SUNDERLAND MAGAZINE



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DIGITAL EDITION

October 2026

Compiled from stories published online in October 2026

SUNDERLAND MAGAZINE

DIGITAL EDITION

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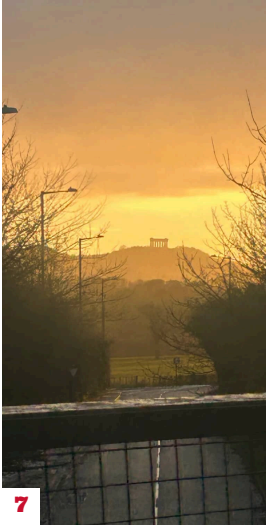
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Every photo is numbered with its page. Spot a face, turn to the number.

On the cover: Sunderland City Council Secures £2.65m Former College Campus to Expand SEND Provision, page 10. Photo supplied by Sunderland City Council.

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

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Your turn

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SUNDERLAND

Nominations Open for Sunderland Young Achievers' Awards 2027 to Celebrate Inspiring Local Youth

Nominations are officially open for the Sunderland Young Achievers' Awards 2027, inviting the city to celebrate and highlight its most inspiring young people.

Organised by Together for Children, the annual awards celebrate the remarkable achievements of children and young people who are making a positive difference in their communities, overcoming challenges, showing exceptional talent, or helping to shape a better future for the city.

People across Sunderland are now being encouraged to nominate individuals and groups aged 8-18 or aged up to 25 for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), who they think deserve recognition for their achievements.

The awards feature 11 categories recognising achievements across areas including learning, sport, arts and culture, caring, personal growth, mental health and community involvement.

Nominations close on Friday 18 December, with the awards ceremony taking place at the Fire Station on Friday 16 April 2027.

Sunderland City Council's Cabinet Member for

Children's Services, Education and Social Mobility, Councillor Carol Giles, said:

The Sunderland Young Achievers' Awards shine a spotlight on some of the incredible things young people are doing in Sunderland. These awards are about celebrating not only talent and achievement, but also qualities like kindness, resilience, determination and willingness to help others.

This is our opportunity to recognise and celebrate our exceptional young people, and I would encourage anyone who knows an individual or group doing something remarkable to put their name forward, being nominated can be a real confidence boost and show young people just how much their achievements are valued.

The Sunderland Young Achievers' Awards have been celebrating the achievements of young people in the city for more than 30 years, with thousands of children and young people recognised since the awards were first launched in 1993.

Sandhill View Deaf Resource Group was crowned Overall Winner at the 2026 awards after impressing judges with its inspirational work to champion deaf culture, British Sign Language and greater inclusion. With confidence, commitment and pride in their deaf identity, the young people became strong advocates for inclusion and accessibility within their school and wider community. Judges praised the group and described them as "thoughtful, courageous and inspiring young ambassadors".

Pupils from The from The Sandhill View Deaf Resources Group said: “We were very happy and excited to win this award, it did not feel real. Going out to deaf events and meeting other deaf people makes us feel excited to be part of the deaf community and has helped us to develop our deaf identity.”

Other winners celebrated in 2026 included Youth Voice Award winner Daisy May Knight, who established a bereavement support group for children following the loss of her brother; Music Award winner Oliver Hughes, who used his passion for drumming to help navigate family challenges; and Young Health and Wellbeing Champion Lola Mae Stephenson, who has raised thousands of pounds and spent countless hours supporting various individuals and charities.

Simon Marshall, Chief Executive of Together for Children and the city's Director of Children's Services, said:

The Sunderland Young Achievers' Awards is always the most special event of the year. It's a real privilege to hear about everything our young people are doing across the city and to bring so many of those incredible stories together for a night filled with celebration, entertainment, fun and pride.

Every nomination tells a story of commitment, courage, determination or compassion. Whether it's a young person supporting others, excelling in education, championing inclusion, caring for a family member or making a positive contribution to their community, these awards recognise achievements that deserve to be celebrated.

The stories of last year's winners demonstrated the remarkable impact young people can have on the lives of others, and I know there are many more inspiring stories waiting to be told, so I would encourage everyone to take a few minutes to nominate a young person or group who deserves recognition.

By Albert Nelson Online 9 October 2026
Continued at **sunderlandmagazine.com/nominations-open-for-sunderland-young-achievers-awards-2027-to-celebrate-inspiring-local-youth**

Major Events Programme Delivers £11.7 Million Boost for Sunderland



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Sunderland's One Big Summer programme has officially come to a close, following months of entertainment, culture and community celebrations that brought more than 400,000 residents and visitors together across the city.

