

Helping YHN families who need a bit of extra support -

See page 4



Festive Fund spreads cheer
See page 7

Looking for work? Join us at our Jobs Fair
See page 8

Older residents get online
See page 10

Useful contacts

Safe Living



ASB can take many different forms, ranging from threatening behaviour and hate crime to loud music to untidy gardens. Don't suffer in silence, report now to our dedicated officers on **0191 278 8740**.

Repairs & Construction Services



Report a new repair by calling **0191 278 7878**, or if it's a non-urgent repair you can also report it on 'my account' at **www.yhn.org.uk**.

We are prioritising repairs that were booked in and cancelled due to Covid-19, along with new non-essential repairs that have been reported during lockdown. We are experiencing a high demand for non-urgent repairs and would like to thank you for your patience while we work to fully reinstate the service.

Housing Solutions



To speak to someone about applying for a new home, contact us on **0191 278 8600**.

Housing Advice Centre



If you need housing advice, are at immediate risk of homelessness or are homeless and have nowhere to stay, please contact the Housing Advice Centre on **0800 1707 008** or visit us at 112 Pilgrim St, Newcastle NE1 6SQ.

Employability



Are you unemployed or looking for a change in career? Text us on **07814 753 088** or email **employabilityteam@yhn.org.uk**

Income



If you've made a claim for Universal Credit, want to make a rent payment, set up a Direct Debit, need some budgeting help or have any queries about your rent account, call your income officer on **0191 278 8600**.

Your Local Services



Your Local Services (previously known as Envirocall) is your single point of contact for environmental services delivered within Newcastle. This includes things like reporting fly tipping, street cleaning, rubbish and recycling, planting and vandalism.

Call Newcastle City Council on 0191 278 7878 or report and track online at www.newcastle.gov.uk.

My Leasehold



YHN manages properties that were sold under the Right to Buy on a leasehold basis. If you are a leaseholder and have any queries call us on **0191 278 7725** or email us at **leasehold@yhn.org.uk**.

My Caretaker Service



We provide Council tenants and leaseholders living in flats across Newcastle with a caretaker service that includes things from building cleaning to a response service. Caretakers are on site 08:30 - 16:30 Monday to Friday. To contact your 24/7 caretaker team outside of these hours, use your intercom or call **0191 278 8600**.

YHN Housing Services



YHN Housing Services @ East End	eastend@yhn.org.uk	0191 278 1566
YHN Housing Services @ Kenton	northkenton@yhn.org.uk	0191 277 4360
YHN Housing Services @ Outer West	outerwest@yhn.org.uk	0191 277 7940
YHN Housing Services @ Walker	walker@yhn.org.uk	0191 278 8455
YHN Housing Services @ West End	westend@yhn.org.uk	0191 277 1484

All information correct at the time of print.

This is 'Homes & People' the newsletter for Newcastle council tenants and leaseholders. If you want this information in your own language we will arrange for an interpreter to help you on 0191 278 8600. This information is also available in easy read, large print, Braille and audio tape. We can also arrange for you to see a British Sign Language interpreter.

বাংলায় Bengali

এই তথ্য হল ইউর হোমস নিউক্যাসল সমন্ধে। এবং আমরা কিভাবে দায়িত্ব পালন করছি সে সমন্ধে। ইউর হোমস নিউক্যাসল, নিউক্যাসল সিটি কাউন্সিলের পক্ষে কাউন্সিলের ঘর বাড়ী ব্যবস্থাপনার দায়িত্বপ্রাপ্ত। এই তথ্য যদি <বাংলায়> অথবা অন্য কোন ভাষায় প্রয়োজন হয় তাহলে এই নাম্বারে ফোন করুন- **0191 278 8600**

普通话 / 国语 Chinese Simplified

这是有关代表纽卡斯尔市政府 (Newcastle City Council) 负责管理市政房屋的 Your Homes Newcastle (您的纽卡斯尔住房) 组织的信息, 内容解释了我们是如何运作。如果您需要此信息的普通话版本或其它语言版本, 请致电 **0191 278 8633** 索取。

廣東話 / 粵語 Chinese Traditional

這是關於 Your Homes Newcastle (您的紐卡素住房) 機構的信息, 內容解釋了我們代表紐卡素市政府 (Newcastle City Council) 負責管理市政房屋以及如何運作。如果您需要此信息的廣東話版本或其它語言版本, 請致電 **0191 278 8600** 索取。

