



FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK
@BYKERCOMMUNITYTRUST
FOR ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

WHAT'S ON THIS SUMMER

SEE PAGE 6

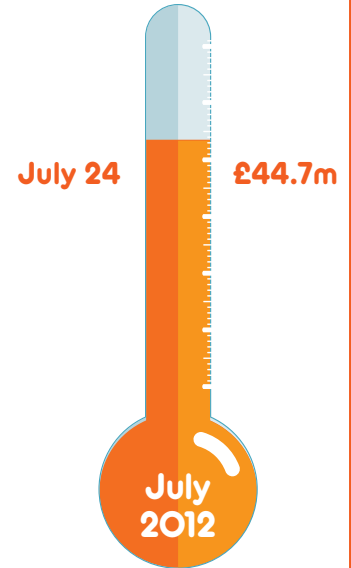
A VERY SPECIAL PAINTING COMMISSION
SEE PAGE 4

A ROYAL VISIT TO AVONDALE HOUSE
SEE PAGE 8

DO YOU LIVE IN A HIGH-RISE BUILDING?
SHARE YOUR VIEWS FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A £50
VOUCHER! SEE PAGE 10

Our freephone telephone number
0800 533 5442
is available for all enquiries and out
of office hours emergency repairs.

- ☎ Option 1 for repairs (also out of hours emergencies)
- 📞 Option 2 for all rent enquiries
- 🏠 Option 3 for all housing enquires
- 🏢 Option 4 for all business enquiries



Since July 2012,
BCT has invested
£44.7m in
improvements!

USEFUL NUMBERS

Concierge Service (Byker Wall residents)

0800 772 0519

Employment & Welfare Benefits

0800 533 5442

Housing Benefit / Council Tax (Switchboard)

0191 278 7878

LANGUAGES

This information is about Byker Community Trust, part of Karbon Homes. If you'd like this in another format, such as translated or audio version, please let us know!

Arabic

هذه المعلومات عن Byker Community Trust، جزء من Karbon Homes. إذا كنت ترغب بها بصيغة أخرى، مثل نسخة مترجمة أو صوتية، فيرجى إعلامنا!

Slovak

Tieto informácie sa týkajú organizácie Byker Community Trust, ktorá je súčasťou spoločnosti Karbon Homes. Ak si želáte obdržať tieto informácie v inom formáte, napríklad v preloženej alebo zvukovej verzii, dajte nám prosím vedieť!

French

Ces informations concernent le Byker Community Trust, qui fait partie de Karbon Homes. Si vous souhaitez obtenir ce document dans un autre format, par exemple traduit ou dans une version audio, faites-le nous savoir !

Czech

Tyto informace se týkají organizace Byker Community Trust, která je součástí společnosti Karbon Homes. Pokud byste chtěli tyto informace v jiném formátu, například v přeložené nebo zvukové verzi, dejte nám prosím vědět!

Polish

Niniejsza informacja dotyczy Byker Community Trust, części Karbon Homes. Jeśli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać tę informację w innym formacie, np. w tłumaczeniu lub w wersji audio, proszę dać nam znać!

Portuguese

Esta informação é sobre Byker Community Trust, parte da Karbon Homes. Se desejar esta informação noutro formato, por exemplo a versão traduzida ou em áudio, por favor informe-nos!

FRONT COVER PHOTO:

A very special painting commission by illustrator Jonathan Edwards

Crossword answers (page 19)
Across: 2. Whiteley Bay, 3. The Hoppings, 5. Barbecue, 7. Kids Kabin,
8. Don Henley, 11. Glastonbury
Down: 1. My Karbon, 4. Ice Cream, 5. Barbie, 6. Wimbledon,
9. Euro 2024, 10. Olaf

WELCOME TO THE SUMMER EDITION OF THE BYKER COMMUNITY TRUST NEWSLETTER.



Where has the year gone? It only seems like two minutes ago we were writing our spring newsletter.

With the summer holidays just around the corner, we're looking forward to our free summer trips. You can find highlights from our previous trips, as well as the details of the upcoming ones, on our 'what's on' page.

As part of our regular what's on page, we've featured some other free fun activities around Byker and Newcastle to give you some ideas for summer days out.

As you'll see from this issue, we're very pleased to announce that our environmental plans for Dunn Terrace have been approved by Newcastle City Council. The Dunn Terrace phase is just the first in our overall environmental investment, where we expect to spend £11 million transforming the areas around your homes.

We're very much aware of how financially challenging the cost of living still is. On page 13 you can hear directly from customers about how accessing advice from our Money Matters service and our Tenancy Sustainment and Welfare Officer can help you to understand your financial situation better.

We'd like to officially welcome our dedicated Foundations for Life colleague Hannah to Byker! In this issue you can find out more about what support her team can provide for you, whether it's accessing employment opportunities or even improving your digital skills.

We also have information about how you can register for the Northern Power Grid Priority Service if you need support in an unexpected disruption to your electricity supply.

Whilst we all welcome the long days and lighter nights, we are mindful that anti-social behaviour (ASB) can increase during the summer months. We continue to work in close partnership with Northumbria Police regarding any reported ASB across the estate and on page 9 you can find information about our Safer Community Team and the support we can offer.

As always, we welcome your feedback about this newsletter and the services we deliver, please speak to your Neighbourhood Housing Officer or a member of staff within our Customer Services Team.

If you're on Facebook, please do give us a follow **@bykercommunitytrust** where we try and post regular updates about what's happening on the estate. I hope you and your families have a wonderful summer.

