

# Northumberland Line

## Keeping You Connected

[Edition 12 | August 2023]



### Photos of the month



Flying the flag at Northern Pride

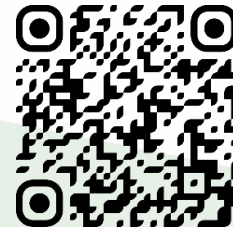


Network Rail track renewal works in Ashington

Welcome to the August 2023 edition of the Northumberland Line newsletter. The aim of this newsletter is to give an overview of upcoming site work, as well as letting you know about key project milestones.

This edition includes an announcement about works starting at three more station sites. It also includes a roundup of all the work we have been doing in the community, including an event to raise money for the Lighthouse Charity, and updates about recent track works and station construction. There is also the opportunity see a train driver's view of the Northumberland Line, by watching a video recorded during a recent special service on the line.

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Alternatively, if you would prefer to have a paper copy delivered to your doorstep, please let us know by calling **0345 600 6400** or email [rail@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:rail@northumberland.gov.uk).



## Keeping You Connected

# What is the Northumberland Line?



The Northumberland Line will bring passenger trains back into service between Ashington and Newcastle. It will provide new stations between Ashington and Newcastle Central Station, taking 35 minutes with no need to change trains. Alternatively, you can switch from the Northumberland Line at Northumberland Park to Tyne and Wear Metro for onward journeys to the Airport, Tynemouth and South Shields.

The freight trains that currently use the railway will still be able to do so, helping support the economic aspirations of both Lynemouth Power Station and the Port of Blyth.



# Progress update and look ahead

## Works to start on three more station sites

We are pleased to share that works have now started to build the new stations at Bedlington, Blyth Bebside and Seaton Delaval. All locations have had some activity over the last year ahead of the main construction works, and stations contractor Morgan Sindall Infrastructure are now ready to formally progress the construction works at all three sites.

Morgan Sindall Infrastructure's construction works are already well underway at Newsham and works are approaching completion in Ashington.

Both Bedlington and Bebside stations feature two platforms, while Seaton Delaval has one. All will feature parking, accessible access and links into cycling and walking routes to encourage sustainable travel.



Northumberland County Council Leader Glen Sanderson and stations contractor Operations Director Pieter Esbach

*This is a positive step forward as work continues at pace to restore this historic railway line by next summer, encouraging investment and growth across the north-east.*

*Once re-opened, the Northumberland Line will slash journey times for residents in half by delivering regular services for passengers that will connect them to new jobs, education and business opportunities.*

**Huw Merriman, Rail Minister**

*Each week sees further progress on this fantastic scheme and we're very pleased to be able to formally award these contracts for the stations to Morgan Sindall Infrastructure.*

*We have more and more infrastructure taking shape along the line, with track going down and stations going up.*

*Along with the benefits to the economy and boosts to our education and tourism sectors, this line will bring a range of green benefits to support our climate change agenda, helping to reduce congestion and improve air quality on key roads by moving people away from car travel and onto public transport.*

**Glen Sanderson, Northumberland County Council Leader**

*We're pleased with how the project is progressing, the stations will help people connect to places within the local region boosting the local economy.*

*We're also working closely with the local community, we've created nine new apprenticeships for local people and 53 full time equivalent local jobs and we continue to engage with over 1,600 local school students inspiring future career opportunities.*

**Pieter Esbach, Operations Director from Morgan Sindall Infrastructure**

You can follow the progress of the construction works through this newsletter and on the project website here:

[www.northumberlandline.uk/](http://www.northumberlandline.uk/)

# Progress update and look ahead

## Bedlington and West Sleekburn track renewal works

Throughout August, Network Rail has replaced approximately 500m of track in preparation for the return of the passenger service. This culminated in an eight day blockade with 24/7 work throughout.

The teams have worked around the clock to replace around 400m of track at Bedlington Station and 100m of track at West Sleekburn, through the Marchey's House level crossing.



Network Rail completing track renewal works

We do understand the level of noise and disruption that result from these works and the impacts on our lineside neighbours. We would like to thank everyone for your patience. The current phase of works is now complete at West Sleekburn and will be completed at Bedlington by 16 September.

## Bedlington Station designs

The Northumberland Line project welcomes the Strategic Planning Committee's decision to approve the demolition of the southern building at Bedlington Station. The building is in a poor structural state and its demolition allows the area on the corner of Station Street and Ravensworth Terrace to be turned into a much more welcoming station entrance for Bedlington Station, with easy access for all, improved landscaping opportunities and space for public art.

