

NM NEWPORT MATTERS

The official newspaper of Newport City Council

CHRISTMAS IS COMING...

Information about council services over the Christmas and New Year will be published on the website as soon as it is available.

As there will be no waste or recycling collections on Christmas Day or New Year's Day, collections in those weeks will be one day late (Tuesday to Saturday). The household waste recycling centre will open on Boxing Day.

For more details on services and festive events in the city visit newport.gov.uk/christmas



COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS

Newport will start the countdown to Christmas with a spectacular event packed with fun for all the family on Saturday, November 18.

Running from 3pm to 5.15pm in the city centre, it will feature live music, fairground rides and celebrity guests with the main stage based at the junction of Charles Street and Commercial Street.

The event will culminate with the official switching on of the Christmas lights and a breathtaking fireworks display.

Organised by the Newport Now Business Improvement District (BID) in partnership with Newport City Council, Friars Walk and Newport City Radio, Countdown to Christmas will mirror the BID's hugely successful previous events.

Last year's event attracted more than 7,000 additional people into the city centre compared with an average Saturday.

Councillor Jane Mudd, leader of Newport City Council, said: *"Countdown to Christmas is always a very special occasion for the city and attracts thousands of people to the city centre."*

"We are very grateful to our partners, especially the Newport Now Business Improvement District, for organising such a fantastic, feel-good event. It's the perfect start to the festive season."

Musical acts will be on stage during the day, and a special guest will be helping the city's mayor, Councillor Trevor Watkins, push the button to light up the city centre for the festive season.

There will be fairground rides along the riverfront and the Christmas lights switch-on is due to take place at 5pm followed by the fireworks display at 5.15pm.

For more details about the event and other festive activities in the city, as well as useful information about services over the holiday period, visit newport.gov.uk/christmas



Photos from last year's event courtesy of Newport Now



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY PARADE

Newport's annual Remembrance parade and service will take place on Sunday 12 November in the city centre.

Those invited to take part in the parade will include standard bearers, ex-servicemen, members of the Royal British Legion, Armed Forces, associations, councillors, representatives from emergency services and youth groups.

Residents are advised that there will be road closures in place from 7am – 1pm. The roads affected will be; Upper Dock Street (from Skinner Street to Old Green roundabout), Old Green roundabout (including slip roads), Town Bridge, Clarence Place, Caerleon Road (from Clarence Place to Church Road), Chepstow

Road (from Clarence Place to Cedar Road), Corporation Road (from Clarence Place to St. Vincent Road) and East Usk Road (from Clarence Place to Tregare Street).

On Saturday 18 November the Merchant Navy Remembrance service will take place at Mariners Green.



BALANCING THE BUDGET IN 2024/25



The ongoing financial pressures being faced by residents, businesses and individuals will remain at the forefront of the council's considerations as it plans its 2024/25 budget.

Councillor Jane Mudd, leader of the council, said: "The last few years have been challenging for all and the year ahead looks to be following a similar path. There were some difficult decisions to be made to balance the council budget for 2023/24, but our main aim was always to ensure

the most fundamental of services are maintained for residents and that we can support those that need an extra helping hand.

"That approach stays with us as we look to the coming year, but there is no doubt it will be a very difficult balancing act – the cost of providing services continues to rise in the same way that everyone's cost of living has gone up. And at the same time, more people are accessing those services, increasing demand. So, we will inevitably have a considerable gap between what money we

have available to us and what we need and want to spend.

"The public's response to last year's budget proposals was excellent. We have promised to be a listening council and the constructive feedback really informed our final decisions. We were very pleased to be able to invest in some of the areas our residents felt were most important including schools and social care.

"Our initial proposals will be presented at Cabinet later this year and residents will again have the opportunity to scrutinise and share their opinions with us before any final decisions are made early in 2024."



WHERE THE COUNCIL GETS ITS MONEY

More than three-quarters of the council's budget is funded by a grant from the Welsh Government. Draft details of how much the council will receive for the coming financial year are expected to be received in December and will be confirmed in the new year.