Michelle Bell
Assistant Director - Byker Community



FROM BERLIN TO BYKER

Our estate has been at the centre of a very special painting commission.

Jonathan Edwards has been an illustrator for 30 years, working with major magazines and creating record sleeves for music artists.

Jonathan has always kept a sketchbook and started drawing buildings and street scenes on his travels in cities such as Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, Berlin, Lisbon and Helsinki. The sketches were then expanded into finished watercolour paintings.

Richard, an architect, commissioned a painting of the Byker Estate, after seeing Jonathan's work.

But - why Byker?

The painting is a gift for Richard's business partner of 40 years, they both studied architecture at Hull in 1985 where their first Head of School was Vernon Gracie.

Vernon was one of the architects for the Byker Estate. Vernon taught them about the importance of people when designing buildings and spaces, just like when he lived amongst the residents in Byker during the build programme, to connect with the people he was serving.

Richard and his business partner have visited Byker on a few occasions over the years and admire the estate's strong community spirit, leafy landscaped environment and the pedestrian friendly footways which connect the external spaces - all in the shadow of the famous Byker Wall.

Jonathan found the estate a brilliant place to paint – lots of angles, colours, shadows and silver birch trees.

We think the painting is brilliant and wanted to share it with those at the heart of the community – our customers.

WHAT'S ON SUMMER HOLIDAYS

Here's our usual round-up of activities and events planned for the summer holidays. For all the latest events and activities, please check the BykerCommunityTrust page on Facebook.



Easter trips

We had a brilliant time on our Easter trips! We took 133 customers to Digger Land, Beamish and Woodhorn Museum.

All BCT trips
are **FREE!**
Packed lunches
included*

WE HAVE THREE NEW TRIPS FOR THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS WHICH ARE OFFERED ON A FIRST COME FIRST SERVED BASIS.



**7 August
NORTHUMBERLAND ZOO**



**15 August
HALL HILL
FARM**



**21 August
BEAMISH**

HOW DO I REGISTER?

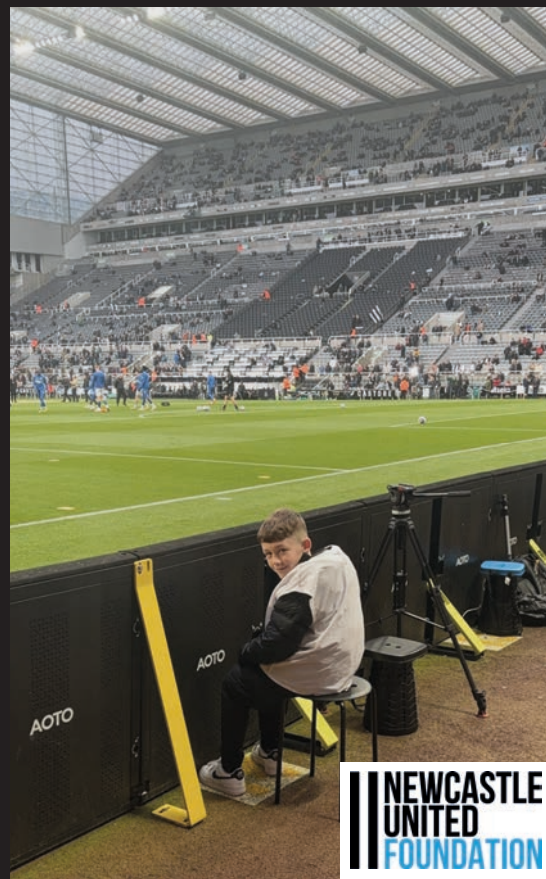
Only BCT customers, who have pre-registered for the event, will be able to attend. To pre-register, you will need to complete an application form, which can be collected from the BCT reception at 17 Raby Cross. Once the maximum number has been reached, we will put any other applications onto a reserve list. For updates and more information, please visit our website or Facebook page.

Terms and conditions apply: *First come first served. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult.

NUF MATCH DAY

The Newcastle United Foundation donated two ball assistant experiences to Byker Primary School and St Lawrence Primary School.

Two lucky pupils spent the match pitch side ready to retrieve any stray footballs so the match could swiftly continue, and they did a fantastic job!



HIGHSTREET PROJECT FREE ACTIVITIES

A programme of free events on Hadrian Square and Shields Road, Byker.

Find out more by visiting newcastleeast.com/commonplace.is

SUMMER ON THE SQUARE
A programme of free events on Hadrian Square and Shields Road, Byker. Brought to you by the Newcastle East High Streets Project.

- Saturday 20 July**
MOVIES ON HADRIAN SQUARE
10am - 7pm
- Thursday 25 July**
COLOURING IN!
Colouring in sculptures
10am - 6pm
- Thursday 1 August**
STORYTIME ON THE SQUARE
10am - 2pm
- Sunday 4 August**
RUBBER DUCK!
A physical theatre circus show
10am - 12pm
- Monday 5 - Tuesday 6 August**
METRO BALL POOL
Monday 12 - 5pm
Tuesday 10am - 5pm with dance performances
- Monday 12 - Friday 23 August**
PUPPET TREASURE HUNT
Weekdays 10am - 3pm
- Sunday 18 August**
HADRIAN MARKET
10am - 3pm
- Friday 23 August**
CARDBOARD ROAD
A miniature Shields Road installation
12 - 5:30pm
- Saturday 24 August**
BYKER GROOVE
All day music festival
11am - 6:30pm
- Friday 30 August**
MOVIES ON HADRIAN SQUARE
10am - 7pm
- Saturday 31 August**
SHIELDS ROAD PERFORMANCE TRAIL
Hidden performances to find
2 - 4pm
- Sunday 1 September**
PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION
2 - 4pm

Newcastle East - Inclusive, Healthy, Vibrant High Streets is a project led by Newcastle City Council focussing on five high streets in the east of the city. You can keep up to date with the project's progress and latest news by visiting our website at: newcastleeast.commonplace.is

NE North East Combined Authority | Funded by UK Government | **LEVELLING UP** | Newcastle City Council

SUMMER ACTIVITIES

There are some fantastic free activities in and around Newcastle this summer holiday.



