback from carers who felt the name 'support group' can be quite daunting to those who just want to socialise with carers in their local area. The CHATs will still be a place for support for those who need it, but as many of you who already attend the groups know, they are a great place to share information and take a break.

In this issue you will also find the opportunity to take some timeout for yourself and access a free 30 minute beauty therapy. The sessions are offered as part of a pilot funded by the Blyth Rotary Club who are passionate about supporting carers in Northumberland.

Registered Charity Number: 1122972 Company Number: 6266972
Carers Northumberland, 107 & 109 Station Road, Ashington, NE63 8RS



Would you like support to support to stop smoking?

Your free local stop smoking service offers a wide range of support services from trained professionals from Northumberland County Council. Their qualified team of specialist advisors are here to support you every step of the way.

They will tailor support to suit you, that is flexible to suit your lifestyle and commitments, they understand that this is a journey, not a quick fix.

You will be able to access an abundance of free tools and support both online and in-person, created by trained professionals, to help you at every stage of your journey.

If you would like to look at accessing support you can visit:
<https://www.stopsmokingnorthumberland.co.uk/support>



Or if you live in Northumberland
you can call: 01670 813 135



Pharmacy First Service



The service enables patients to be referred into community pharmacy for a minor illness or an urgent repeat medicine supply.

The new Pharmacy First service, launched 31 January 2024, adds to the existing consultation service and enables community pharmacies to complete episodes of care for 7 common conditions following defined clinical pathways.

The service is expected to free up GP appointments for patients who need them most and will give people quicker and more convenient access to safe and high quality healthcare. Currently, NHS patients in England must visit their GP to access prescription only medication, meaning repeated GP visits and delays in treatment.

It now includes the supply of appropriate medicines for 7 common conditions for certain age ranges including:

Acute otitis media (earache) - Impetigo - Infected insect bites - Shingles - Sinusitis - Sore throat - Uncomplicated urinary tract infections

More information can be found here:<https://www.england.nhs.uk/primary-care/pharmacy/pharmacy-services/pharmacy-first/>



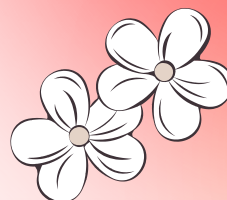
THERAPIES FOR CARERS



Carers can enjoy a complimentary 30 minute treatment, you can choose from:



**Back Massage
Indian Head Massage
Reflexology
Facial**



Treatments are available to be booked on Mondays from February 2026 and will be delivered at YMCA Ashington.

For more information, eligibility and booking please contact us on 01670 320025 or email info@carersnorthumberland.org.uk

*we have a very limited number of spaces available and these will be on a first come, first served basis. Priority will be given to carers with an active caring role.

Thank you to the Blyth Rotary Club who are funding this pilot programme. The therapies will be delivered by Steph the Director of Essential Beauty Academy, who has over 25 years experience and is a former carer herself.



DO YOU LIVE IN ALLENDALE?

MONDAY NIGHT SOCIAL CLUB *Games Night*

CLASSIC AND CURRENT GAMES FOR EVERYONE!

- Dominoes
- Chess
- Checkers / Draughts
- Backgammon
- AND MORE!

Every
Monday from
7pm

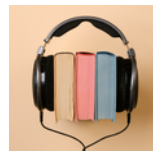
The Kings Head
Market Place,
Allendale,
Northumberland, NE47
9BD



<https://www.kingsheadpuballendale.co.uk/>



Library Audio Book Groups in Blyth and Cramlington



Would you like to join a book group where you listen to the title every month, then meet to discuss?

Group is open to all and suitable for those with any level of Visual Impairment.

No device necessary as in partnership with the RNIB Envoy Connect Devices will be available..

For more information please email:
mylibrary@northumberland.gov.uk
or phone: 07966329139

If you want to join us speak to a member of staff or book your place via Eventbrite - www.nlandlibs.eventbrite

If you are looking for support with employment or education, we're here to help

The Working for Carers project recently supported Debbie, a carer who had to leave her job due to work-related stress. The project helped Debbie write a CV, build her confidence and find a new job that allowed her to balance caring and work. Read about Debbie's story and how we support her on our website.

The Working for Carers project can help you to:

- Find employment, training, education and volunteering opportunities
- Understand your rights as a working carer
- Build your confidence and skills
- Write CVs, applications and support with interviews



Our friendly advisors offer one-to-one, free, non-judgemental and specialist advice to best help you. Visit our website, or get in touch with us to find out more about the Working for Carers project.

This project is a partnership between Newcastle Carers, North Tyneside Carers' Centre, and Carers Northumberland. It is funded by the UK government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, with the North East Combined Authority as the lead authority.



Carefree - Breaks for Carers

Carefree offers hotel breaks for carers by partnering with hotels across the country to make use of unsold rooms.

Full-time (30+ hours per week) unpaid carers (18+) can gain access to Carefree's Breaks Hub by direct referral from Carers Northumberland. There is a £38 admin fee to be paid by the carer.