فارسی Farsi

این اطلاعات درباره سازمان «خانه های شما در نیوکاسل» و عملکرد آن است. این سازمان از سوی شهرداری نیوکاسل, مسئولیت اداره خانه های دولتی را به عهده دارد. در صورت نیاز به این اطلاعات به زبان فارسی یا زبان های دیگر با شماره تلفن تماس بگیرید. **0191 278 8600**

Français French

Ces informations concernent Your Homes Newcastle : qui est chargé de gérer les logements sociaux au nom de la municipalité de Newcastle et comment nous procédons. Si vous avez besoin de ces informations en français ou dans une autre langue, téléphonez au : **0191 278 8600**

کوردی سۆزانی Kurdish

ئهم زانیارییه سههاریه به Your Homes Newcastle و چۆنییه کارکرده که به که له لایهن شاری نیوکاسلهوه ئه کرکی ئهوهی پێدراوه که خانهوه کانی شاری شار بهرێوههاریهتی بکات. ئه کرکههاریهتی له وهرگرتنی ئهم زانیارییه به زمانی کوردی یا ههر زمانیکی دیکه ههیه به ژماره تلهفونی 0191 278 8600 پێوهندی بکرن.

Português Portuguese

Esta informação refere-se à Your Homes Newcastle, a organização responsável pela gestão da habitação social em nome do Município de Newcastle, e a nossa situação actual. Se precisar desta informação em <português> ou noutra língua, queira ligar para o **0191 278 8600**

русском Russian

Информация о Your Homes Newcastle, которая отвечает за управление делами муниципального жилья от имени Муниципалитета г. Ньюкасла и об общем состоянии дел. **0191 278 8600**.

Español Spanish

Esta es información sobre Your Homes de Newcastle, que es la responsable de gestionar las viviendas municipales en nombre del Ayuntamiento de Newcastle, y sobre nuestra manera de hacerlo. Si necesita esta información en español o en otro idioma, llame al **0191 278 8600**.

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Follow us on Twitter: **@NewsfromYHN**

Designed by: barkingdog design and layout.

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Welcome to the latest edition of Homes & People.

Hi everyone,

On behalf of YHN’s Customer Service Committee, I’m delighted to welcome you to the first Homes & People of 2022.

2021 was a busy year for the Committee, both locally and nationally. We are still meeting virtually rather than in person, but that hasn’t stopped us from working hard to make sure YHN customers’ voices are heard.

One of the things I wanted to share with you is our involvement with North East Tenants’ Voice (NETV), which is a group of tenants from across the region who come together to drive forward change for tenants across the North East. NETV aims to tackle stigma, social deprivation and negative perceptions and will challenge government, both locally and nationally.

Together with NETV we can make a real difference, and I look forward to sharing some updates with you in the next few months. Keep an eye on future editions of Homes & People and on the YHN website to find out more.

If you’d like to get involved with YHN and ensure customer voices are heard, please do email getinvolved@yhn.org.uk - we would love to hear from you.

With best wishes for 2022,

Jackie Greenwood
Customer Service Committee Vice Chair



Are your details up to date?

To help us keep in touch with you and provide updates on our services, please let us know if you think your contact details may be out of date.

Email: communicationsteam@yhn.org.uk | Online: www.yhn.org.uk/contact-us | Call: 0191 278 8600

Could your family use a bit of extra support?



Left to right: Wendy Wallace, Amie Cooper and Gillian Costigan.

Our fantastic Family Workers are here to help YHN families needing additional support. Early help can change things for your family before a problem becomes more serious, and can stop a problem before it even starts.

Family Workers can help with any issues you and your family are having. Things like improving the home environment, resolving conflict, helping with debt, or with parenting skills. Maybe you're having problems with children going to school - we can help with routines, homework, and will work closely with the school on your behalf.

Your family worker can meet you at home or in your local community to chat about how we can support you, and help you identify a plan and develop strategies to stop problems developing or escalating. They'll listen to you and put the needs of you and your family first. We work alongside other partners to get the best for YHN families who may be struggling.

Gillian Costigan is one of our family workers who recently supported Claire (name has been changed). Claire had addiction issues and was living in accommodation that was not suitable for her baby. Her baby was living with foster parents.

Claire was referred to our Family Worker team for extra support. Claire wanted to work with services to address her issues so she could get her child returned to her care.