The money raised through council tax only accounts for less than one quarter of the council's budget, but it is recognised that this is a very substantial bill for residents, despite Newport maintaining one of the lowest rates in Wales for many years.

For more information about the council's budget, how we spend our money, the budget setting process for 2024/25 and how and when you can have your say, visit newport.gov.uk/budget

COST-OF-LIVING ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Many people are finding it tough financially but help and advice is available from the council and other organisations.

We would urge people who are struggling or worried about their finances to get in touch before they reach crisis point.

You can find a range of advice at newport.gov.uk/support or can email your enquiry to costofliving@newport.gov.uk where it will be picked up by one of the team and directed to someone who can help.



HAVE YOUR SAY...



RAIL IMPROVEMENTS IN NEWPORT

Transport for Wales are seeking views on proposals for five new railway stations in south-east Wales and new cross-border rail services.

The proposals include three new railway stations for Newport including Llanwern, Somerton and a Newport West station, located in Duffryn.

Residents can view more information about the plans, and share their thoughts, on the Transport for Wales website. The consultation will close on 14 January 2024.

tfw.wales/sew-new-stations



OUR PLAN FOR NEWPORT

Preparation of Newport's replacement local development plan have taken a step forward with the publication of our preferred strategy.

The preferred strategy sets out the options for where new housing and employment developments will take place in the city.

Residents, businesses and stakeholders are now being asked to share their views on the strategy.

More information on the consultation, which is open until late December, can be found on our website.

newport.gov.uk/rldp

FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

We want to hear your views on what our flood management priorities should be over the next six years.

Your views will help shape our next flood risk management strategy, which will be published next year.

The council is the local lead flood authority for the city, and has a duty to set up a strategy for how we will work with partners, residents and businesses to manage flood risk.

tinyurl.com/3tn2ajkb



HOMES FOR UKRAINE APPEAL

More safe havens are needed for individuals and families who have fled their homes in Ukraine because of the conflict.

Thank-you payments of £500 a month will be made to hosts for up to 12 months as well as access to other free support and training.

Ukrainian families and individuals have been given a warm welcome by their local hosts and both parties have spoken positively about the experience.

If you would like to have an informal chat about becoming a host please contact Ukraine.support@newport.gov.uk

To apply to become a host visit gov.wales/offerhome



PARENT GOVERNORS WANTED

Primary and secondary schools across the city have vacancies for parent governors.



Governors should be representative of the school community, reflecting their rich diversity and culture. They can have a variety of backgrounds and professional interests but will have the best interests of the school at their heart.

Governing bodies support the school, help to raise standards of education, and ensure young people have the best outcomes possible. They are expected to attend at least one meeting per term.

If you are interested in contributing to this important role in your child's school, contact the head teacher to find out if there is a vacancy and how you can apply.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE - LEADER AND MAYOR



We launch the festive season with the ever-popular Countdown to Christmas event in the city centre this month.

While Christmas is a time for celebration, it is also a time for reflection and to remember those who might not be finding it so joyful.

With the cost-of-living still biting, some families and individuals will be worrying about, and struggling with, their finances.

I would encourage people finding it difficult to make ends meet to seek help before they reach crisis point. Information about where to find support and advice can be found in this edition of Newport Matters.

It can also be a time when people feel even more isolated and lonely. There are organisations that can

help, including the council's own community connectors. Please check on your neighbours, especially those who live alone or are vulnerable.

Once again, I urge people to "shop local", not just for Christmas but all year round. Newport has fantastic retailers and hospitality outlets – despite what some people would have you believe.

Many of these are independent, small enterprises. All need your custom and support to ensure they can continue offering their services and employing local people.

And, finally, a massive thank you to all those who are supporting others in any way. You truly embody the true meaning of Christmas.

**Councillor Jane Mudd,
Leader of the council**



The Mayoress and I would like to send our best wishes to you all and hope that you have a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy new year.