The break is for the carer only - carers are welcome to take a companion but not the person they care for.

Carers Only

Breaks typically consist of 1-2 nights plus breakfast for two. You can book a two breaks a year with Carefree.

If you would like to be referred to Carefree to apply for a break get in touch with our Info Team on 01670 320025 or info@carersnorthumberland.org.uk

Changes to Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Team contact number

If you or someone you know is in crisis
Call us on NHS 111 and select the mental health option.

This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

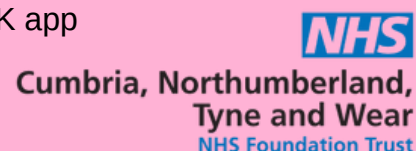
You'll speak to a mental health professional who will listen and help you find the right support.

If you are Deaf or have communication difficulties, you can contact us in a crisis by:

Texting 07860 064 775

Using SignVideo

Contacting 18001 111 using the Relay UK app





Borrow our Alnwick Garden & Lilidorei Passes



We have a limited number of passes that allow free access to Alnwick Garden / Lilidorei.

Bookings can be made to access the Garden only or Garden and Lilidorei for registered carers and additional guests.

Passes include free car parking and 10% off food, beverages and gifts.

Further eligibility and booking criteria applies, contact us on 01670 320025 or info@carersnorthumberland.org.uk for more information and to check availability.



Welcome Meeting

We would like to invite carers who are new to our service to an online welcome meeting. Here we will let you know more about our services and how to access them. We will show you how to get the best out of our website and how to book onto our events and workshops. The welcome meeting is also an opportunity for you to ask us any questions you may have about Carers Northumberland.

The sessions will run via Zoom. Our session will be held on:

Thursday 26th February - 6pm

Thursday 26th March - 6pm

You can book online here:

www.carersnorthumberland.org.uk

Carers
Only

Borrow our Woodhorn Museum Passes

Located in Ashington, once the largest pit village in the world, the former colliery is now home to a popular visitor attraction. Woodhorn brings to life Northumberland's proud mining heritage, making it a fun and cultural day out for all the family.

We have a number of passes for carers to borrow that allow free access to the museum. Get in touch on 01670 320025 or info@carersnorthumberland.org.uk for more details or to book your passes.



Lasting Power of Attorney Workshop

Making a lasting power of attorney (LPA) can seem like a daunting task.

Join us for a workshop where we will talk you through the process of making an LPA, break down the roles and responsibilities and talk about what you need to consider when making an LPA for either yourself or someone else.

This workshop will be held face to face:

Hexham - Wednesday 4th March 2pm

Newcastle Building Society, 1-2 Beaumont Street,
Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3LZ

**Carers
Only**

Berwick - Thursday 19th March 11am

William Elder Building 56-58 Castlegate, Berwick-upon-Tweed TD15 1JT

To book call 01670 320025 or visit:

www.carersnorthumberland.org.uk/news-and-events

Making Guilt Manageable

Guilt can be draining. Join us for an informal and interactive workshop to find out how to:
recognise guilty feelings, know your own guilt triggers and keep guilt in check.

This session will be delivered on Zoom

Monday 9th February at 2pm.

call 01670 320025 or visit:

www.carersnorthumberland.org.uk/news-and-events to book.

**Carers
Only**



AnxiousMinds **STEPPING STONES** **BLYTH**

Do You Need Help Back into Employment or Education?

Join the **Stepping Stones Project** and let us support you every step of the way.

- **FREE** Counselling
- **FREE** Employment Support Workshops
- **FREE** One to One Support Back into Employment



Must be 18 + economically inactive and unemployed, living within NE24 postcode

DELIVERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Blyth Resource
AND INITIATIVE CENTRE



Funded by
UK Government

CALL 01670 946188 COUNSELLING
CALL 01670 542847 EMPLOYABILITY

www.anxiousminds.co.uk



Woodcraft Wellness offers free woodcraft workshops to children, young people, and adult members of Northumberland.

Workshop sessions teach the skills of hand carving greenwood and help participants to connect with themselves, the natural environment and the community in which they live.



Regularly held, therapeutic and practical carving sessions lead by an experienced woodcraft tutor and therapy practitioner.

For more information and booking visit:
www.woodcraftwellness.co.uk
or scan the QR code.

Sessions in village centre, Bellingham
See you soon!



Alnwick Meal

Looking for something exciting to enjoy over lunch.

We will be meeting up at Dirty Bottles, 32 Narrowgate, Alnwick, NE66 1JG on:

**Wednesday 11th February
1pm**

Everyone
Welcome

They have a lovely lunch time menu that can be seen here:

www.greeneking.co.uk/pubs/northumberland/dirty-bottles/menu?type=drinks&ion=cocktails

Attendees will be responsible for paying for their own food/drinks.

