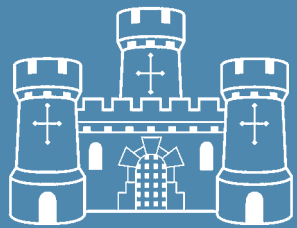


# COUNCIL PLAN

2018 - 2022



NEWCASTLE  
UNDER LYME  
BOROUGH COUNCIL





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# OUR VISION

Good local services, a prosperous borough, and safe and welcoming places for all



Leader of the Council  
Cllr. Simon Tagg

*"This plan sets out an ambitious vision for the borough as a place where people have good jobs, live in vibrant communities, and receive quality services"*



Acting Chief Executive  
John Tradewell

*"The new vision and priorities give a clear focus for our work in the Council to drive growth and prosperity in Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough, and deliver the services that our residents value and need."*

## Foreword

Welcome to the Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan 2018-2022 which details our plans for the next four years. This plan sets out the Council's aspirations and priorities for the next four years. It sets out our new vision, and focuses the work of everyone in the Council on four key priorities:

- Local Services that Work for Local People
- Growing our People and Places
- Healthy, Active and Safe Borough
- A Town Centre for All

This plan sets out how we will work to make the borough an even better place for everyone who lives, works, studies or visits here. Our aims can only be achieved by taking advantage of every opportunity available and developing new ones through innovation and a more collaborative approach.

The Council is committed to strong and sustainable economic growth for the borough, focusing upon opportunities around Keele University, Newcastle Town Centre and Kidsgrove.

Equally the Council is committed to achieving visible improvements in service delivery. The most recent can be seen with the opening of the impressive Castle House, the new home for council and other public services set in Queen's Gardens. This move allows the Council to embrace a new way of working and opportunities for better service delivery both amongst our own teams and with our partners who share the space with us. It also sets the standard for future developments and partnership working in the borough.





# OUR PRIORITIES

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## Priorities for our Borough

The Council has developed four new priorities to deliver the planned outcomes:

### Local Services that Work for Local People

This underpins everything we do. Our aim is to be a council that listens to its local residents and communities by being responsive to their needs, and to work with them to deliver first class services.

### Growing our People and Places

We aim to build a strong and sustainable economy to ensure opportunities and support are available to everyone to improve their lives.

### A Healthy, Active and Safe Borough

We will ensure everyone enjoys a safe environment, and access to a wide range of facilities and activities to support residents and visitors to improve their health and quality of life.

### A Town Centre for all

Creating two vibrant town centres in Newcastle and Kidsgrove where everyone can live, work, shop, study and spend their leisure time.



# PRIORITY ONE:

## Local Services that work for Local People

The Council will continue to look at its finances and resources to see how we can manage with less, but still deliver the services that local people want and need, and at the same time respond to the challenges ahead. Working with local partners, and of course national and regional ones, we will ensure that efficient and effective services are delivered in the borough for all.

The Council, along with partners, have recently moved to Castle House from the Civic Offices, providing opportunities for agile working and changing the way it works.

In order to deliver Local Services for Local People, we will engage with our communities and customers and listen to their views of their services. Using this information, we will:-

- review any service issues for users
- challenge the current service provision
- remove duplication and reduce costs
- improve the quality of the service.

### Working Locally

We will work locally and focus on involving local people, organisations and partners in shaping and delivering local services. When people get involved in shaping their neighbourhood, they get the services they want, and it helps to create a stronger sense of community and personal responsibility.

### Our Digital Council

Our digital vision is :- *To provide easy-to-use online services for our customers that deliver value and greater independence.*

The use of smartphones and tablets has put technology in the hands of people who would never have used a PC or laptop, and increasingly they expect to be able to do anything, from anywhere, whenever they want. Providing just a website that displays information is no longer enough; hence the shift towards self-serve online options.

### The Move to Digital

Currently, the Council has no major services that are entirely digital and intends to exploit the technology to reduce resources and costs. We will embrace digital means to provide efficient end to end services which are beneficial for all our customers and the Council. The first council service to go digital is Recycling and Waste, with other services involved over the next 12 months.

The screenshot shows the 'Online Payments' page for Newcastle-under-Lyme Council. The page header includes the council logo, name, and navigation links: Home, A to Z, Accessibility, Contact Us, All Services, and a search bar. The main content area is titled 'Online Payments' and includes a breadcrumb trail 'Home > Online Payments'. Below the title, there are links for 'Information & Payment Help' and 'Cancel'. A note states '\* indicates a required field'. The form is titled 'Payment For: Council Tax' and contains several input fields: 'Account Number \*', 'Name \*' (with a note 'This is the name shown on your bill'), 'First line of address \*', 'Second line of address', 'Third line of address', 'Fourth line of address', and 'Postcode \*'. At the bottom, there is a field for 'The amount you wish to pay' with 'Amount \* £' and '0.00' displayed. At the very bottom of the form are three buttons: 'Continue', 'Reset', and 'Back'.