Walker outdoor week

There's a whole range of free activities taking place in Walker this summer!

Each event will have a range of activities including arts and crafts, face painting, workshops, sports, plus loads more! **Head to our Facebook page for full details.**

Stotts Park

Monday 22 July 12.30pm
Tuesday 23 July 12.30pm

Walker Park

Wednesday 24 July 3pm
Thursday 25 July 12.30pm
Friday 26 July 12.30pm

Bring your bike along to Kids Kabin's street workshops, where you can learn how to fix your bike for free!

When: Every Wednesday from 3.45pm - 5.15pm until 28 August 2024.

Where: Sessions are hosted throughout the estate, head along to the Kids Kabin facebook page for further information!



Nourish Food school

Nourish Food School is offering free cooking and coaching classes.

Your personal Food Coach will teach cooking and nutrition skills whilst helping you create a food plan so you can shop well, cook well and eat well.

The Byker club takes place on **Thursdays, 1.30pm - 3.30pm at Byker Sands.**

You can register online at <https://www.nourishfoodschoo.co.uk/nourishfoodcoach>



At home activities with the Natural History Society of Northumbria

We recently invited The Natural History Society of Northumbria down to host a bug hunt in Byker, but don't worry if you missed it – they have a fantastic range of free materials available on their website!

Their free Young North East Naturalist Journal contains numerous fun activities for budding young naturalists to discover and explore, from nature journaling, going on outdoor adventures to getting creative with maps. There is an activity suitable for everyone to choose from to complete across the seasons.

You can download the journal from the website: <https://www.nhsn.org.uk/young-north-east-naturalist-journal/>



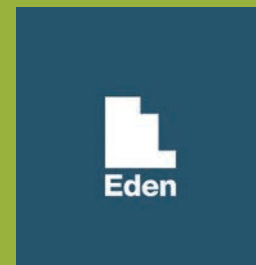
Activities with Eden

Eden is hosting weekly free **5-a-side football** on Wednesdays, 11 am - 12pm

They provide free transport from the old Byker Pool car park to Walker Activity Dome.

It's a great opportunity to meet new people and improve fitness.

They are also hosting a **Summer Lunch Club** on Monday 22 July, Monday 12 August and Thursday 22 and 29 August. From 12.00 - 1.30pm head to St Silas Church for a free lunch along with fun family activities crafts and games.





A ROYAL VISIT TO AVONDALE HOUSE

Byker welcomed some very special guests in May - Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester.

They headed to Launchpad's Avondale House, which is owned by Karbon Homes, to find out more about the charity and to meet staff and residents.

Their Royal Highnesses received a tour of the house, which provides vital accommodation and targeted support to UK Armed Forces' Veterans experiencing homelessness and unemployment.

They also spent time talking to staff, residents and partners who the charity works with, and visited one of the residents' flats.

Avondale House was one of three projects they visited in Newcastle, and they were warmly greeted by Year 6 children from Byker Primary School and St. Lawrence's RC Primary School who waved Union Jack flags upon their arrival.



GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY SAFETY TEAM

Ensuring the safety of our community is of great importance, and we have a dedicated team here in Byker working alongside the police to help keep you safe.

We wanted to share the range of work our Community Safety Team delivers, and you can hear from some of the team who work tirelessly to help create secure and safe places for our customers to live.

In the event of an emergency, always call the police on 999.

What does our team deal with?

Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour is any behaviour that causes or is likely to cause fear, alarm and distress.

Most neighbours live happily and are pleasant to others. However, disputes can happen. If you're experiencing any anti-social behaviour or harassment, make sure to report it to us so that we can help.

Our Community Safety Team specialise in dealing with high-risk cases of anti-social behaviour, as well as protecting and supporting the victims, and they work closely with the police to resolve issues

Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading or violent behaviour, including sexual violence.

We do not tolerate domestic abuse, and no one should live in fear of it. That's why we help and support any person experiencing it or feeling threatened.

Priority is always given to the safety of people suffering from domestic abuse. We provide victims with a quick and sensitive response and deal swiftly and effectively with perpetrators.

Reporting tools

iWitness

Our iWitness scheme encourages people to report disturbances and instances of anti-social behaviour when they see it.

A specially trained, independent and accredited team of iWitness officers respond to your reports of disturbances immediately and provide accurate and credible witness statements.

They're available out-of-hours and they respond to reports and incidents of anti-social behaviour that are happening or ongoing at the time you make your phone call. Please call **0800 533 5442** if you would like to access **iWitness**.

The Noise App

The Noise App is a quick and easy way to record noise which is causing an annoyance or nuisance.

Instantly record noise nuisance on your smartphone to create an accurate record of the problem and how it affects you.

Once you've recorded your evidence, you can send it directly to us to investigate for free.