Booking is essential

To book call 01670 320025 or visit <https://carersnorthumberland.org.uk/news-and-events>



Heighley Gate
Garden Centre



We will be enjoying a light lunch at Heighley Gate Garden Center, Gate, A697, Heighley, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 3DA on:

**Tuesday 17th March
1pm**

Everyone
Welcome

Why not pop along, it is a great opportunity to meet other carers but you can also take a look around the centre for some spring planting inspiration.

Attendees will be responsible for paying for their own food/drinks.

Booking is essential

To book call 01670 320025 or visit <https://carersnorthumberland.org.uk/news-and-events>



Fish and Chips Walk

Everyone
Welcome

**Thursday 5th March
12.30pm**

Join us for a lunch at South Beach followed by a short walk along the prom (weather dependent)
Meeting at Coastline, Links Road, Blyth, NE24 3PL.

Free parking available. The walk is less than a mile, on the flat and suitable for wheelchairs.

Attendees will be responsible for paying for their own food/drinks.

Booking is essential

To book call 01670 320025 or visit <https://carersnorthumberland.org.uk/news-and-events>

Important Update About our Groups

You may remember in our last issue we mentioned that our groups are changing.

We have rebranded our groups as CHAT groups (carers having a talk), this is following feedback from attendees who felt the name 'support group' can be off putting to those who would like to socialise with local carers. We hope this rebrand will make our groups feel a little more accessible to carers.

We have also taken the difficult decision to close some of our less well attended groups, if you would like to know where your closest group may be please call our team.

CHAT

Carers Having A Talk



Casual, friendly catch ups for carers

Carers Northumberland run CHATs in eight different locations across Northumberland, offering the opportunity for unpaid carers to meet new people, take a break from their caring role, get information, share knowledge and have a CHAT!

Visit www.carersnorthumberland.org.uk/carer-groups or call 01670 320025 for more information

February

= Carers only
 = All welcome

DATE	GROUP/ACTIVITY	TIME	HAVE YOU BOOKED?
Tuesday 3rd	Alnwick CHAT Lindisfarne Centre, 30 Lindisfarne Rd, Alnwick, NE66 1AU	10am - 11am	
Thursday 5th	Ponteland CHAT Merton Hall, Merton Way, Ponteland, NE20 9PX	10.30am - 11.30am	
Monday 9th	Making Guilt Manageable via Zoom	2-3pm	
Tuesday 10th	Blyth CHAT Buffalo Community Centre, 55 Regent St, Blyth NE24 1LL	10.30am - 11.30am	
Wednesday 11th	Carer Meal - Dirty Bottles Alnwick 32 Narrowgate, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 1JG	1pm	
Thursday 12th	Prudhoe CHAT The Manors, Adderlane Rd, Prudhoe, NE42 5ET	10.30am - 11.30am	
Friday 20th	Morpeth CHAT Vision Northumberland, Staithes Ln, Morpeth, NE61 1TD	2pm-3pm	
Wednesday 25th	Berwick CHAT William Elder Building, 56-58 Castlegate, Berwick, TD15 1JT	11am - 12pm	
Thursday 26th	Cramlington CHAT Welcome Methodist Church, Station Road, NE23 1EN	2pm-3pm	
Thursday 26th	Carer Welcome Meeting Online via Zoom	6pm - 7pm	
Friday 27th	Hexham (Acomb) CHAT Journey Enterprises Ltd, Acomb, Hexham NE46 4SA	11am - 12pm	

To book your space call 01670 320025 or book online here: <https://carersnorthumberland.org.uk/news-and-events>
 All events are subject to minimum participation levels and may be cancelled if there is not enough interest

Caring Matters - February/March 2026

March

 = Carers only
 = All welcome

DATE	GROUP/ACTIVITY	TIME	HAVE YOU BOOKED?
Tuesday 3rd	Alnwick CHAT Lindisfarne Centre, 30 Lindisfarne Rd, Alnwick, NE66 1AU	10am - 11am	
Wednesday 4th	Lasting Power of Attorney Workshop Hexham Newcastle Building Society, 1-2 Beaumont Street, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3LZ	2-3.30pm	
Thursday 5th	Carer Meal and Walk - Fish and Chips in Blyth Coastline, Links Road, Blyth, NE24 3PL.	12.30pm	
Thursday 5th	Ponteland CHAT Merton Hall, Merton Way, Ponteland, NE20 9PX	10.30am - 11.30am	
Tuesday 10th	Blyth CHAT Buffalo Community Centre, 55 Regent St, Blyth NE24 1LL	10.30am - 11.30am	
Thursday 12th	Prudhoe CHAT The Manors, Adderlane Rd, Prudhoe, NE42 5ET	10.30am - 11.30am	
Tuesday 17th	Carer Meal - Highley Gate Garden Centre Gate, A697, Heighley, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 3DA	1pm-2.30pm	
Thursday 19th	Lasting Power of Attorney Workshop Berwick Upon Tweed William Elder Building, 56-58 Castlegate, Berwick, TD15 1JT	11-12.30pm	
Friday 20th	Morpeth CHAT Vision Northumberland, Staithes Ln, Morpeth, NE61 1TD	2pm-3pm	
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