From outdoor cinema screenings and live music performances to family activities and community events, One Big Summer transformed Sunderland's parks and public spaces into vibrant destinations, showcasing the city as a place to visit, explore and enjoy.

The programme began in spectacular style with BBC Radio 1's flagship festival, the Big Weekend at Herrington Country Park in May. Almost 100,000 music fans attended the three-day festival enjoying performances from more than 100 of the world's leading artists, including Fatboy Slim, Zara Larsson and Olivia Dean.

Sunderland City Council worked alongside the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority to ensure that the Big Weekend was one of the major events of the summer and a fantastic experience for everyone attending.

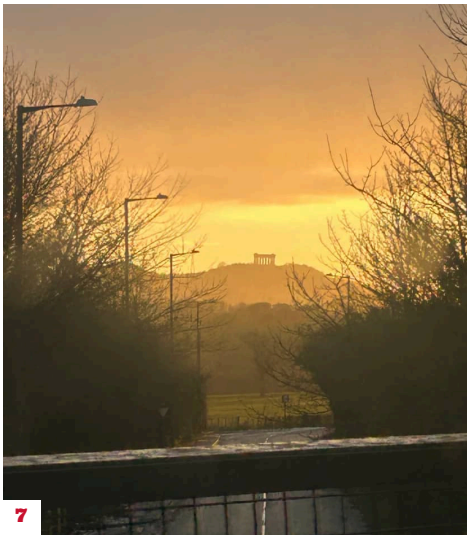
The event generated an estimated £4million in economic benefit, attracted more than 70,000 visitors to Sunderland and delivered national and international exposure for the city, achieving more than 96 million global social media views and generating 6.5 million plays through BBC iPlayer and BBC Sounds.

By Albert Nelson Online 12 October 2026
Continued at **sunderlandmagazine.com/major-events-programme-delivers-117-million-boost-for-sunderland**

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SUNDERLAND

A Love Letter to Sunderland



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Photo: Lauren Rogers

There is something about coming home that changes the way you see a place. You return to familiar streets with older eyes. You notice the things you once took for granted, the histories hiding in plain sight, the things you never quite understood before, and the small details that make somewhere yours. You begin to understand that home is not simply where you grew up, but the place whose landscape, stories, and people have become part of you.

For me, that place is Sunderland.

A city shaped by the sea and the River Wear, by generations of shipbuilders, miners, glassmakers, and countless others whose work helped build the North East. A place with roots that stretch far beyond the industries for which it is best known, and a history shaped by people who have arrived from elsewhere, made lives here, and become part of its story.

In my hall, I walk past a painting of my great-grandfather's pit and a Sunderland shipbuilding advert every morning. I take my time to stop and look at them each day, reminded that this is part of my history, part of how my home came to be my home.

Sunderland is more than its city centre, more than its industrial past, and more than the things people think they know about it. It is the beaches and the cliffs, the river and the parks, the neighbouring towns and villages, the local traditions, and the everyday kindnesses that make a place feel like home.

It's the ham and pease pudding sandwich I've been looking forward to all morning. It's picking up treats from the local bakeries, ready to have my mum and nan round for coffee, and the quiet happiness of finally having them here, around my table. It's the neighbourhood children slipping notes through my letterbox saying, 'You're the best', because they know I've had a hard day. It's strawberry sauce (or monkey's blood as we would call it) melting into ice cream, the sea breeze on your cheeks and the cold air chilling your nose as you wander along the rocky beach.. It's the jar of sea glass at my mum's house, filled with little pieces collected by my brother, sister and me when we were small children. It's stepping off the Metro that now connects the place I called home at university with the place I call home today. It's the familiar chill in the air, carrying something of the past while making the future feel full of possibility. It's the feeling that, for once, I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be.

By Lauren Rogers Online 16 October 2026

Continued at **sunderlandmagazine.com/a-love-letter-to-sunderland**

SUNDERLAND

Sunderland Little Libraries Scheme Continues with Coastal Book Hunt



Photo supplied by Sunderland BIDs

Visitors to Sunderland's coastline will be able to enjoy the next chapter of a scheme encouraging people to read this October.

Sunderland's BIDs, which includes the City Centre and Seafront BIDs, recently introduced a Little Libraries scheme, where people can borrow, return or replace books stored in four key locations.