It has been a privilege to carry out the duties as Mayor of Newport with my daughter as Mayoress.

We have enjoyed meeting many of the citizens and businesses of Newport during my mayoral year so far and we look forward to meeting many more over the coming months.

The two charities I am supporting this year are the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA) - which provides care and support for people with MND, their families and carers,

and Growing Space which is a mental health charity that supports people with mental ill health, autism or a learning disability.

More information on both of these charities can be found on the mayor's office pages of the council website.

**Councillor Trevor Watkins
Mayor of Newport**



FOSTERING



There are different types of fostering that allow you to help local children even if you can't commit to it full-time.

Find out more by having a chat with our friendly Foster Wales team.

You can give them a call on **01633 210272**; email **fostering@newport.gov.uk** or pop into one of their monthly drop-in sessions in Horton's Coffee Shop, Millennium Walk, on the first Tuesday of every month.

CONNECTING NEWPORT RESIDENTS WITH ADVICE AND SUPPORT

The council, along with partners across the city, will be hosting an information day at Newport Market on 9 November 2023.

Residents will be able to access a wide variety of services providing information and advice on areas

including, employment and skills, cost of living, council tax and benefit and housing advice.

Also available will be the council's family information service, schools and adult education, as well as details on community activities for all ages from the youth and play service and the community connectors teams.

There is no need to book, drop in anytime between 10am and 2pm.

For more information contact **07581 011462**.

VITAL SUPPORT HELPING NEWPORT FAMILIES



Our Families First prevention team provides a support service to families and children to improve the quality of their day-to-day lives.

Primarily for vulnerable children, aged from eight to 18, who may benefit from help and do not receive specialist support from other departments, such as social services.

By working with families to address their needs and build resilience, the team aims to improve outcomes and reduce the need for statutory intervention.

The team recognises that families have different needs, depending on their circumstances, and provide flexible packages of support.

Workers are located across the city and offer advice on parenting, challenging behaviour, school attendance, healthy relationships and much more.

For more information visit **newport.gov.uk/ffpreventions** or call **01633 656656**



LOOKING BACK AT THE NEWPORT FOOD FESTIVAL



Last month, we were delighted to bring an extended three-day Newport Food Festival to the city centre.

There were lots of tasty treats and entertainment on display across the weekend, as well as some fantastic cookery demos from local chefs and our special guest Wynne Evans.

We also saw the return of the Teen Chef competition which saw teams from Newport Youth Academy showcase their culinary skills. Newport Youth Academy provides education and training for young people aged 16-19. You can find out more about them at newport.gov.uk/nya

Here's a few of our favourite pictures from the day!



Thank you to our main sponsor, Accent on Education, as well as all of our sponsors, supporters and partners for helping us to make this year's festival bigger and better than ever!

NEWPORT CITY DOGS HOME WIN TWO RSPCA GOLD AWARDS

Newport City Dogs Home has won gold in two categories at the 2023 RSPCA Cymru PawPrint Awards for their work with stray dogs and kennelling.

This is the twelfth year that the team has been recognised with a gold award in the stray dog category for their dedication looking after the dogs in their care.

The RSPCA PawPrints annual award scheme recognises hard work from public bodies in relation to animal welfare.

There are a number of categories for awards including recognition for stray dog provision, animal licensing work, contingency planning, and housing policies.

To achieve a gold award for stray dog services requires protecting the welfare of stray dogs during and after they are in your care, as well as promoting responsible ownership. The kennelling gold



award requires ensuring the welfare needs of dogs are met and in line with RSPCA good practice.

Councillor James Clarke, cabinet member for strategic planning, regulation and housing said: "We are very proud of the hard work from everyone associated with Newport City Dogs Home. All of

our staff work very hard to ensure stray or unwanted dogs have the care they need to ensure bright futures in their new homes".

For more information on the work undertaken by Newport City Dogs Home visit newport.gov.uk/newportdogshome

VOTER ID NOW LEGALLY REQUIRED AT SOME ELECTIONS

You may already have a form of photo ID that is acceptable as it could be a passport, driving licence, blue badge, certain concessionary travel cards, biometric immigration document or other types of identity cards.

