



Welcome to the first newsletter from the Darlington **UNITY** group.

The UNITY group is made up of representatives from cultural associations, community leaders and others with an interest in improving **community cohesion** in Darlington. Representatives from Durham Police and Darlington Borough Council also attend so they can keep the group informed about their work.

What is **community cohesion**? At a very basic level it's about us all living alongside each other, understanding each other and having a 'live and let live' attitude. At a deeper level it's about us all reducing the tensions that sometimes arise between communities and everyone being able to be who they want to be and reach their potential – equality of opportunity!

The UNITY group wants to spread their message beyond just the group to give everyone in Darlington a chance to find out about what events might be happening and give YOU a chance to put forward ideas. We want you to read about what we are doing, but more importantly we want YOU to tell us what YOU think we should be doing.

If you represent a group or community, we'd also like you to consider joining our group to ensure their collective voice is heard.

If you have any questions about this newsletter or want to find

out more about **UNITY** please contact –



Andrew Allison on 07384 797779



or e-mail Benjamin Scott - darlingtonunity@durham.police.uk

Enjoy reading the newsletter and keep a look out for the next one!



TOP TIP – click on the **Title** of each topic to see the rest of the story.

[Afghan Families](#)

Darlington is preparing to welcome four families displaced as a result of the conflict in Afghanistan. The UNITY group agreed to extend a warm welcome to them and offer assistance in any way they could. It was recognised that there are some in the town who will not be happy about this news, but it was the role of the UNITY group and others to ensure that it is support and friendship that wins the day, not mistrust and hatred.



[Darlington PRIDE 2021](#)

After a low key 2020 PRIDE, this year it was back, and it was bigger and better! A great range of entertainment on stage and plenty of stalls in the marketplace on the Saturday; a chilled-out picnic in the park on Sunday; a fun filled evening in the bars and clubs on Monday night.



[National Hate Crime Awareness Week \(HCAW\) – 9th to 16th October 2021](#)



Durham Police and Darlington Borough Council are organising a week-long series of online events focussing on HATE CRIME. Monday will see keynote speakers 'launch' the event and then each subsequent day will offer an opportunity for professionals and key members of our communities to learn about: reporting a hate crime and the police response; how a hate crime case is handled by the Crown Prosecution Service; what support is available to victims of hate incidents and crimes. On Friday there will be a 'summary of the week' and a chance to ask questions to a panel of subject experts. Members of the UNITY group will be involved in the planning of the event and many will be attending each days' events.

There will also be a couple of announcements made during the week which should help demonstrate that things are moving forward and fighting HATE in Darlington is still a priority, especially for the UNITY group.

AFGHAN FAMILIES

Darlington is preparing to welcome four families displaced as a result of the conflict in Afghanistan. The UNITY group agreed to extend a warm welcome to them and offer assistance in any way they could. It was recognised that there are some in the town who will not be happy about this news, but it was the role of the UNITY group and others to ensure that it is support and friendship that wins the day, not mistrust and hatred.



Cabinet members in Darlington Borough Council agreed a support package at the beginning of September and the council continues to work with central government and the North East Migration Partnership to ensure what is in place is suitable and in line with regional partners. Families will need to quarantine for the appropriate period of time after which they will be able to access support. It is expected that families will arrive by the end of September.



For information about the families arriving in Darlington –

<https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/19564101.four-afghan-families-rehomed-darlington-council/>

For info about Darlington people helping the families -

<https://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/19528563.darlington-pub-old-english-gentleman-hub-afghan-donations/>

Who are the TALIBAN - information at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-11451718>

What is the crisis in Afghanistan? - information at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-58542451>

[Click here to return to menu](#)

Darlington PRIDE 2021

After a low key 2020 PRIDE, this year it was back, and it was bigger and better! A great range of entertainment on stage and plenty of stalls in the marketplace on the Saturday; a chilled-out picnic in the park on Sunday; a fun filled evening in the bars and clubs on Monday night.