Claire's banding was causing issues with her "move on plan". Gillian worked closely with YHN's Housing Solutions team to allocate correct

banding, which allowed Claire to move quickly into a two bedroomed home of her choice. The move gave Claire the opportunity to successfully complete her assessments with other services.

Gillian discovered Claire wasn't receiving the benefits she was entitled to and supported her with her claims, increasing the money she received. She also helped with her utility bills and worked in partnership with other agencies to fully carpet and decorate her new house.

Following a lot of hard work on Claire's part and with support from Gillian, the foster carers and other agencies, Claire's son was returned and they celebrated his first birthday with a party. Gillian continues to help Claire settle in to her new community.

Claire said: "As soon as Gillian started working with me things moved so quickly. She gave me confidence and helped me move to a home that feels safe. Gillian is so supportive and friendly. What really mattered to me was everything she said she was going to do, she did."

Gillian said: "Claire worked so hard to turn things around, she blew me away with how much she wanted this. Her little boy is happy and thriving and they are a lovely family."

If you feel like you could do with some family support - we can help. We have Family Workers in working in all areas of the city - see page 2 for email addresses, or call us 0191 278 8600.

Getting back to business - Jen's update

I wanted to update you on the progress we're making as we continue to manage the impact of the pandemic on YHN services.

We were starting to see real improvements to our services and then Storm Arwen came along. Had we not experienced one of the worst storms in decades, I would have confidently said we were on route to recovery; however this severe weather event has unfortunately thrown us off track. I know it's not ideal that we're sometimes unable to provide an immediate response to requests, but I want to assure you we've put a number of practical improvements in place to respond to the frustrations some of you may be experiencing.

Our **Repairs & Construction Service** continues to deal with the aftermath of Storm Arwen that caused substantial damage to a large number of YHN-managed homes across Newcastle. Our teams worked throughout the weekend supporting customers severely affected by the storm, assessing and repairing the damage.

The service continues to respond to all reported and scheduled repairs (so it's business as usual), but we're also coordinating 240 roofing repairs as well as some full re-roofing, 361 fencing repairs, and 14 reports of brickwork damage.

We're working hard to get through everything and prioritising work, so some of the less urgent repairs may wait a while longer.

To help get things back on track, we've extended working hours to remove the backlog of outstanding repairs. A number of our call handlers are working specifically on repairs calls to improve

expertise during this difficult period.

Storm Arwen also had a huge impact on our **Contact Centre**, which saw a huge 74% increase in the number of calls received on Saturday 27 November. 1,979 calls were

received on this date, compared to 414 the previous Saturday. This had an impact on call waiting times - we thank everyone for their patience when trying to get through.

Our **Housing Services teams** helped customers affected by Storm Arwen, visiting residents and providing any necessary support. Aside from the storm response, Housing Services teams are continuing to coordinate our estate tidy ups, and I'm sure you'll agree, the results are fantastic. Find out more about this on page 12.

We're working really hard to put practical solutions in place to help get our services back on track. If you have any questions at all please do contact us, the details for our different services can be found on page 2.

Thank you again for your patience and understanding.

Jen Vinton, Customer Services Director



We're recruiting - could you join us as a Delivery Driver?

Our NFS service is looking to recruit qualified 7.5t delivery drivers to deliver furniture to our customers. This is a permanent role, working Monday - Friday.



Full time
opportunities
for overtime



Salary
£19,312 - £20,493



Closing date
31 January 2022

How to apply

For more information visit www.northeastjobs.org.uk/yourhomesnewcastle. You can also call Andrew Waters, Senior Operations Manager, for an informal chat on 07816 842568.

Saying no to violence against women and girls



Left to right: Tina Drury (YHN Managing Director), Councillor Clare Penny- Evans, Lord Mayor Councillor Habib Rahman, Peter Lassey (Chair of White Ribbon UK), Councillor Irim Ali, Councillor Nick Cott.

We're proud to announce that our commitment to ending male violence against women received national recognition in November when we were awarded White Ribbon Accreditation.

White Ribbon is the leading charity that is committed to ending men's violence against women by engaging with men and boys to make a stand against violence. Their mission is for all men to fulfil the White Ribbon Promise, to never commit, excuse or remain silent about male violence against women.

To achieve and retain accreditation, YHN, along with Newcastle City Council, has implemented

an action plan that includes activities to engage and educate men and boys about the role they can play in challenging violence against women and girls, in promoting positive and respectful relationships between men and women, and in encouraging people to sign up to the White Ribbon Promise.