We have already had some great conversations with Network Rail and local

stakeholders on the restoration and renovation of the northern building on the site, and we're looking forward to creating a station environment that Bedlington will be proud of for a long time to come.

For more information about the proposed design, see <https://www.northumberlandline.uk/post/bedlington-station-design>.

## A trip along the Northumberland Line

On 2 August, project partners and stakeholders had a chance to see the progress of works along the line from two special trains that ran along most of the route.

Northern ran the trains from Newcastle to Morpeth via the new station sites at Northumberland Park, Seaton Delaval, Newsham, Blyth Bebside and Bedlington. Northern drivers are not yet trained to drive between Bedlington and Ashington.

Please play the videos below to hear from the driver of the special service, share the passenger experience, and the view from the driver's cab.



Interview with driver and VIP passengers



Journey along the Northumberland Line from the driver's cab

# Progress update and look ahead

## Ashington track works – Points Make Prizes!

During July, Network Rail and their contractors completed some major track works in the Ashington area.

As well as replacing track between the new station and Green Lane Level Crossing, a new set of points were installed so that trains can access the new station platform at Ashington and then change tracks to head back towards Newcastle.

The new points will make running passenger trains on the line possible, and it has been a huge investment in Ashington as part of the project to restore passenger trains to the Northumberland Line.

Hospital Level Crossing (the foot crossing between Roseneath Court & Darnley Road) has also now closed.



New track in place at Ashington



Track renewal works in progress in Ashington

## Great community work continues

There's been more great work in the community by our team during the past couple of months. Here are just a few highlights of what we have been up to.

- New 'station coming soon hoardings' in place at station sites
- The Dales School launched their repurposed Pacer train which has been transformed into a science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) classroom
- A residents' drop-in meeting was held in Bedlington ahead of track works
- Q&A with the Dukes School Rail Club in Ashington
- Work experience and mentoring for local schools in Ashington
- Two summer work placements for University of Northumbria students

## Supporting Northern Pride

Over the weekend of 22 and 23 July, the team from Morgan Sindall Infrastructure were proud to support the Northern Pride festival, which took place in Newcastle, sponsoring the Family and Youth Zone. Despite the (very!) wet weather, the event attracted over 15,000 participants.



Morgan Sindall Infrastructure team's stall at the Northern Pride 2023 event

# Progress update and look ahead

## Fundraising event to support The Lighthouse Charity

Our Northumberland Line project team came together recently to raise money for the Lighthouse Charity. This is the only charity with a focus on those working in the construction industry and it provides free emotional, physical, and financial wellbeing support for all in the construction community and their families.

Across the evening, the team raised over £2,110 for this very worthy cause and had fun playing rounders!

This event could not have happened without the generous support from our supply chain, who provided a number of prizes that were raffled off. Thanks go to Danny Sullivan's, London Rock, Lyreco, Potters, Forte Engineering, Airdroneans FC, VGC, Bespoke Concrete, Tribuild Solutions, Nixons, Hewitsons, Flannery, Hubway Plant, McCann, Selwood, Wingate Electrical, Marwoods, RSS Infrastructure, Pod-Trak, KGJ, Premier, Ground Control, GWS and Oliver Connell.

You can find out more information about the work of the Lighthouse Charity here <https://www.lighthouseclub.org/>.



Action shot from the Northumberland Line rounders tournament

*Throughout the summer works have really ramped up on the Northumberland Line and the most visible will have been the blockade and closure of level crossings to allow track works to be progressed at Bedlington and West Sleekburn. We have also seen a ramp up on stations and structures, with construction work starting at Blyth Bebside and work recommencing at Seaton Delaval. The landscape at Newsham also continues to change on a daily basis as the bridge abutments and embankments rise out of the ground. It is also great to see Ashington station nearing completion and I look forward to the team finishing up and the works moving on to Bedlington.*

*There's a real sense that we are gathering momentum and it is incredibly exciting to see all this work in preparation for passenger services returning to serve communities along the line. Of course, we always aim to minimise disruption and we recognise there are always things to be learned and improvements that can be implemented for future disruptive closures – thank you to everyone for their patience during these works.*

**Neil Blagburn, Northumberland Line Programme Director**

## Virtual tours: Behind the fence

Every month our stations contractor Morgan Sindall will be providing a 'behind the fence' look at each of their active sites. By using the QR codes below, you will be able to walk through the sites and see the progress being made, as well as learning how some of the work has been delivered and details of the machinery involved.

