

Photos of the month



Students from Gateshead College on one of the Special Services



Aerial view of the works taking place at Newsham station

Welcome to the October 2022 edition of the Northumberland Line newsletter. The aim of this is to give an overview of upcoming site work, as well as letting you know about key project milestones.

This edition includes information on recent Special Services on the line and the latest information about the recruitment and training of drivers for the Northumberland Line trains.

It also includes an update on the works underway at each of the station locations, including links to virtual walkthroughs of the currently active sites.

If you wish to receive future editions of this newsletter straight into your email inbox, sign up at nland.cc/signup or use the QR code below.



Alternatively, if you would prefer to have a paper copy delivered to your doorstep, please let us know by calling **0345 600 6400** or emailing rail@northumberland.gov.uk.

What is the Northumberland Line?



The Northumberland Line will bring passenger trains back into service between Ashington and Newcastle. It will provide six new stations at Ashington, Blyth Bebside, Bedlington, Newsham, Seaton Delaval and Northumberland Park, with journeys between Newcastle and Ashington taking about 35 minutes with no need to change trains. Trains will run around half-hourly. 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

Recent project highlights

Newsham works

At the end of Summer, Northumberland Line stations contractor Morgan Sindall completed the demolition of Arden House, which was located south of South Newsham Road (A1061). The building was removed to make space for the new station and car park.

The main site compound has now been completed at the Newsham Station site. Site cabins have been installed, for the team to use as office spaces and welfare. Additional smaller satellite temporary compounds will be located elsewhere along the route, as and when required.



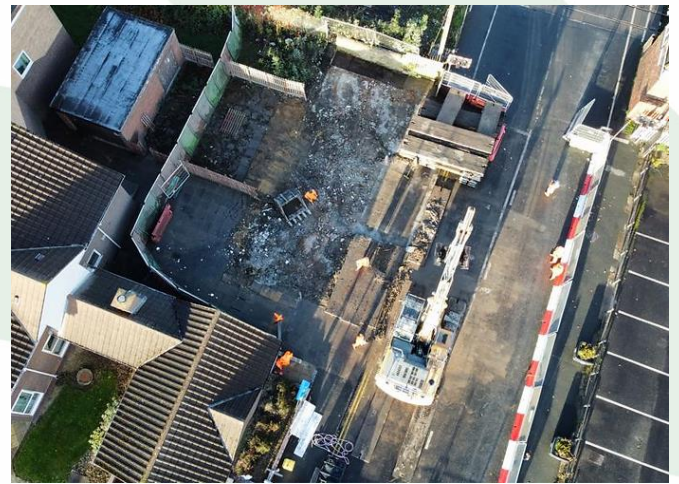
Site cabins at Newsham Station compound

Bedlington works

The former Boots building in Bedlington has been demolished to allow for works associated with the new station. Over the course of two weekends in October, Morgan Sindall carefully managed the demolition of the structure. This involved using a large mechanical excavator, with the structure carefully reduced to the ground and all demolition material removed from the site.



The former Boots building, before demolition



Aerial view of the site after demolition

Bridge upgrade works

Contractors AmcoGiffen have completed the works to repair and upgrade two underpasses in the Backworth area. These new structures will provide safe pedestrian routes underneath the railway lines, which will be much busier once Northumberland Line services begin.



Underpass during the works

Recent project highlights

Ashington works

Morgan Sindall have reconfigured Wansbeck Square car park in preparation for works starting on Ashington Station.

Throughout the construction works, although Wansbeck Square car park will be set out differently, **public car parking will remain available in marked bays** with vehicle and pedestrian access maintained throughout. Recycling facilities have also been relocated in the current car park.

To maintain safe pedestrian access to Wansbeck Square from Kenilworth Road the team have created a temporary footpath that will run in parallel to the car park entrance. Signs have been placed to help users find their way. The existing footpath has now been closed for the length of the works.

A drop-in event at Ashington will take place in the next couple of months, and further details will be included in the next edition of this newsletter.



Location of temporary footpath

Bedlington showcase events

On Friday 4 November (between 13:30 and 16:00) and Saturday 5 November (between 9:30 and 12:30) drop-ins will be held at East Bedlington Station, where you can find out more about future plans in Bedlington, including:

- the Borderlands Place Programme,
- local walking and cycling schemes,
- the Northumberland Line,
- Bedlington Libraries trial bicycle library,
- town centre developments,
- local business support and
- community policing.

Restoring Your Railway

Restoring Your Railway is a £500 million fund supporting the development and delivery of rail lines and stations in England and Wales, levelling up the country by connecting people and communities. The Northumberland Line between Ashington and Newcastle has benefitted from this policy and is one of 20 projects that is now in design or construction.

The overall aim of the Restoring Your Railways is reconnecting communities to enable economic growth and access to education and leisure opportunities via safer and greener rail transport.

#RestoringYourRailway



#LevellingUp

Progress update and look ahead

Contributing to communities – Special Services

In September, two Special Services ran on the Northumberland Line. The services took people along the route of the Northumberland Line, starting at Newcastle Central Station and travelling north up to Bedlington, before returning to Newcastle.

The Specials provided the opportunity for business leaders from Cobalt Business Park, residents and local schools, including Hilcrest Sixth Form and Gateshead Rail Academy, to see the station sites and work happening on site from lineside.

The feedback from those who attended was positive and many were looking forward to the first passenger services operating.