Scan here to download the Noise App:



Noise App
on iOS



Noise App
on Android



Craig Cross – Safer Communities Officer (Byker Community Trust)

"I work out of the Byker Community Trust office managing cases of anti-social behaviour, breaches of tenancy and compliance issues, such as

when we have problems accessing our homes for essential safety checks. I have worked in Byker for at least 10 years and really enjoy trying to make a difference for people in the area."

You can find out more about
Community Safety and support we offer at
www.karbonhomes.co.uk/community-safety



DO YOU LIVE IN A HIGH-RISE BUILDING?

Share your views for a chance to win a £50 voucher!

We want your feedback on our draft Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy. By participating, you could win one of three £50 vouchers for either Love2Shop or Amazon.

In April 2023, the Building Safety Act 2022 became law. This was created following recommendations from Dame Judith Hackitt's 2018 review of fire safety and building regulations after the Grenfell fire.

As part of this law, Karbon Homes must create, review, and share a Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy with all high-rise building residents aged 16 and over.

The goal of this strategy is to involve residents in safety decisions about their buildings. We've been working with some residents through our Building Safety Panel, and now we want to hear from more of you.

The consultation opened on Monday, June 10, 2024, and will close on Friday, July 26, 2024. We want as much feedback as possible during this time. You can give feedback online or talk to someone in the Byker office.

You can access the strategy in these ways:

1. Download a one-page summary and view the full version online: www.karbonhomes.co.uk/buildingconsultation
2. Visit the Byker office to get a printed version
3. Ask your scheme co-ordinator for a copy (Tom Collins House only)
4. View a copy of the strategy summary on your **building noticeboard**
5. Email buildingsafety@karbonhomes.co.uk and we'll send you a copy
6. Call **0800 533 5442** and we'll arrange to send you a copy
7. Scan this **QR code** below or on the posters in your building to see the digital version



Your feedback is vital in helping us ensure everyone's safety and wellbeing. Thank you for your time!

DO WHAT YOU NEED, WHEN YOU NEED



Are you using MyKarbon yet?

What is MyKarbon?

MyKarbon is our free, safe and secure online tool where you can view and manage your tenancy and access some of our services digitally. It's available 24/7 on any device, so you can do what you need, when you need.

What can you use it for?

1. Managing your tenancy

MyKarbon can be used to help manage your tenancy, making those little jobs that bit easier and putting your mind at ease that everything is as it should be. Use MyKarbon to:

- View your account balance
- Make online payments
- Set up a direct debit
- Request a refund (if your account is eligible and in credit)
- See your weekly or monthly charges
- View a breakdown of your charges
- Read your rent statements

2. Managing your repairs and servicing

MyKarbon can be used to help manage your home's repairs and servicing, making it easier to book and track appointments and maintain your home in working order. Use MyKarbon to:

- Log/report a repair
- Book an appointment for a new repair
- View details of your active repairs, including the latest status
- Request an update for a pending repair appointment
- Request a change to an upcoming repair appointment
- View your upcoming servicing appointment details
- Request a change to an upcoming servicing appointment

3. Manage your details

You can use MyKarbon to update your account details to ensure we always have the latest information for you. Use MyKarbon to:

- View and update your contact details
- Change your password

By the numbers: why should you use MyKarbon?

- Over **6,000** repairs were reported online in the last 12 months
- Over **87,000** payments were made online in the last 12 months
- Over **10,000** customers already have a MyKarbon account, and over 1,200 customers have registered in the last 12 months.

We've designed it to be easy to use, so if you already do online shopping, banking or even social media then you'll find MyKarbon is right for you!

If you'd like to learn how to use MyKarbon, but aren't confident with using digital tools, then our Foundations for Life Team can help you learn some digital skills. You can get in touch with them by dropping an email to foundations@karbonhomes.co.uk or calling us on **0808 164 0111**.

Or go to: www.karbonhomes.co.uk/mykarbon

On the page that appears, click register and put in your details, you'll need your name, date of birth, an email address and your tenancy reference number which can be found on any letters you've received from us.

If you need any help, get in touch via email at info@karbonhomes.co.uk, or by phone by calling us on 0808 164 0111.

FOUNDATIONS FOR LIFE: INTRODUCING HANNAH

We'd like to take this opportunity to introduce you to our dedicated **Foundations for Life** colleague, **Hannah**.

Hannah will be working closely with our customers to help build the skills, experience, qualifications and mindset to maximise your potential, achieve your career aspirations, and increase your digital skills.

Our Foundations for Life service is completely customer-led, whether you want a career change, to get back into employment, or to just improve your digital skills – there is help available.

We've already had courses running throughout the year including our "Write Turn" course, where we help you to pass your driving theory test.



Hannah will be running drop-in sessions alongside the rent surgeries on Wednesdays.

We regularly post opportunities on our social media pages, and further information about Foundations for Life can be found on the Karbon website.

If you'd like to contact us about how Foundations for Life could help you, email: foundations@karbonhomes.co.uk



UPDATE TO OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSING TEAM

We'd like to welcome **Gemma Hutchinson**, who has been appointed as a **Neighbourhood Housing Officer** and will be looking after Jennifer's old patch.

Our Neighbourhood Housing Team is dedicated to working closely with customers to find out what your views are on how we can further improve our services to you.

COULD YOU BE MISSING OUT ON £15 BILLION OF BENEFITS THAT GOES UNCLAIMED EVERY YEAR?

It's hard to believe we're over halfway through the year! Our financial circumstances can often change rapidly, through factors out of our control, meaning we could be in a very different position to what we were in January.

Being able to understand what we can be entitled to when we need some extra support can often be confusing, and we can end up missing out.

