DURHAM MAGAZINE



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DIGITAL EDITION

August 2026

Compiled from stories published online in August 2026

DURHAM MAGAZINE

DIGITAL EDITION

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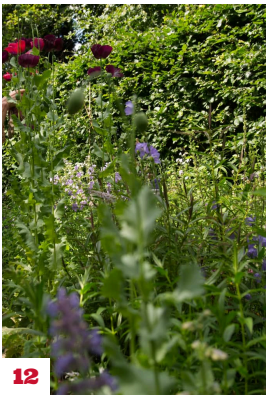





Every photo is numbered with its page. Spot a face, turn to the number.

On the cover: Moving On Durham Receives Funding for Young People's Garden Project, page 10. Photo supplied by Moving On Durham.

This is a look-back edition, put together in November 2026 from stories that appeared online in August 2026. Durham Magazine's first digital edition was published in November 2026.

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Photo supplied by Durham County Council, The Light

DURHAM

Treasured DLI Collection Items Prepared for Display in Durham

Treasured items that help share the stories of those who served in the Durham Light Infantry (DLI) are being prepared for display at a new cultural venue.

The Light, Durham City's latest tourist attraction, is set to open on Saturday 22 August, bringing together art, innovation and history in remarkable ways.

As well as three galleries dedicated to showcasing internationally significant contemporary art, the Durham County Council venue will include a permanent exhibition exploring what it means to belong to the DLI.

Entitled We Are The Durhams, the free exhibition will retain the building's military links, as the former home of the DLI Museum and Durham Art Gallery in Aykley Heads. It will tell the Regiment's story from its formation in 1758 to the final laying-up of the colours in 1968, and its modern successors, The Rifles.

But it is more than simply a military history. Through images, sounds, hands-on activities and rich sensory experiences, We Are The Durhams will reveal a deeply human story of identity, belonging and community. It will invite visitors to come face to face with the men behind the uniform and their families, and explore the objects that travelled with them and defined their lives.

With final preparations now underway to fit

out the gallery space, the council's deputy Armed Forces Champion Cllr Adrian Schulman and Colonel Ted Shields MBE, Chair of the Trustees of the Former DLI, visited The Light's sister venue, The Story, to see some of the items that will go on display.

The Story is home to the entire DLI Collection and Archive, and, over the last few months, the team has been busy preparing objects to go on display at The Light.

Cllr Schulman said:

"It's been fascinating to look at some of the objects that will feature in the new exhibition, and I can't wait to see them in place at The Light when it opens next month.

"The DLI is such an important part of County Durham's heritage, as well as being integral to the personal histories of so many of our residents. To have a spectacular new venue capable of showcasing this heritage in ways that have never been possible before is something we are incredibly proud of.

"Furthermore, the fact The Light will also stage major contemporary art exhibitions will attract even more people to the venue, helping us to share the DLI story with a wider audience."

Among the objects Cllr Schulman and Colonel Shields examined were a St Dunstans Badge, a Silver War Badge and wedding ring belonging to Private Tom Smith of Boldon Colliery; and a set of medals awarded to Sir Thomas Bradford, the eldest of the Fighting Bradfords, believed to be the most decorated family of the First World War.

They also got up close to a miniature copy of the monument dedicated to the 2nd Battalion DLI at Kohima; and body armour worn by Lieutenant Colonel Nick Kitson while commanding 3rd Battalion The Rifles in Afghanistan in 2009 and 2010.

Colonel Shields said:

"'For all of us who hold a special place in our hearts for County Durham and the DLI, The Light will be a must-visit destination. It's set to blaze new trails in the culture and heritage sector in the North East and across the UK, and will play an important part in showcasing Britain's Armed Forces' heritage.

"We are incredibly proud to have a permanent DLI gallery at The Light. We Are The Durhams will inform and inspire today's generation, help us to reconnect with our past, to understand what our forebears endured and overcame, while standing in testament to what can be achieved even in the darkest of days. I pay tribute to the vision and determination of all involved in making this all happen."

When it opens in less than one month's time, The Light will become a place where art, innovation and history meet. In addition to the cultural offer, it will include dedicated areas for educational and community activities, a café with an outdoor terrace overlooking beautiful grounds and flexible spaces for meetings and events.