Through our dedicated Safe Living and Safeguarding teams at YHN, we work within our communities to reduce the threat of domestic abuse and take action against perpetrators. These services are available for all our customers and our experienced teams are here to offer support.

To access support to these services, or to find out more, visit www.yhn.org.uk/white-ribbon.

Covid-19 self-isolation support

If you need extra support to self-isolate because of Covid-19, Newcastle City Council's Welfare and Wellbeing Team can help. The team can:

- give guidance about self-isolation and talk you through what you need to think about
- help eligible residents book COVID-19 vaccination appointments, arrange travel, and answer any questions
- match you up with opportunities of interest such as physical activity, arts and culture opportunities, and skills and training

For more information visit www.newcastle.gov.uk/citylifeline or call freephone 0800 170 7001.

Festive Fund spreads cheer

The festive season may have passed but we still want to celebrate all the amazing projects we were able to support through our Festive Fund last year. Community groups were able to bid for a share of £2,000 to help spread some festive cheer, and we think they've done a smashing job!

20 organisations were supported in total and YHN's contributions went towards helping just under 2,000 people! We received requests from across the city, and some of the fantastic projects we were able to help included:

- Mercy Hub, West End - spreading some cheer by sharing a festive goody bag with someone in need
- Rookie Sports, Walker - running fun sessions of rookie golf with residents of Treetop Village, allowing residents to safely socialise and connecting to one another after feeling the real impact of the pandemic
- Westerhope United, Lemington - supporting the club's annual drive to put together hampers to go to families in need
- Blakelaw Flats Tenants' and Residents' Association - support towards the TARA hosting Christmas lunch for residents in the centrally located community room
- Dwellbeing Shieldfield - organising a fun festive treasure hunt for local young people to enjoy
- CDW Community Aid, Chapel Denton and Westerhope - delivering festive treats to local care home residents



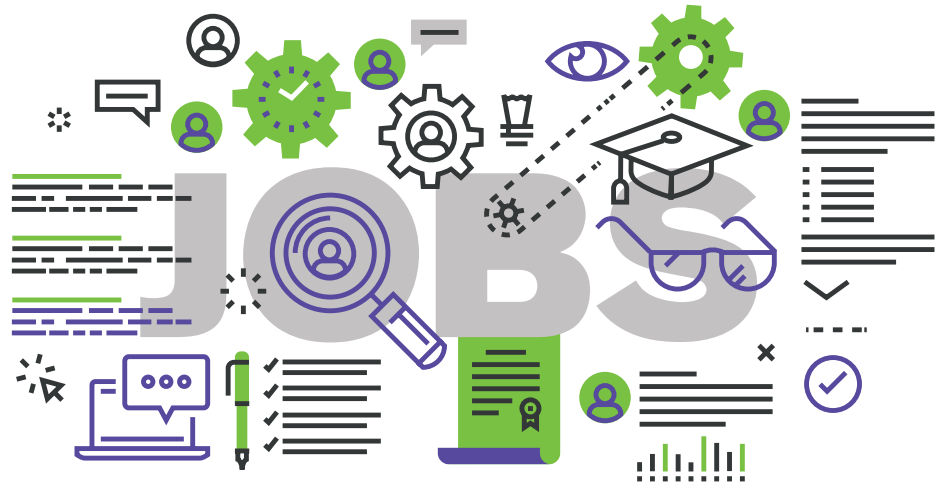
“I enjoyed the session very much. It's a friendly competition played in a good spirit. The whole Covid situation has been bad for me and stopped me from socialising. Life stopped. Being able to come along and mix with people again has been brilliant. It is good for morale.”

Pat, Rookie Sports participant

We're launching Round 4 of the YHN Community Fund in January, which is open to community and voluntary groups to bid for a share of £20,000, to help bring communities together and make them stronger. Get in touch with us via communityfund@yhn.org.uk or visit www.yhn.org.uk/communityfund

Looking for work? Come along to our jobs fair!

We're working with the Newcastle United Foundation to bring you over 60 employers and training providers at our first in-person jobs fair in nearly two years.