After a long wait it was time for people to let their hair down, or put their hair up, or wear a wig – it was PRIDE 2021.

Saturday – a fantastic crowd watched a variety of entertainment on the stage, as well as passionate speeches from some key guests. There was support from County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service – now that's an amazing fire engine!



The Police were there with a stall offering advice and also just walking about chatting to people – flags to the fore!



The celebrations moved down to South Park on the Sunday. The weather didn't look too promising at first but it turned out to be a great day. There were entertainers roaming about keeping the kids busy and South Park Bowls Club were open for business, encouraging people to get involved, try bowls and showing that it is a sport everyone can enjoy. If you want to check out how they are changing bowls in Darlington check out their facebook site and website –

<https://www.facebook.com/southparkbowls/>

<https://southparkbowls.wordpress.com/>

Monday night the action was in the Imperial Quarter and the town centre bars for the 'adult only' part of the weekend.



For more on this story – www.facebook.com/Darloprideweekender/

Want to find out what's happening on 'Darlington Gay Night' - <https://www.facebook.com/darlogaynight/>

ARCUS is a counselling and social support service based in Darlington, primarily developed for LGBTQ+ people, but their services are open to ANYONE!



01325 97 88 10



contact@arcuslgbt.com

There is information, guidance and loads of LGBTQ+ resources on the **STONEWALL** website –

About us

At Stonewall, we stand for lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace (LGBTQ+) people everywhere. We imagine a world where all LGBTQ+ people are free to be ourselves and can live our lives to the full.

<https://www.stonewall.org.uk/>



[Click here to return to menu](#)

National Hate Crime Awareness Week (HCAW)

9th to 16th October 2021

Durham Police and Darlington Borough Council are organising a week-long series of online events focussing on HATE CRIME. Monday will see keynote speakers 'launch' the event and then each subsequent day will offer an opportunity for professionals and key members of our communities to learn about: reporting a hate crime and the police response; how a hate crime case is handled by the Crown Prosecution Service; what support is available to victims of hate incidents and crimes. On Friday there will be a 'summary of the week' and a chance to ask questions to a panel of subject experts. Members of the UNITY group will be involved in the planning of the event and many will be attending each days' events.

There will also be a couple of announcements made during the week which should help demonstrate that things are moving forward and fighting HATE in Darlington is still a priority, especially for the UNITY group.

We are making efforts every day to stop hate crime in Darlington, but NHCAW provides an opportunity to focus on hate crime and raise its profile in the press, social media and in the eyes of organisations who perhaps don't deal with hate crime issues that often.

One of the key issues is the high number of incidents that don't get reported. This means that the Police, Darlington Borough Council and others don't get a true picture of the problem in our area. It is vital to our fight against hate that we increase the number of incidents that are reported to the police. When crimes are reported we are able to start to identify potential offenders, 'hot spot' locations, the types of attack (verbal abuse, physical assault, online abuse, etc.) and the target of the attacks – disabled people, Muslim community, etc.

Even if a person reports an attack but does not give their name, the description of the attacker, where it happened, type of attack and the target of the attack can all provide the police with useful information that might help them identify the perpetrator and possibly stop attacks on others.

More information about HCAW 2021 - <https://www.stophateuk.org/hate-crime-awareness-week/>

Information on Hate Crime from Durham Police - <https://www.durham.police.uk/Report-It/Hate-crime/Hate-Crime.aspx>

Did you know? You don't have to report a hate crime directly to the police.

You can report through the True Vision website - <https://www.report-it.org.uk/>



If someone is convicted of a crime and it is proved it was motivated by hate then the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) can apply to the courts for a 'sentence uplift'. This is an increased punishment for the crime and **more than half** of the CPS requests for uplifts last year led to offenders having their sentence increased **because it was motivated by hate**.

Information about HATE CRIME and the CPS - <https://www.cps.gov.uk/crime-info/hate-crime>

[Click here to return to menu](#)