The existing 1960s building has been sensitively remodelled and extended to create a modern and spacious venue capable of hosting world-class exhibitions.

Victory Over the Sun: Encounters with Light will launch the ambitious programme, bringing together groundbreaking works by artists who use light in extraordinary ways, including Tracey Emin, Dan Flavin, Olafur Eliasson, and Chila Burman.

By Durham Magazine Online 3 August 2026

Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/treasured-dli-collection-items-prepared-for-display-in-durham**

Durham's New Cultural Venue Opens with Family Activities and Major Exhibitions



6

Opening weekend celebrations, summer holiday workshops, exhibitions and live performances will mark the launch of The Light, Durham City's newest destination for culture, creativity and community.

The Durham County Council venue opens its doors on Saturday 22 August, with a vibrant programme of activities people of all ages will enjoy across the weekend and the remainder of the school holidays.

Inspired by The Light's inaugural exhibitions, We Are The Durhams: The Durham Light Infantry Exhibition and Victory Over the Sun: Encounters with Light, the activities will provide a taster of the venue's autumn/winter programme which will be announced next month.

From circus performers and brass bands to artist workshops, immersive installations, family activities and monthly-late night events, the Aykley Heads attraction will be a place to discover, create, connect and be inspired.

The opening weekend celebrations will begin on Saturday 22 August. As well as being among the first to view The Light's exhibitions, visitors can relax with a picnic blanket or deckchair in the grounds and enjoy a programme of live performances.

Pittington Brass Band will perform a series of outdoor sets on the Saturday, while The Cequin Circus will bring the grounds to life with stilt walkers, disco-ball-headed dancers, and a spectacular choreographed fire-spinning performance.

By Barbara Parker Online 14 August 2026

Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/durhams-new-cultural-venue-opens-with-family-activities-and-major-exhibitions**

First Durham Jazz Festival Performances Near Capacity as Excitement Builds



7

Durham Jazz Festival is seeing strong demand ahead of its inaugural event this October, with its first show now sold out and several other performances nearing capacity.

Newcastle jazz band Knats became the first act to sell out after the announcement of their 2026 Mercury Prize nomination, adding to growing excitement around the three-day festival, which takes place across Durham City from Friday 23 to Sunday 25 October.

Knats are among 12 artists shortlisted for the prestigious award, with their album A Great Day In Newcastle competing alongside releases from major names including Olivia Dean, Paul McCartney and RAYE.

Following widespread coverage of the nomination, tickets for the band's Durham Jazz Festival appearance at Fabio's Bar on Saturday 24 October sold out. The performance comes just two days after the Mercury Prize winner is announced at Newcastle's Utilita Arena.

With other festival shows now also selling fast, organisers John Lyons, Alan Patrickson and Richard Turner, are encouraging audiences to book early for the performances they don't want to miss. Emma Fisk's Hot Club du Nord show celebrating the music of Stéphane Grappelli and Django Reinhardt on Friday lunchtime is also now sold out.

"The response to our first Durham Jazz Festival has been fantastic. Seeing Knats sell out following their Mercury Prize nomination is a real milestone, and we're now seeing several other shows getting close to capacity," said Mr Patrickson.

By Barbara Parker Online 30 August 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/first-durham-jazz-festival-performances-near-capacity-as-excitement-builds**

DURHAM

Ushaw Tea Dances Help Older People Connect Through Music and Movement



8

Older people in North West Durham are stepping back in time on the dance-floor, thanks to a new series of tea dances at one of the county's landmark cultural venues.

Ushaw Historic House, Chapels & Gardens has launched monthly sessions in its refectory, giving around 40 local people aged 65 and over the chance to enjoy traditional entertainment, music and social time with others.

And to help ensure everyone who wants to attend can get there, a free shuttle bus service has been set up to take dancers living in local villages to and from the venue.

Online 12 August 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/ushaw-tea-dances-help-older-people-connect-through-music-and-movement**

DURHAM

Pet Shop Boys' Neil Tennant Leads Durham Book Festival 2026 Line-up



8

Pet Shop Boys singer Neil Tennant, actor Christopher Eccleston and bestselling authors including Susanna Clarke and Lucy Foley are among the names announced for Durham Book Festival 2026.

The festival will return from 9 to 11 October, with most events taking place at Gala Durham and additional activity planned across County Durham libraries.