# To achieve our key priority we are committed to:

- Increasing access to, and the sharing of quality information for, citizens and staff at the right time, regardless of time or location
- Working with partners and residents to develop community-led and community-commissioned services
- Delivering a planned Digital Delivery programme
- Reviewing Recycling and Waste services
- Ensuring the workforce have the right skills, at the right time, in the right place
- Ensuring a robust, integrated Customer Services that is efficient, open and innovative and meets the needs of the community
- Enabling community groups and others to take on initiatives to develop and improve community facilities which better meet their needs
- Continuing to work closely with town and parish councils to improve services for local people
- Working with our partners, we want to sustain local public services in a context of reducing resources
- Working with Staffordshire County Council to enhance co-operation in service delivery within the existing structure of local government in Staffordshire







# PRIORITY TWO:

## Growing our People and Places

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The Council wants to grow the borough's economy and build on what is already good - the borough's identity, its location within the Staffordshire region with good motorway links, education opportunities with our acclaimed Keele University and Newcastle-under-Lyme College, and our strong local communities. Our future depends on how we take up opportunities to raise aspirations and achieve our ambitions.

Our aim is to strive for the borough to be a place where the economy is strong and sustainable, where local people have the skills and opportunities to take up the good jobs with good wages that are created, and where everyone benefits from economic growth. This also means that we need to ensure that there are good homes for everyone, and that every citizen has a safe and secure place to live.

To deliver this we will engage with our partners, locally and regionally, including businesses already in the borough, and work with them to develop their plans and encourage inward investment and the growth of our existing businesses for the benefit of our communities.

### **External and partner funding**

We will continue to work with our partners, including playing an active role in the Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). We will look for opportunities to secure funding from Growth Deal monies and the Growing Places fund to invest in the local economy. We will work with the Constellation Partnership to ensure that North Staffordshire and South Cheshire secures strategic investment, housing and jobs. We will work with Staffordshire County Council on our four shared priorities of Newcastle Town Centre, Keele, Knutton and Kidsgrove.

## University Growth Corridor

One of our most exciting opportunities as a borough is the potential for further growth in “high tech” businesses and good quality housing at Keele University - the Keele Deal seeks to unleash the growth potential of the University and its Science and Innovation Park facilitated by emerging plans for expansion through the University Growth Corridor, which is a priority for the partnership.

## Enterprise Zone (EZ)

The Chatterley Valley EZ provides incentives to assist companies in locating here and will provide employment opportunities for our communities.

## Employment and Skills

For our residents to be ready to seize job opportunities as they arise, we need to make sure there is educational support and apprenticeships available to grow employment prospects for our communities, and ensure they have the right skills to access employment. We will continue to co-ordinate the Newcastle Employment and Skills Group to address key issues around skills across the borough, and work with the Stoke and Staffordshire LEP Education Trust to deliver the Skills Strategy and to better meet employers’ requirements.

## Housing and the Joint Local Plan

A Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Local Plan is being prepared jointly by both councils. This will help us plan for the right kind of housing which satisfies the future needs of the population to remain, and encourages movement of working age people into the area. There needs to be affordable and other entry-level housing available for first time buyers to allow people to move up the property ladder, as well as down the property ladder in later life to suitable housing providing independent living.

## Place Based Approach (PBA)

The Newcastle Place Based Approach Group, as part of the Newcastle Partnership, has identified three priority areas based on a detailed review of the Early Help Performance Framework to focus its efforts in accessing available funds to support the growth vision for our communities.

The areas of investment proposed are:-

- Emotional and Wellbeing Support
- Support for Financial Inclusion
- Workforce Development





# To achieve our priority we are committed to:

- Ensuring growth opportunities and support for our communities
- Focusing on identified areas for economic growth and delivering the Economic Development Strategy 2018-2023, further amplified by targeted interventions to be agreed with Staffordshire County Council
- Delivering a Joint Local Plan to support the sustainable development of our towns and villages
- Supporting local residents in housing need to access appropriate housing and to prevent homelessness
- Working with our partners to provide better job opportunities, employment and skills initiatives and promotion of apprenticeship schemes.
- Promoting the University Growth Corridor development, including completion of a vision for the area jointly commissioned with our key partners at Keele University and Staffordshire County Council
- Continuing to work closely with town and parish councils to improve the area for local people
- Enabling community groups and others to take on initiatives to develop and improve community facilities which better meet their needs
- Seizing opportunities to work in collaboration with new partners to develop better housing opportunities
- Working with the LEP Education Trust Programme group to implement the Skills Strategy 2016-2020







# PRIORITY THREE:

## A Healthy, Active and Safe Borough

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We want communities that are happy, healthy and active and able to enjoy living in a safe environment. We will work with partners to ensure there are opportunities for residents to enjoy an active lifestyle.