As customers, you have access to our Money Matters service, as well as our dedicated Tenant Sustainment and Welfare Officer, Aneta.

Customers David and Emma* recently accessed the Money Matters service, and were able to improve their financial circumstances, through several benefits, including some they didn't know they were entitled to.

David had been unable to work for many months due to mental health issues, and this had significantly impacted the household income, with only one part time income being brought in by Emma. Along with having two dependent children, and under occupying their home by one bedroom, the family were under a lot of financial stress.

David was referred to the Money Matters service by his Living Well Coordinator.

The couple were identified as needing a benefit check to try and maximise their income, along with searching for any other benefits they could be entitled to.

As a result of working with Money Matters, the family were awarded an extra income of £871 per month through this benefit search.



Emma said: "The Money Matters Team were brilliant – so helpful.

"We've been able to claim things we didn't even know existed before speaking to Money Matters.

"We'd recommend the Money Matters service to other customers, especially because we didn't know what we could be entitled to."

Aneta Szafranska, Tenancy Sustainment and Welfare Officer at Byker Community Trust, said:

"Benefit rules can be complicated, and myself as well as the Money Matters Team are trained to provide specialist advice to help customers navigate their way through the system.

"It's great to see that these customers have been successful in working with our team, and hopefully the extra income will help to reduce the financial stress they have been under."

If you feel in a similar situation to this customer's story or want to find out more about the support and advice we can offer, please contact Aneta on 0800 533 5442 to arrange an appointment.

Alternatively, you can contact Karbon Money Matters, please contact the team at moneymatters@karbonhomes.co.uk or on **0808 164 0111**.

Remember, you're not alone and we are here to help.

*Customers names have been changed for anonymity

PLANNING PERMISSION APPROVED FOR DUNN TERRACE

We're very pleased to announce that we have received planning permission and listed building consent for the environmental improvements at Dunn Terrace.

We are now in the tender process, which is the process of selecting a contractor to carry out the work.

In the meantime, we are continuing our customer consultations in the Ayton Neighbourhood, so you can have your say on the proposed plans.

Keep an eye out on our social media pages and website for further information.



TYNE AND WEAR FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE: TAKE CARE DURING THE LIGHTER NIGHTS THIS SUMMER

As we welcome the summer months, it paves the way for the lighter evenings. This will encourage young people to enjoy spending more time in the local community with their friends.

We support people enjoying their social and leisure time but we would advise parents and guardians to be aware of where their children are throughout the lighter nights.

If you are worried about an incident in your area and would like to share any information, you can tell us 100% anonymously by calling **Fire Stoppers** on **0800 169 5558**.

Let's stay safe this summer!

FLY TIPPING

We work hard with Newcastle City Council to keep the estate clean and well-maintained – and we'd like to thank the vast majority of customers who help us to do so.

However, there is a persistent problem with litter throughout the estate which is being further worsened by fly tipping. Alongside enforcement officers from the council, we have identified several customers this year who have illegally dumped waste, resulting in three fixed penalty notices.

It is a criminal offence to fly tip. If you witness fly tipping you can speak to us confidentially on **0800 533 5442**.



Whether it's bringing in your bins to avoid them being tipped over, using the litter bins supplied across the estate, joining one of our litter picks, or reporting fly tipping, every small effort makes a difference. **Please dispose of your rubbish correctly, we appreciate all your help in keeping the estate tidy.**

YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL UPDATE

BYKER WARD



Nick Kemp
(leader of the council, Labour)

Please note - there are no surgeries during August or Bank Holidays

Ward surgeries will be held on the:

Second Tuesday of each month

St. Martin's Centre,
Roman Avenue, NE6 2RJ
12noon – 1pm

Ward surgeries will be held on the:

Second Saturday of each month

East End Pool,
Hadrian Square, NE6 1AL
10am – 11am

Third Wednesday of each month

Byker Community Trust Office,
Raby Way, NE6 2FF
1pm – 2pm



Councillor Hayder Qureshi
(Labour)

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St. Martin's Centre,
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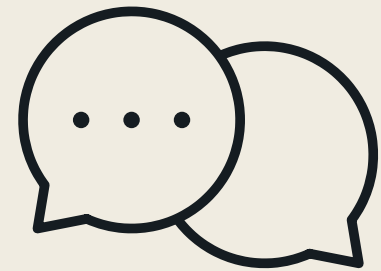


Councillor Nick Hartley
(Green Party)

Ward surgeries will be held on the:

Last Sunday of each month

East End Pool,
Hadrian Square, NE6 1AL
9.30am – 11am



NORTHERN POWER GRID PRIORITY SERVICE REGISTER

Having to deal with unexpected interruption in electricity supply can be stressful at the best of times, but factors such as disability or illness can make this worse.

Northern Power Grid offer a priority service register for customers who may need extra support if there's an interruption.

You may be eligible for the priority service if:

- You are disabled
- Have mobility issues
- Have a mental health condition
- Have children under the age of 5
- Are of pensionable age
- Are elderly

- Are a carer
- Have a chronic or serious illness

The service has measures they can put in place to make your experience easier, including providing alternative heating or cooking facilities, providing information in a preferred language or arranging a visit from dementia friends.

To find out if you are eligible for the Priority Service Register, call **Northern Power Grid's Customer Care Team on 0800 040 7766** and select **option 4** when you hear the recorded message.

You can also email
priorityservices@northernpowergrid.com

HOW WE'LL HANDLE YOUR COMPLAINTS



Here at Byker, we work hard to give you a brilliant service. But we know sometimes things do go wrong.