Organised by Durham County Council and produced by New Writing North, this year's programme will include literature, poetry, politics, history and music, alongside events linked to the 2026 National Year of Reading.

By Barbara Parker Online 13 August 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/pet-shop-boys-neil-tennant-leads-durham-book-festival-2026-line-up**

DURHAM

Bishop Auckland Events Programme Offers Family Fun Throughout the Year



Photo supplied by Hawkey PR for Bishop Auckland Town Council

The council's programme of support continues throughout the year, with a wide range of free, family-friendly events offering something for everyone.

Behind the scenes, the council's office team works hard to develop and coordinate community-focused ideas that help bring the programme to life.

Until Saturday 30 August, families can enjoy the Enchanted Bishop Auckland Trail, a free activity that takes visitors around the town in search of enchanting brick-built characters. Participants can solve clues along the way, with prizes up for grabs.

Online 25 August 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/bishop-auckland-events-programme-offers-family-fun-throughout-the-year**

DURHAM

County Durham and Darlington NHS Trust Receives Sophie's Legacy Recognition



A 10-year-old girl's wish to make hospital stays better for other children and families is being brought to life in the North East, as a local NHS Trust becomes the first organisation in the region to receive Sophie's Legacy Approved Hospital recognition.

Sophie Fairall spent much of her final year in hospital undergoing treatment for a rare childhood cancer. Before she died in September 2021, aged just 10, Sophie identified three things she wanted to change for other children and their families: better food for children in hospital, meals for parents staying alongside their child and access to Play Specialists seven days a week.

By Barbara Parker Online 24 August 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/county-durham-and-darlington-nhs-trust-receives-sophies-legacy-recognition**

In brief



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DURHAM

Construction Students Gain First-Hand Insight into Building-Site Careers

Thirteen sixth-form students with special educational needs have gained first-hand experience of construction careers during a visit to a live building site at Lambton Park.

Online 1 August 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/construction-students-gain-first-hand-insight-into-building-site-careers**



10

Photo supplied by Moving On Durham

DURHAM

Moving On Durham Receives Funding for Young People's Garden Project

A long-standing North East homelessness charity will be able to create new outdoor opportunities for young people, thanks to funding from a regional employer.

Online 2 August 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/moving-on-durham-receives-funding-for-young-peoples-garden-project**



10

DURHAM

County Durham Lunch Club to Offer More Trips and Activities

Older people in a rural County Durham village will have more opportunities to enjoy day trips, free activities and social events thanks to a £3,500 donation from EMG Solicitors.

By Barbara Parker Online 19 August 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/county-durham-lunch-club-to-offer-more-trips-and-activities**



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DURHAM

Where Light Meets Stone by Dan Saunders

I've lived in County Durham for years, and like a lot of people, Durham Cathedral has always just been… there. It's a place I've visited countless times, but I don't think I truly appreciated it until I started photographing it.

By Barbara Parker Online 7 August 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/where-light-meets-stone-by-dan-saunders**

In brief



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DURHAM

Darlington and Durham Discharge Lounges Support Patients Heading Home

A North East hospital trust has marked its first Love Your Lounge Month, a campaign held throughout August to raise awareness of the important role discharge lounges play in supporting patients who are ready to leave hospital.

Online 27 August 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/darlington-and-durham-discharge-lounges-support-patients-heading-home**



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DURHAM

County Durham Dad Runs Great North Run for Sick Children's Trust

A County Durham dad is preparing to take on this year's Great North Run in support of The Sick Children's Trust, the charity that helped his family stay together while his baby son fought for his life in hospital.

By Barbara Parker Online 7 August 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/county-durham-dad-runs-great-north-run-for-sick-childrens-trust**



11

NEWCASTLE

Great North Air Ambulance Launches SOS Raffle for Helicopter Fleet

The Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAS) is offering supporters the chance to win a £10,000 top prize in its annual raffle, while raising vital funds for its life-saving work across the North of England and the Isle of Man.

By Sara Janiszewska Online 3 August 2026
Continued at **newcastlemagazine.com/great-north-air-ambulance-launches-sos-raffle-for-helicopter-fleet**



11

NEWCASTLE

Sketch for Sammy 2026 Launches Search for North East Comedy Writers

The search is underway for the North East's next comedy writing talent, as the Sunday for Sammy Trust launches its popular Sketch for Sammy 2026 competition and the Clement & La Frenais Award for Best Sketch.