### **Green and Open Spaces**

The Council's Open Space Strategy seeks to ensure that our communities have access to high quality open spaces which provide a range of facilities.

We will improve facilities where we can, and will prioritise our resources towards the strategic sites which serve the largest catchment areas to ensure standards are maintained in those locations. We will continue to support our community groups in looking after their neighbourhood streets and open spaces and continue to develop partnerships which assist in keeping the borough clean and attractive.

The borough has been very successful with the Britain in Bloom competition, and the Newcastle in Bloom campaign is a borough-wide partnership which includes residents, businesses, schools, community groups and a wide range of volunteers. Our aim is to get more people involved to help improve their local area. The displays make Newcastle-under-Lyme an attractive place to live, study, work and visit.

### **Brampton Museum**

The Brampton Museum is provided by the Council and is run by Council staff and volunteers. The Brampton Museum is a veritable "jewel in the crown", free to access and attracts many thousands of visitors each year. Through the work of the museum, the people of Newcastle-under-Lyme can be proud of their heritage, history and identity. Brampton Museum is situated on Brampton Park, within the conservation area of Newcastle-under-Lyme.



## The New Vic Theatre

The Borough Council is a strong supporter of the New Vic Theatre, which adds hugely to the cultural life of the borough. It draws in significant funding from the Arts Council and other funding partners which allows it to provide a large and varied programme of work throughout the year.

## The Philip Astley Project

The Borough Council is a key partner on the Philip Astley Project. This has enhanced the borough's arts and cultural calendar. Thanks to the Philip Astley Project, Newcastle-under-Lyme town centre now has a number of visual reminders that Astley was the creator of the modern circus and the broader performing arts traditions including a street art subway, Newcastle-under-Lyme children's library and the recently renamed 'Philip Astley walk'.

Also, the Newcastle-under-Lyme Business Improvement District organises an annual Jazz and Blues Festival and, since 2014, has collaborated with Appetite and Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council to bring circus to Newcastle-under-Lyme town centre during the Homecoming Festival.

## Sport and Active Lifestyles

Jubilee2 provides high quality sporting and active lifestyle facilities in Newcastle-under-Lyme for everyone's training, fitness and coaching needs.

The Council is working with partners to look at areas where we can deliver the greatest impact to reduce health inequalities. Using the place based approach, early intervention and prevention activities will be commissioned and delivered to support those most in need.

We are working with local partners and a community group to ensure Kidsgrove Sports Centre reopens at the earliest opportunity as a community run sports facility.

The Newcastle Partnership, with support from the Staffordshire Commissioner of Police, Fire and Rescue and Crime, has provided funding to deliver SPACE activities during school holidays, to enable young people to take part and be active, and intends to continue delivery during the coming year.





## A Safer Place to Grow

We are committed to reducing anti-social behaviour, improving the quality of life for local people and reducing crime and fear of crime within our communities. We are keen to promote understanding, tolerance and respect within our communities and to encourage residents to be proactive and resolve issues themselves wherever possible. Where problems escalate into more serious and widespread issues, the Council will proactively work with partners and residents to tackle anti-social behaviour and other community issues.

We have established the Daily Hub, bringing together a multi-agency team which provides a forum for partners to problem solve, support and challenge each other around cases of vulnerability.

## To achieve our priority we are committed to:

- Developing and improving the leisure and cultural services we offer to residents and visitors of the borough
- Delivering a programme of healthy initiatives with partners

- Delivering a programme of cultural events and exhibitions
- Supporting community run events, both leisure and cultural
- Maintaining high standards of street cleanliness
- Providing efficient and effective waste collection services
- Building on our work with police and partners to reduce anti-social behaviour and crime in our communities
- Protecting residents and visitors with high standards of food safety and licensing in the borough
- Working to gain Green Flag Awards and compete in the Regional Britain in Bloom competition
- Development and delivery of the Sport and Active Lifestyles Strategy
- Securing external funding to support the museum to increase access and income thereby improving resilience and sustainability
- Developing and delivering the Open Space Strategy and Green Infrastructure Strategy, including improvement projects such as The Wammy Neighbourhood Park (Phase 4)





# PRIORITY FOUR:

## A Town Centre for All

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We want our town centres in Newcastle and Kidsgrove to be the vibrant and successful centres of life in the borough. We want to ensure that they have the right retail, public service, leisure, cultural, business and residential facilities that work for local residents and attract visitors and businesses to the town centres.

The new Castle House, situated in Queen's Gardens, sets the new benchmark for what we want to see in our town centres. It sets a high standard for future development, with its inspiring building set in a green environment, and is already seen as a place to meet, visit and enjoy. We need to build on this by ensuring future development supports our vision for the town centres and other areas of the borough.