Click here to see the [video produced by Northumberland County Council of a September Special Service](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NAnNTToAt5FY) or search <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NAnNTToAt5FY>

Northern are now starting to plan a 'Santa Special' on the line, with a view to involving more children from the local area. Santa Claus is coming to town!

Northern Rail recruitment and training: Update

All 20 drivers required to operate Northumberland Line services have now been recruited by Northern and are going through the relevant training. Some of the earlier trainees have now had their initial passing out and driving services ahead of gaining their full driver competencies.



Northern Train on the Northumberland Line

A Driver Team Manager (DTM) and a Conductor Team Manager (CTM) have now also been appointed and are undergoing the relevant training. Both have been recruited due to the additional workloads that come with the increase in drivers and conductors needed to operate the services on the line. The CTM will eventually be based at the new Conductor Depot proposed for Ashington.

The DTM team at Northern are starting a series of route learning exercises for the section of the line between Bedlington and Ashington. Due to the infrastructure on this section of track, Northern have not been able to operate services on this section. DTMs will board GB Rail Freight services to get initial route knowledge on this section, and this started earlier this month. This forms part of the wider driver route learning programme that will ramp up nearer to Entry into Service.

Northumberland Park

Surveys and ground investigation works are due to begin in November 2022 at the site of the Northumberland Park location. These works are necessary in order to better understand the make-up of the ground in this location, which will in turn assist in finalising the construction methodology for the station.

The site of the new Northumberland Park Station is a location of former mining works, and investigations are needed to confirm if the former workings require grouting (filling).

Seaton Delaval

The site of Seaton Delaval station is also one of the locations where grouting is needed to fill in former mine workings and to make the ground stable. These works started in late summer and are expected to continue into November 2022.

In addition to the grouting works, excavations and construction works for the new station platform have started at Seaton Delaval. The team are currently working seven days a week, and this will continue until the end of December. This work must include weekends as sometimes it requires the railway to be closed for safety reasons, and to minimise disruption to freight train services.

Newsham

Following the demolition of Arden House to create space for the new station and car park, works have continued to prepare the site for the construction of the station.

Works have also commenced on the east and west compounds at Newsham Station, including fence installation, site access, site welfare and piling mat installation.

Works to construct the station will commence in early 2023, and more details will be shared in due course.

Works are also currently underway to repair and upgrade an underpass between Seaton Delaval and Newsham, near Lysdon Farm. This work is due to be completed in early December.



Underpass works being completed between Seaton Delaval and Newsham

Blyth Bebside

Preliminary work at Blyth Bebside station has included clearing the land of vegetation ahead of the construction. Work to construct the station is due to start in 2023, and more details will be shared in due course.

This site is another where grouting may be needed to fill in former mine workings and to make the ground stable.

Works by station location

Bedlington

Works have now started to prepare the site for the construction of Bedlington Station, with the demolition of the former Boots building.

The next phase of activity in this location is exploratory works relating to the historic mining works in the area, to confirm the need for grouting (filling).

To the south of the Bedlington station site, construction works to reinstate the disused railway sidings at Furnace Way have started. The works included the removal of existing vegetation, waste materials and trees in the temporary compound area. Surveys were also completed to record the topography of the area and to identify existing buried cables and utilities.

Contractors working for Network Rail are now installing the new track into the sidings. This work will continue until the end of November 2022.

Ashington

Works are taking place alongside the railway adjacent to Wansbeck Square car park in preparation for construction of the new Ashington Station, including constructing a temporary access road, putting up site fencing, and setting up a site compound.

In early October 2022, works to demolish the old station platform and walls began and they are expected to be complete at the end of November 2022. This work requires weekend working to minimise the disruption to the freight train services.

Virtual tour

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 station sites and see the progress made, as well as learning how some of the work has been delivered and details of the machinery involved. All images provided were taken by fully competent and trained individuals, working to and fully compliant with the safety guidance for each location.

Take our tours below.

[Ashington - 08.10.2022](#)



[Bedlington - 15.10.2022](#)



[Newsham - 17.10.2022](#)



[Seaton Delaval - 17.10.2022](#)



Upcoming road closures

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 [@NlandCouncil](https://twitter.com/NlandCouncil).

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

St Michael's Avenue, New Hartley (Hartley Level Crossing)

Full road closures will take place on the following dates.

- 6am on Monday 31 October to 6am on Tuesday 1 November.
- Midnight on Saturday 12 November to 5am on Monday 14 November.
- 8pm on Monday 28 November to 5.40am on Tuesday 29 November.
- 8pm on Tuesday 29 November to 5.40am on Wednesday 30 November.
- 8pm on Wednesday 30 November to 5.40am on Thursday 1 December.
- Midnight on Friday 2 December to 5.40am on Monday 5 December.
- 9pm on Thursday 8 December to 5am on Friday 9 December.

Melrose Court, Bedlington (Furnace Way Sidings)

Partial road closures between the hours of 5am and 8am will continue to take place on the following dates.

- Monday 31 October.
- Friday 4 November.
- Monday 14 November.
- Friday 18 November.

Astley Road, New Hartley

Partial road closures will take place on Astley Road by the Hastings Pub on the following dates.

- 9pm on Monday 31 October to 5am on Tuesday 1 December.
- 9pm on Thursday 10 November to 5am on Friday 11 November.
- 9pm on Monday 14 November to 5am on Tuesday 15 November.
- 9pm on Thursday 17 November to 5am on Friday 18 November.

Connect with us



Connect with us and keep updated online by signing up at 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 www.northumberland.gov.uk/line.

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