We've recently updated our complaints policy and process to ensure our service is up to scratch.

We spoke to Wendy Graham, Assistant Director of Customer Experience at Karbon Homes to find out more.

Making a complaint

We'd encourage you to contact us as soon as possible after the issue first arises, as complaints must be raised within 12 months of the incident, ideally when you first became aware of the problem. This is so we can deal with the problem as quickly as possible.

Service request

Sometimes you might need us to take action, but not handle it as a complaint. This is a 'service request' such as a request for a repair or reporting anti-social behaviour. It may also be a query for information or an explanation, or a request to put something right.

Service requests are not complaints. If you are dissatisfied with our approach to resolve the issue, or the outcome, you'll be given the opportunity to make a complaint.

Stage one - Responding to your complaint

We'll look to resolve problems and put things right with the minimum of delay. When you get in touch, we'll establish full details of what's happened and what you would like us to do about it.

Stage two - Reviewing your complaint

If you're unhappy with our response at Stage one you can move your complaint to Stage two. We'll listen to what you feel has not been appropriately investigated

or disagree with and work with you to understand the outcome you're looking for.

Not satisfied with our response. You can choose to take your complaint further

We'll always try and resolve complaints. However, if you need extra support or advice during the complaints process, you can contact the Housing and Financial Ombudsman Services, Building Safety Regulator, Citizens Advice or get help from a designated person – this can be a local councillor or your local MP.

You can find out more about our complaints process by visiting [karbonhomes.co.uk/complaints](https://www.karbonhomes.co.uk/complaints)

Learning from our complaints

We're always looking to improve.

To do this we'll learn from your feedback – to try to improve the experience for other customers.

Below are just a few examples of the feedback we've had from both customers and colleagues, the actions we're taking in response to this feedback and the results of these actions.

Complaints responded to in timescales

A major piece of customer feedback last year was that we weren't responding to complaints in agreed timescales.

This has been a significant area of focus across all teams. We implemented alerts before deadlines for colleagues and introduced weekly performance reporting to monitor progress. We also provided one-to-one guidance and training to colleagues to ensure they meet timescales and maintain contact with customers.

This has resulted in a notable improvement in our performance, with us achieving over 98% of complaints on time for the last four months.

Accessibility to our complaints process

Some customers shared that we needed to make our complaints process easier to understand and more accessible.

We refreshed all our customer complaint materials to make them easier to read. So, our leaflet and video are now much shorter and easier to read, with the leaflet available in an easy read format too. We've also developed a visual infographic and offer a translation service too. All of the information is also on the website where customers can use the Recite Me accessibility tool which allows visitors to customise the content so that they can read and understand it in ways that work best for them.

Building Safety

Under the **Building Safety Act 2022** a "relevant complaint" about building safety may relate to:

- A building safety risk to a specific building.
- The performance of an Accountable Person in fulfilling its duties under the Building Safety Act.

If you remain unhappy with the outcome of a complaint, it can be referred to the Building Safety Regulator by either Karbon or you as the customer complainant.

Damp and Mould

In response to an increase in the number of calls and complaints from customers in relation to damp and mould, we've put a number of new processes in place to address the issues customers were raising.

We introduced a Damp and Mould Project Team consisting of colleagues from different areas of the business. The team created a new Damp and Mould Policy, and a new process for managing cases, designed to improve the experience for customers. We are also currently piloting a new case management system and intend to roll out further improvements in the coming months.

We've recruited additional trade operatives and surveyors so that we can respond to reports of damp and mould as quickly as possible. We have rolled out training for all customer-facing colleagues to identify and support customers. We've also updated our website and leaflets, which are available in multiple languages, to help guide customers on this important topic.

Scan here to find out more about our approach to damp, mould and condensation



Or go to: www.karbonhomes.co.uk/dampandmould

Our complaint process

The Housing Ombudsman can help you throughout the process and you can escalate to them after Stage two.



COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

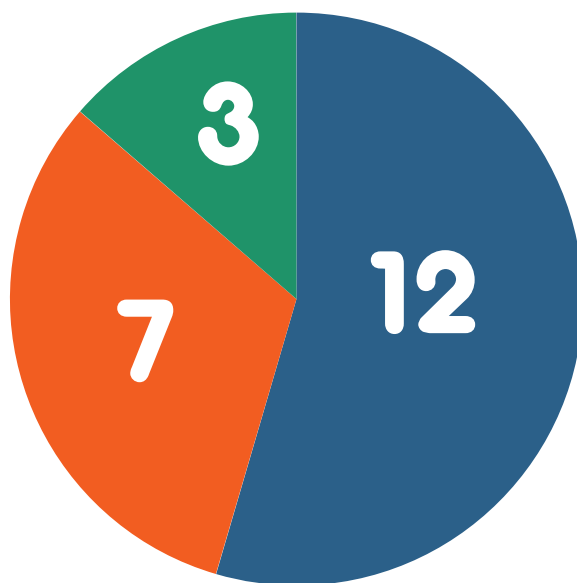
Q4 JANUARY – MARCH 2024

Our aim is to give you the service you expect all day, every day, 365 days a year. We try hard to avoid problems, but sometimes we do make mistakes. If you receive a poor service, then please tell us about it so we have the opportunity to put things right. We greatly appreciate your time and view any feedback

as an opportunity to improve our services. We're always listening and ready to work hard to resolve your concerns straight away. We received 17 complaints in Q4 and 22 compliments from customers happy with the service they received from us.