Join us on **Friday 4 February at St James' Park between 10am-2pm** to find out about job vacancies, courses and other opportunities. YHN's Employability Team will also be at the event to talk about our opportunities and the support we can provide. With job vacancies at record high levels, our jobs fair is a fantastic opportunity to

Speak directly to employers about vacancies and training opportunities. We've staggered arrival times throughout the day so it won't feel too busy. There's a host of positions available with employers across Newcastle - come along and find out more!

Book your place

Email employabilityteam@yhn.org.uk, call or text 07814 753088.

Our repairs and maintenance service

The repairs and maintenance service we provide to you is central to us achieving our vision of being 'First for housing' so we are doing everything we can to ensure we deliver an excellent service that is always right first time.

Our new repairs and maintenance policy guides how we will do this, setting out the things we are responsible for as well as the things we need you to do to enable us to do our jobs properly. This includes you reporting repairs to us as soon as you notice a problem and you giving us access to your property when we need it to carry out a repair or for an essential visit such as a gas or electrical safety check.



You can read the policy on our website at www.yhn.org.uk and contact us at any time to report a repair or rearrange or book an appointment:

☎ **0191 278 7878**

✉ **repairs@newcastle.gov.uk**

🌐 **www.yhn.org.uk**

📞 **Press your intercom if you have one**

Emergency repairs can only be reported by phone or intercom so please do not email or use the website in an emergency.



Keeping your home safe - water

Do you know we have a team full of specialists with expert knowledge about every aspect of building safety?

There's a low risk of your water supply causing problems such as Legionnaires' Disease but here are some top tips from our water safety experts to help keep you safe.



Keep hot water hot -

don't reduce your hot water temperature from the pre-set level and tell us if your water temperature drops suddenly.



Keep cold water cold -

cold water must be kept cold to stop bacteria growing. If your cold water starts coming through your taps warm, tell us.



Keep them clean -

keep taps and shower heads clean and tell us if you notice any debris or discoloured water.



Keep it safe -

make sure any appliances that are connected to the water supply comply with water regulations. Contact us if you need advice.



When returning from holiday or time away from your home, run your taps for several minutes before using them.

If you have any questions about water safety, please get in touch with us at compliance@yhn.org.uk or on 0191 278 8600.



Electrical safety checks

Electrical safety checks by Your Homes Newcastle are FREE and keep you and your neighbours safe

- We will contact you every **five years** to arrange your check
- A **qualified electrician** will check your electrical sockets, wiring, fuse board and circuit breaker
- We are required **by law** to check your electrics are in good working order and we may take **legal action** if you don't give us access to carry out the check

Faulty electrics can cause fires, electric shocks and burns.

DO YOUR BIT TO KEEP YOUR HOME SAFE

- ✗ **Don't** overload your sockets
- ✗ **Don't** buy fake or poor quality electrical goods (such as phone chargers)
- ✗ **Don't** carry out alterations or repairs to your electrics - contact us instead
- ✓ **Do** switch your appliances off at the socket when not in use
- ✓ **Do** give us access to carry out your electrical safety check
- ✓ **Do** regularly test safety devices such as RCDs



www.yhn.org.uk compliance@yhn.org.uk 0191 278 8600

IN AN EMERGENCY SUCH AS A FIRE YOU SHOULD CALL 999



Housing Plus residents boost their digital skills



Housing Plus residents have been learning new digital skills thanks to a project ran by YHN and Newcastle City Libraries.

During the pandemic many people used digital services to access shopping and keep in touch with friends and loved ones, but others did not have this option. Being able to use digital services has never been more important, and we're thrilled we've been able to help 32 of our Housing Plus residents 'get online' and increase their confidence.

Residents aged from 53 - 91 years old were provided with a tablet, and they took part in 8 weeks of internet use and tablet training. During lockdown, training took place twice a week over the phone. Later, when restrictions were lifted, the training was delivered face-to-face in small groups in communal lounges.

The training explained how to access and use the internet. Each resident was helped to create their own email account, and they were shown how to send and receive emails safely and securely.

Residents were also set up with their own online library account so that they could download and read free ebooks, audio books and magazines.

Everyone who took part said that from having no previous knowledge of how to get online, they now felt so much more confident. The fact that they were allowed to keep the tablet once the training had finished meant that they could continue with their digital journey.

This type of training has proven to be a huge success, and it just goes to show that you're never too old to learn new things!

Start your online journey with us this new year!