You will only need to show one but it needs to be the original version and not a photocopy and the name on your ID must be the same you use to register to vote.

If you don't already have an accepted form of photo ID, or you're not sure whether your photo ID still looks like you, you can apply for a free voter ID document, known as a Voter Authority Certificate.

For more information, including the full list of accepted forms of photo ID, visit electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID or call the helpline on **0800 328 0280**.



THREE-WEEKLY BIN COLLECTION ROLL-OUT



The council is rolling out its new three-weekly bin collection schedule to households across the city.

The new schedule will see household rubbish bins and garden waste bins collected once every three weeks. Currently these are collected once every two weeks.

Residents should already have received the following information through the post:

- a letter informing them that the changes are about to start
- a leaflet explaining what the changes mean and why they are being introduced

All households will continue to have their waste and recycling collected on the day of the week which it currently is. For example, if your collections are currently on a Monday, they will remain so.

All garden waste bins will continue to be collected fortnightly up until the end of November 2023, which is when these collections pause for the winter. They will move over to three-weekly once they resume in late February 2024. Note that garden waste collections for phase one households will remain three-weekly, as these have already moved onto the new schedule.

All other waste services will remain unchanged.

This means that recycling and food waste will continue to be collected weekly, and hygiene bags will be collected fortnightly.

Residents living in flats, or a house of multiple occupation will not have these changes made straight away. The council will work with landlords to introduce these changes at a later date.

The change has been brought in to help the council meet its recycling targets. Currently the council is recycling around 67 per cent of waste it collects. To meet Welsh government targets, this needs to increase to 70 per cent by 2024/25.

Failure to meet this target will see the council liable for fines. At the current recycling rate, the fine from April 2025 would be in excess of £500,000 per year.

Analysis of waste collected in Newport shows that almost 40 per cent of what is currently going into household rubbish bins can be recycled at the kerbside.

The council will make resources and assistance available for anyone who needs help with the changes.

Residents can head to our website to view their collection dates, and also read through our list of frequently asked questions about the changes, at newport.gov.uk/waste.



CLIMATE CHANGE ANNUAL REPORT APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Our first full annual report for our organisational climate change plan was approved by the full council meeting in September.

The report, which covers the 2022/23 financial year, sets out the actions we took to help reduce our carbon emissions in line with our target of

becoming net zero by 2030.

The annual report contains a number of interesting case studies regarding our work, along with emissions data for each of our six themes.

The council declared a climate and ecological emergency in November 2021.

Our organisational climate change plan sets out how we will do our bit to fight climate change and become carbon neutral by 2030.

tinyurl.com/yzcas4pd



RESIDENTIAL DISABLED PARKING BAYS

Applications for disabled parking bays near people's homes have reopened.

Applications can be submitted to us from 1 November to 31 January.

All applications will be reviewed at the same time to ensure fairness and best use of the resources available.

Following a successful application, the work will be carried out within 12 to 18 months.

Although they are provided to help those with a disability park near their home, they can be used by anyone who displays a blue badge regardless of location.

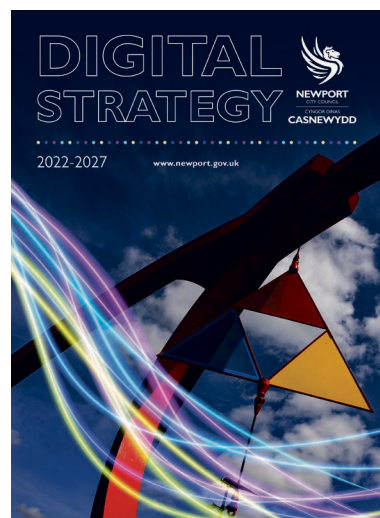
For more information about the criteria, the process and to apply, visit newport.gov.uk/parking or phone 01633 656 656.



USING TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES



The council has published its new digital strategy that defines the digital aspirations for the city over the next five years.