By Sara Janiszewska Online 11 August 2026
Continued at **newcastlemagazine.com/sketch-for-sammy-2026-launches-search-for-north-east-comedy-writers**

In brief



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NEWCASTLE

Newcastle Cathedral Café Marks Five Years After Supporting 64 Prison Leavers Into Work and Volunteering

A Newcastle Cathedral café created to help people rebuild their lives after involvement with the criminal justice system is marking its fifth anniversary after supporting 64 prison leavers into employment and volunteering.

By Callum Fraser Online 14 August 2026
Continued at **newcastlemagazine.com/newcastle-cathedral-cafe-marks-five-years-after-supporting-64-prison-leavers-into-work-and-volunteering**



12

CONSETT

Inside Roz and Chris's Hidden Garden

Thirty years ago, Roz and Chris transformed a concrete parking yard and field on the outskirts of Lanchester into the beautiful garden it is today.

Words and photographs by Chris Bruce, Communities in Focus Online 7 August 2026
Continued at **consettmagazine.com/inside-roz-and-chriss-hidden-garden**



12

CONSETT

A Century of Faith and Community at All Saints Church

From humble beginnings as Lanchester's "Tin Church" in 1901 to the beautiful building that stands today, All Saints Church has been at the heart of the community for more than a century.

Words and photographs by George Ledger, Communities in Focus Online 5 August 2026
Continued at **consettmagazine.com/a-century-of-faith-and-community-at-all-saints-church**



12

Photo: Mark Wilkinson, Communities in Focus

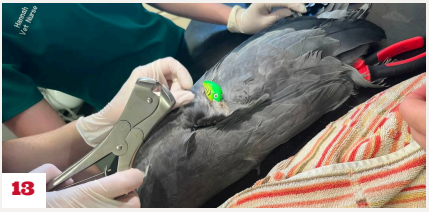
CONSETT

Communities in Focus Exhibition Opens at Willow Burn Hospice Gardens

Our summer exhibition at Willow Burn Hospice Gardens is now open, following a successful launch on Thursday, 2 July.

By Consett Magazine Online 3 August 2026
Continued at **consettmagazine.com/communities-in-focus-exhibition-willow-burn-hospice-gardens**

In brief



CONSETT

Young Heron Rescued After Becoming Trapped in Discarded Fishing Line

A young heron has been rescued after becoming badly entangled in discarded fishing line, prompting a warning about the danger abandoned fishing tackle can pose to wildlife.

By Consett Magazine Online 14 August 2026
Continued at **consettmagazine.com/young-heron-rescued-after-becoming-trapped-in-discarded-fishing-line**



SUNDERLAND

Sunderland Prepares for Back-to-Back Weekends of Music at Keel Square

Sunderland's Keel Square is set to become the ultimate party destination this month, with two back-to-back weekends of live music offering something for everyone.

By Albert Nelson Online 18 August 2026
Continued at **sunderlandmagazine.com/sunderland-prepares-for-back-to-back-weekends-of-music-at-keel-square**



SUNDERLAND

Washington Village Welcomes Britain in Bloom Judges

A dedicated team of volunteers has welcomed the RHS Britain in Bloom judges to Washington Village, as the community represents the region in this year's national competition.

By Sunderland Magazine Online 4 August 2026
Continued at **sunderlandmagazine.com/washington-village-welcomes-britain-in-bloom-judges**



DARLINGTON

Darlington Runner Builds 2,100-Strong Running Community From Scratch

A Darlington runner has turned his own return to running into a growing online community, with First Mile Club now connecting hundreds of runners through TikTok, Strava and WhatsApp.

By Daniel Blair Online 17 August 2026
Continued at **darlingtonmagazine.com/darlington-runner-builds-2100-strong-running-community-from-scratch**

In brief



STANLEY

Stanley Author Hopes to Inspire Local Readers After Publishing Fourth Book

After turning more than 25 years of experience as a holistic practitioner into books for adults and children, Stanley resident Nicola P Foster is hoping to share her writing journey with local schools

By Nicola Foster Online 31 August 2026
Continued at **stanleymagazine.com/stanley-author-hopes-to-inspire-local-readers-after-publishing-fourth-book**

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