**[Newsham - 16.08.2023](#)**



**[Northumberland Park - 16.08.2023](#)**



**[Ashington - 16.08.2023](#)**



# Works by station location

## Palmersville Dairy Underpass

The construction works at Palmersville Dairy are now entering their final stage, following successful installation of the underpass to maintain the public right of way across the Northumberland Line.

## Northumberland Park

Northumberland Park will be the first stop for trains travelling from Newcastle.

Works to enable the start of mining remediation, which will ensure the voids left by historic mining are completely filled in, have now commenced. The mining remediation works are then expected to take between three and six months to complete.



Mining remediation works at the site of Northumberland Park Station

## Seaton Delaval

Seaton Delaval will be the second stop for trains travelling from Newcastle.

Work has now started to prepare the site for the construction of the new station. This work is due to be completed in Spring 2024. We look forward to sharing the progress of the construction works in future newsletters.

## Newsham

Newsham will be the third stop for trains travelling from Newcastle and construction of the station and platform are underway.

Construction work is now also underway for the new road bridge and roundabout off the A1061 South Newsham Road.

## Blyth Bebside

Blyth Bebside will be the fourth stop for trains travelling from Newcastle.

Works to enable the start of station construction began in late July. These works include de-vegetation for the new Heather Lea footpath and installing temporary four-way traffic lights on Front Street.

We look forward to sharing the progress of the station and footbridge construction works in future newsletters.



Artist's impression of Blyth Bebside Station and A189 footbridge

## Bedlington

Bedlington will be the fifth stop for trains travelling from Newcastle.

As reported previously, part of the old station platform has now been removed to allow new track to be laid through the station site. Once the track renewal is completed in September, station construction works will recommence.

## Ashington

Ashington will be the final stop for trains travelling from Newcastle.

Works at Ashington are now concentrating on completing the new car park and its access.

## Upcoming road closures

We understand how disruptive any road closures (either partial or full) can be for journeys. Unfortunately, they are needed on this project to allow the team to complete all the necessary works safely.

Where possible, we share information about road closures in advance to allow people to plan their journey. These will be shared via Northumberland County Council's social media channels, primarily on Twitter via **@N\_landCouncil**.

The following is a list of the road closures currently planned. Please note, these may be subject to change.

### **A186 (Rotary Road) southbound closures**

The southbound lane of the A186 (Rotary Road) and the adjacent footway is now closed until **March 2024**.

### **St Micheal's Avenue, New Hartley partial closure**

St Micheal's Avenue across New Hartley Level Crossing will have partial road closures in place on the following dates and times.

- From **7am to 5pm on Sunday 3 September**
- From **7am to 5pm on Monday 4 September**
- From **7am to 5pm on Tuesday 5 September**
- From **7am to 5pm on Wednesday 6 September**
- From **7am to 5pm on Thursday 7 September**

Access across the level crossing will be maintained throughout the works, although you may experience a short delay due to the need for temporary traffic lights.

## Bebside Level Crossing closure

Pedestrian and vehicular access across Bebside Level Crossing will be restricted on the following dates and times.

- From **10pm on Tuesday 19 September to 5.30am on Wednesday 20 September**.
- From **10pm on Thursday 28 September to 5.30am on Friday 29 September**.

## Marchey's House Level Crossing closure

Pedestrian and vehicular access across the Marchey's House Level Crossing at West Sleekburn will be restricted on the following dates and times.

- From **10pm on Wednesday 20 September to 5.30am on Thursday 21 September**.
- From **10pm on Thursday 21 September to 5.30am on Friday 22 September**.
- From **10pm on Monday 25 September to 5.30am on Tuesday 26 September**.

## Green Lane Level Crossing closure

Pedestrian and vehicular access across Green Lane Level Crossing in Ashington will be restricted from **10pm on Tuesday 26 September to 5.30am on Wednesday 27 September**.



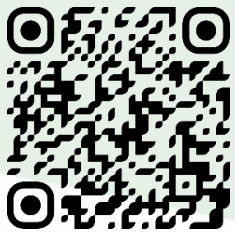
# Connect with us



Connect with us and keep updated online by signing up at [nland.cc/signup](http://nland.cc/signup). Alternatively, scan the QR code below to sign-up to receive the digital newsletter **monthly**.

Up to date information about the project will be included on the scheme website <http://www.northumberlandline.uk/>.

If you would like to get in touch with us to ask any questions, please use the details below and we will try to ensure the appropriate person responds to you as soon as possible.



# Keeping You Connected

Northumberland Line... Connecting Communities, Businesses and People



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