Based on four key themes - digital transformation, digital skills and inclusion, data and collaboration and digital infrastructure and connectivity – it will support and improve the wellbeing of residents and employees, as well as enabling businesses to thrive in the city.

The strategy sets out how the council will use technology to transform the delivery of its services. This represents an ambitious digital vision that embraces innovation delivered in partnership with the Shared Resource Service and other key partners.

The strategy is guided by important principles - innovation, data driven, user centred, inclusive, collaborative, secure and green. It also recognises the need for continued vigilance to protect the council's data from cyber-attacks and other threats.

Councillor Dimitri Batrouni, cabinet member for organisational transformation, said: "The last three years has seen some of the biggest changes in society and how people interact with public services through digital technology.

It has also highlighted inequalities in our communities regarding access to digital technology and the skills to use it effectively. The new digital strategy aims to address these issues and

support the delivery of our objectives set out in the corporate plan."

Elements of the strategy have already been progressed, including the implementation of the Local Broadband Fund project to transform the connectivity and systems in council-run adult residential care homes and improvements to the council's website.

A new city centre hub which showcases the latest in assistive technology has also opened in Newport Market.

The hub is a place where people will be able speak to members of the council's occupational therapy team and get advice about using the latest in assistive technology – helping them to live independently and safely at home.

Further progress on the actions set out in the strategy will be reported in an annual digital report.

More information on the digital strategy can be found at newport.gov.uk/digitalstrategy

HELPING TO IMPROVE THE DIGITAL SKILLS OF NEWPORT'S RESIDENTS

The recently published digital strategy sets out how the council aims to improve the lives of residents in Newport by providing support and access to digital technology.

Newport adult community learning service offers computer courses for students at different levels - from beginners to intermediate and are for anyone aged 16 and over.

Digital skills courses can show you how to stay safe online, how to search and find information on the internet, how to be creative using your computer or laptop and how to use word processing and spreadsheet packages. All digital skills courses are free-of-charge and can be joined at any time during the academic year.



If you're looking for courses to improve your job prospects the ICDL Level 1 and Level 2 courses are recommended and endorsed by employers. Both courses include word processing, spreadsheet and presentation modules.

There are two learning paths on offer – standard 24-week courses and fast-track courses, which are longer lessons over a 16-week period. Prices for ICDL courses start from £146 (£86 for concessions).

You can find out more about these classes by phoning 01633 656656, emailing community.learning@newport.gov.uk or visiting newport.gov.uk/communitylearning

MAKE NEW FRIENDS WITH NEWPORT LIBRARIES

To help people feel less isolated, Newport libraries run free groups that bring people together.

Newport Central Library is hosting a weekly crafty corner session which will run every Friday morning from 11am – 12pm. Come along with your craft of choice, spend an hour chatting with fellow crafters and make new friends!

Reading Friends runs at Malpas Library on the third Monday of every month from 2:15 - 3:15pm. The next meeting is on 16 November, everyone is welcome, no need to book.



PUPILS MEET SPECIAL LIBRARY VISITORS



Waterstones Children's Laureate Joseph Coelho met children from Maindee Primary School in Newport's Central Library in September.

It was part of a nationwide library marathon mission by the award-winning poet, playwright and children's author to encourage people, young and old, to join their local library.

He was joined in Newport by the Children's Laureate Wales, Alex Wharton.

Find out more about what our libraries have to offer at newport.gov.uk/libraries

USER RESEARCH

We're in the process of making some redevelopments to the Newport City Council website.

As part of this, we're looking for people to take part in some user research sessions so that we can make sure any changes we make are user-friendly, accessible, and inclusive.

If you'd like to take part, please email web@newport.gov.uk.



SIGN UP TO OUR RESIDENTS E-NEWSLETTER

Have you signed up for our residents newsletter yet?

We'll send you regular emails with the latest news and information from Newport City Council direct to your inbox.

Subscribe to our mailing list at newport.gov.uk/signup