The next opportunity in Newcastle is the Ryecroft site. This development needs to mirror Castle House and provide an uplift to the townscape, and contribute to the development of a vibrant and successful town centre.

The Council is exploring options for the future use of the Guildhall, an historic landmark based in Newcastle town centre, set to be given a new lease of life.

Keele University, working with the Borough Council and partners, have ambitious plans to expand, and, as strategic partners, we are supportive of this ambition for the University Growth Corridor. Given the importance of both the University itself and that of Keele Science and Innovation Park to the economy and life of the borough, we consider it to be of the utmost importance to the Borough Council that it is able to work alongside the University in developing and supporting its plans for growth.





For the period of this plan, we will continue to support and work with partners, such as the Newcastle Business Improvement District (BID) to build on its good work, notably in relation to the town centre activities programme which continues to grow in stature, with annual highlights firmly embedded in events such as the Lymelight and Jazz and Blues Festivals. These events are vitally important to ensure that Newcastle Town Centre remains the local centre of choice for the borough's residents given the evident challenges for the retail sector.

Newcastle has marked the 250th anniversary of the modern circus with C250 celebrations, which have fully embraced the opportunities for cultural tourism. Funded through Heritage Lottery and Arts Council England along with other partners, the town has seen nationally acclaimed No Fit State Circus in residence, an outdoor circus exhibition in Red Lion Square, The Homecoming, and AstleyFest on Lyme Valley Park, which attracted approximately 6,000 people, increasing footfall to the town centre.

Kidsgrove is also central to our future plans. We are committed to working with Staffordshire County Council to develop a long term plan for Kidsgrove that takes advantage of its location, road and rail connectivity. We want to use the public sector property estate in the area to regenerate the town and provide the new facilities that the town needs, such as a new sports centre and extra care provision. We need to ensure that when HS2 arrives in the region in less than 10 years' time, Kidsgrove is well placed to take advantage of the opportunities this will create.

## To achieve our priority we are committed to:

- Redeveloping the Ryecroft site
- Promoting events with partners to encourage visitors
- Continuing the work to maintain low vacancy rates in the town centres
- Supporting further development of Keele Science and Innovation Park and the University Growth Corridor
- Supporting retailers and local business to remain and prosper in the town centres
- Developing a long term plan for Kidsgrove with the County Council
- Delivering car parking services that support the town centres
- Supporting the plans to use the Guildhall as a publicly accessible building
- Supporting housing developments offering a good mix of accommodation for all
- Continuing support for the development of the University Growth Corridor.

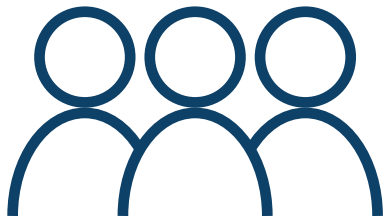




# Newcastle-under-Lyme Facts and Figures

## THE BOROUGH

HAS A POPULATION OF



**129,000**

**20.2%**

OF RESIDENTS ARE

**65 PLUS**

**(26,100)**

**16.3%**

OF RESIDENTS  
ARE AGED

**15 AND  
UNDER**

**(21,000)**

**27.2%**

OF RESIDENTS ARE  
YOUNG PEOPLE

**UNDER 24**

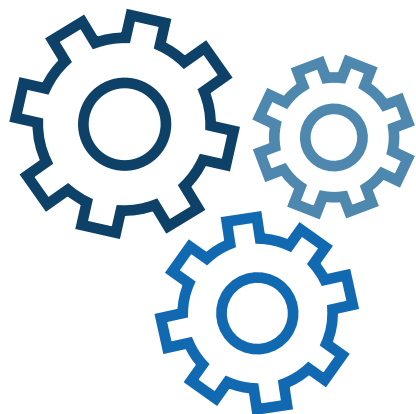
**(35,100)**

**39.7%**

OF RESIDENTS  
ARE AGED

**50 PLUS**

**(51,000)**



**82.5%**

OF RESIDENTS OF  
WORKING AGE ARE IN  
EMPLOYMENT

**(67,600)**

**63.5%** OF RESIDENTS ARE  
OF WORKING AGE

**AGED 16 - 64**

**( 8 1 , 9 0 0 )**

The source for all of the above, and to the left and right, is NOMIS August 2018



**6.1%**

OF WORKING AGE  
POPULATION ARE

OUT OF WORK DUE TO  
**ILL HEALTH**

**(APPROX. 5,000)**

**THE LONE  
PENSIONER  
HOUSEHOLD  
FIGURE IS  
13.5%**

(Census 2011)



**69.5%**

OF ADULTS IN  
THE BOROUGH ARE  
**HOMEOWNERS**

(Census 2011)

**59%**

OF RESIDENTS AGED  
**65 PLUS**  
HAVE LIMITING  
LONG TERM  
**ILLNESS**