Number, Nature, Outcome

22 
COMPLIMENTS



 Grounds Maintenance

 Regeneration

 Housing Management

17 
COMPLAINTS

COMPLAINTS UPHELD

Upheld

9

Not Upheld

2

Partially Upheld

6

Upheld: A complaint is considered as 'upheld' when the investigation into the complaint found that BCT made mistakes or provided a poor service to the customer.

Not upheld: A complaint is considered as 'not upheld' when the investigation into the complaint found that BCT acted correctly in providing the service to the customer.

Partially upheld: A complaint is considered as 'partially upheld' when BCT agrees that the complaint was justified in at least one element of the complaint.

Ways to contact us:

- Face-to-face with any member of staff, including contractors working on BCT's behalf.
- Call our Customer Service Team on **0800 533 5442 (option 3)** 9am-5pm Monday to Thursday and 9am-4.30pm Fridays.
- Email our Customer Services Team at: enquiries@bykerct.co.uk

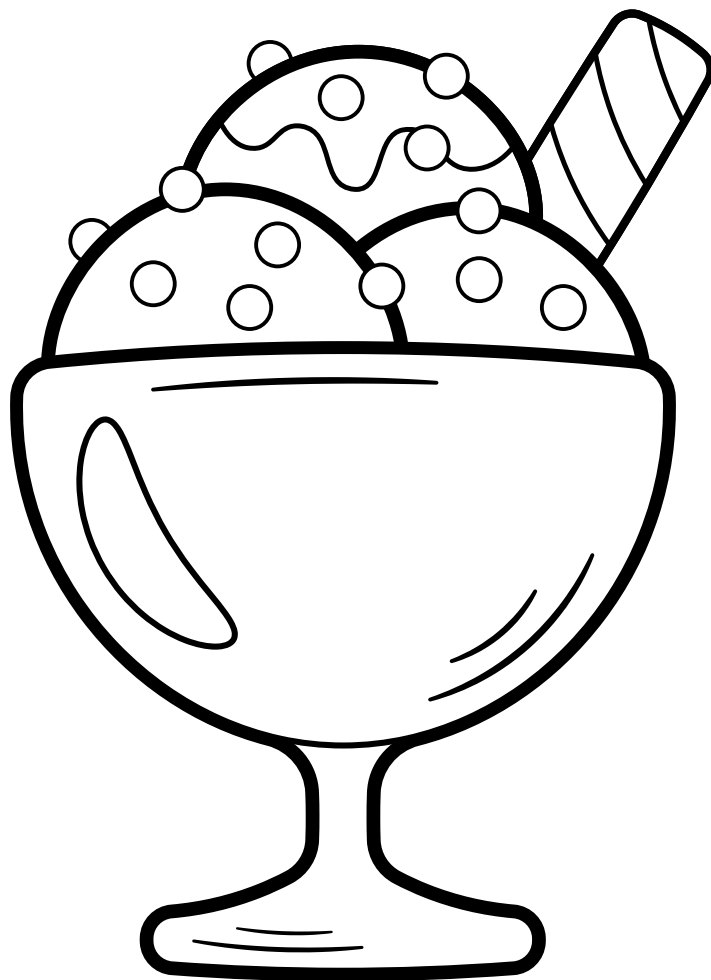
- Write to our local office address: Byker Community Trust 17 Raby Cross, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2FF.
- BCT website and social media via Facebook and Twitter.
- Via a Councillor, MP or other third party.

CHILDREN'S COLOURING COMPETITION

To celebrate the summer, we are giving you the chance to win a £25 gift voucher with our colouring competition!

Grab your pens, pencils, crayons and paints and colour in our scrumptious ice cream sundae. Be as creative as you like, you can even add some of your favourite toppings to the picture as well.

Ask a grownup to share your entry with us by **sending a photo of your entry** to **communications@karbonhomes.co.uk** and be sure to include your age. We'll publish a selection of the entries on Facebook and in the next edition. **Good luck!**