Our face-to-face courses are now running again at the City Library:

- **Learn My Way, Online Basics** - this 2-part course is perfect for anyone who wants to learn the basics of how to access and use the internet and email.
- **Intro to Office** - designed for those who want to know how to use Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. This 4-part course also allows participants to gain a City and Guilds accredited qualification.
- **Techy Tea Parties** - bring along your smart phone, tablet or laptop and learn how to get the most out of your device. You may attend 4 of these sessions per device, but they are extremely popular, and we recommend you book your 4 sessions as a group rather than individually.

How to book

If you or your family are already online, visit www.newcastle.gov.uk/get-online-newcastle and book your place. You can also email Getonline@newcastle.gov.uk, or call 0191 2774100.

£25 prize wordsearch

Complete the puzzle which contains words found in this issue of Homes & People.

But - one of the answers is missing. To enter the competition all you need to do is identify which word is NOT in the wordsearch then email us your answer. Good luck!

J E N F N C E K E E F S Z W K G J G X C
B Q N P D D O N I E R I A F S B O J J O
R R W I P W Y V S I A W I W D Z W G Z N
M B G R L A R T X D P R I R E P H P Q D
Q P O T L N I I M P E Y K H I M L N I E
R G V U V V O F N K T H X T E B X E V N
L J W H E S I T R X T E G M M T B I A S
N D Y F V O K O E Y U W Y P Y B F O I A
J X U J D X W U E G Q C Z G Y X G M N T
P N U S U Y U V V A V P I M W S E K C I
D A U Q L W O P R J U T H N P M P Q D O
F C R I L F Z R J N B C Y M E N V B P N
F N M J S M J P A S F G X D W A Y H I R
R A S A L Y O E I J S I T C I R X T R Z
F D I G P O L P B A E T Z X G E L L T C
P X Z R B C Y I J S Y E D B F T X C M K
A H B X A D D F Z V X E Q P W E K Q F V
A T B L L T O G Z M T D H I M V K F Q Q
W O H C W G I I S J L W T B K W D H Q C
A U T U D G P Z Q S P X H X W F G O W I

Family worker

White

Ribbon

Condensation

Festive Fund

Jobs Fair

Get online

Veteran

Clean up

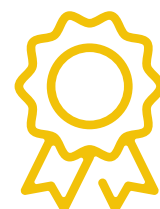
Send the missing word along with your name and address to:

Email: communicationsteam@yhn.org.uk

By Friday 4 March

Please note: competitions are only open to customers with no rent arrears.

Congratulations to Maxine Goldman who was the winner of the October competition. The missing word was 'energy'.



Armed forces drop-in surgery every other Thursday!

YHN is a partner of the Armed Forces Outreach Service, which helps veterans living in the North East to make the transition from military life back into civilian life, and also supports serving members of the Armed Forces and their families.



ARMED FORCES OUTREACH SERVICE

A Local Authority Partnership

As part of our work around this, we've set up a drop-in surgery in partnership with staff at Avondale House that will run every other week. It's a drop in so no need to book, and light refreshments will be provided.

The drop-ins run every other Thursday, starting 6 January for 2022 at Avondale House, 50 Raby Way, Byker, NE6 2FR.

Who is the surgery for?

The drop-in surgery is available to serving and former members of the armed forces, their spouses, partners and widow/ers or former spouses, partners and widow/ers.

What kind of support is available at the surgery?

Topics discussed will likely centre around social housing and veterans' supported accommodation, as well as financial support available via the council's veteran fund, emotional support, educational, employment and development opportunities.

The door is always open for 121 appointments at the drop in.

How can I find out more?

Visit www.yhn.org.uk and search 'armed forces' to find out more. Steve Lambert is our Senior Armed Forces Outreach Officer and you can contact him on 0191 278 8600 or email steve.lambert@yhn.org.uk.

The great estate 'blitz'

Over the last year, customers and volunteers from YHN and Newcastle City Council have been blitzing our estates. The volunteers have been busy litter picking and filling up a lot of rubbish bags to make our estates look tidier and a safer place to live in.

A local resident in the West End commented after an estate blitz in her area: "I saw you on the estate litter picking and wanted to say well done. It's so refreshing to see people helping to make the estate a nicer place to live."

Lord Mayor, Councillor Habib Rahman attended the West End clean up and many of our local councillors have been getting stuck in around the city.

We're working our way round our estates and we have plenty more planned in throughout the year.

If you'd like to get involved in your estate blitz, keep checking our Facebook events for the latest information.