JUST FOR FUN

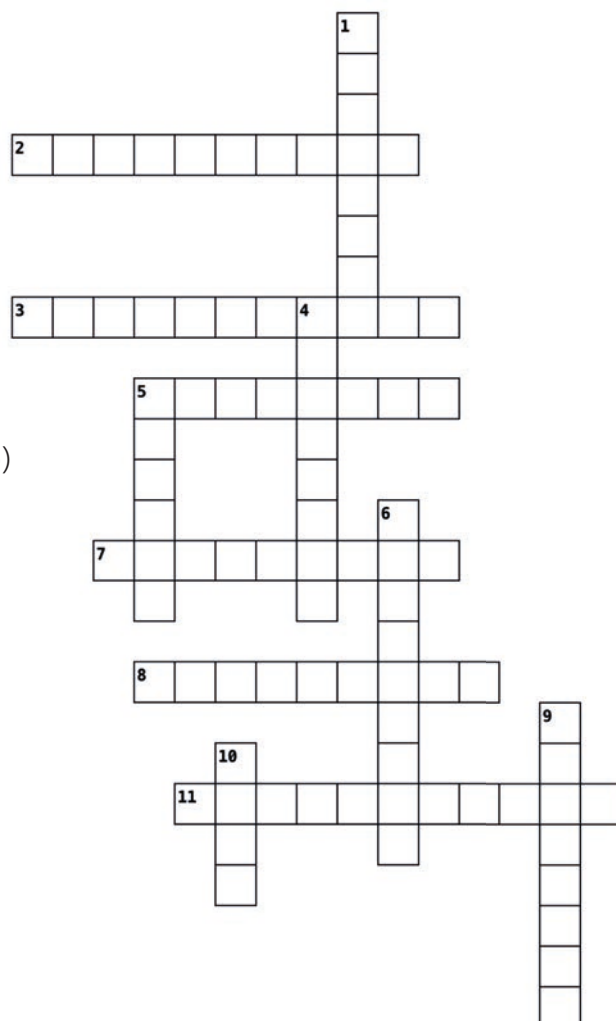
Crossword clues

Across

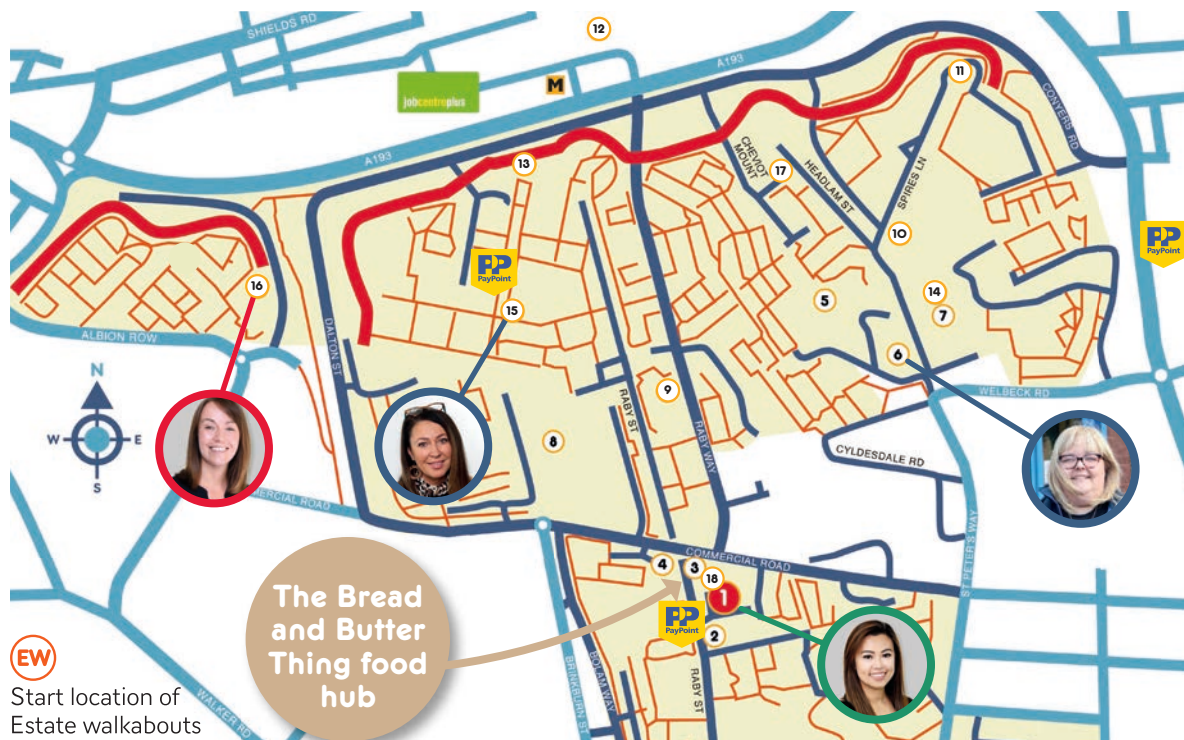
2. North Tyneside Coastal town (7,3)
3. Annual funfair that takes place on the Town Moor in Newcastle upon Tyne in June (3,8)
5. Outdoor cooking (8)
7. Where you can take your bike to for repair workshops (4,5)
8. Musician who sang The Boys of Summer (3,6)
11. Music festival that takes place in Somerset in June (11)

Down

1. Where you can update your customer details (2,6)
4. Frozen dessert (3,5)
5. Last year's highest grossing film (6)
6. Tennis tournament that takes place during the summer in the UK (9)
9. Major football tournament taking place this summer (4,4)
10. Character in Frozen who loved summer (4)



Crossword answers on page 2



EW
Start location of Estate walkabouts

The Bread and Butter Thing food hub

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Byker Community Trust office Freephone 0800 533 5442 | 10 St. Lawrence's Primary School Call 0191 265 9881 |
| 2 Children and Families Newcastle East – Byker Sands Centre Call 0191 275 9636 | 11 St. Lawrence's Church |
| 3 ACANE Community Centre and The Bread and Butter Thing Call 0191 265 8110 | 12 East End Library and Pool Call 0191 277 4100 |
| 4 St. Michael's Church Centre Raby Cross | 13 Climb Newcastle |
| 5 St. Michael's Church Headlam Street | 14 Chirton House |
| 6 Former Byker Community Centre | 15 Ralph Erskine House |
| 7 Byker Village Bowling Green | 16 Tom Collins House |
| 8 Byker Primary School Call 0191 265 6906 | 17 Mount Pleasant |
| 9 Avondale House (Veterans' Support) | 18 Byker Pantry |

How to contact Byker Community Trust:

Call: **0800 533 5442**

🔧 Option 1: Repairs
(also for out of hours emergencies)

£ Option 2: Rent Enquiries

🏠 Option 3: Housing Enquiries

🏢 Option 4: Business Enquiries

✉ enquiries@bykerct.co.uk

💻 www.bykercommunitytrust.org

📘 bykercommunitytrust

📞 @bykertrust



Part of **Karbon**