And now that project is taking on a new dimension, with a Look for the Book event at the seafront on 10 October.

Running from 10am to noon, the event connects Sunderland's Little Libraries with the National Year of Reading, while giving people another reason to get outdoors and enjoy Roker and Seaburn.

By Zoe Walker Online 8 October 2026
Continued at **sunderlandmagazine.com/sunderland-little-libraries-scheme-continues-with-coastal-book-hunt**

SUNDERLAND

Sunderland Launches 2026 Poppy Appeal to Support Veterans and Their Families



Photo supplied by Royal British Legion

The Royal British Legion's 2026 Poppy Appeal has officially launched in Sunderland, encouraging residents to show their support and honour those who have served and sacrificed for their country.

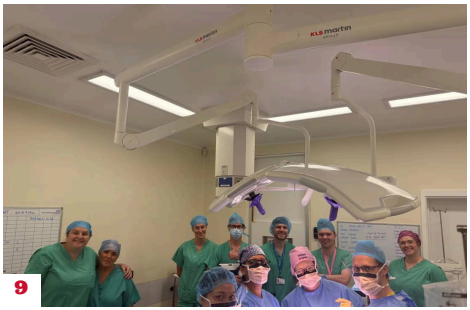
The campaign was launched by the Mayor of Sunderland, Councillor Robert Hutchinson, who marked the occasion by purchasing the city's first poppy.

Every autumn members of the Royal British Legion visit the Mayor's Parlour at City Hall in a civic tradition to launch the annual campaign and celebrate Sunderland's ongoing support for the appeal.

By Catherine Wilson Online 26 October 2026
Continued at **sunderlandmagazine.com/sunderland-launches-2026-poppy-appeal-to-support-veterans-and-their-families**

SUNDERLAND

Sunderland Royal Hospital Carries Out Landmark Sleep Apnoea Surgery



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A patient in the North East has become the first in the region to receive a pioneering implant designed to help people with obstructive sleep apnoea breathe normally while they sleep.

The landmark procedure was made possible through a partnership between South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust, The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, bringing an innovative new treatment option to patients across the region.

By Barbara Parker Online 5 October 2026
Continued at **sunderlandmagazine.com/sunderland-royal-hospital-carries-out-landmark-sleep-apnoea-surgery**

SUNDERLAND

Sunderland Announces Huge New Year's Eve Party with Two Fireworks Displays



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Sunderland is getting ready to welcome 2027 in style with a free New Year's Eve celebration at Keel Square, featuring live entertainment and two spectacular fireworks displays.

Taking place on Thursday 31 December, the event will feature a star-studded line-up headlined by TV personality and DJ Gok Wan, promising an unforgettable evening as the city comes together to celebrate the arrival of the new year.

Celebrations will get underway on Keel Square from mid-afternoon, with a programme of fun family entertainment and music, before the early evening fireworks display at 6.30pm.

By Zoe Walker Online 25 October 2026
Continued at **sunderlandmagazine.com/sunderland-announces-huge-new-years-eve-party-with-two-fireworks-displays**

In brief



SUNDERLAND

£50,000 Grant Awarded to Support New Sunderland Specialist Eye Hospital

A major £50,000 grant from the Sir John Priestman Charity Trust has been awarded to STS Charity, the official charity of South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust, to support the future of local eye care services.

By Zoe Walker Online 21 October 2026
Continued at **sunderlandmagazine.com/50000-grant-awarded-to-support-new-sunderland-specialist-eye-hospital**



SUNDERLAND

University Partnership Supports New Breast Cancer Awareness Film

Students at the University of Sunderland have teamed up with an acclaimed North East film director to bring a powerful stage play about breast cancer to the big screen.

By Catherine Wilson Online 6 October 2026
Continued at **sunderlandmagazine.com/university-partnership-supports-new-breast-cancer-awareness-film**



Photo supplied by Sunderland City Council

SUNDERLAND

Sunderland City Council Secures £2.65m Former College Campus to Expand SEND Provision

Plans to relocate Barbara Priestman Academy to the site could deliver enhanced facilities while helping address the growing demand for specialist SEND provision across Sunderland.

By Barbara Parker Online 28 October 2026
Continued at **sunderlandmagazine.com/sunderland-city-council-secures-265m-former-college-campus-to-expand-send-provision**



SUNDERLAND

Washington Pride in Place Invites Applications to Lead New Youth Board

Organisations with experience in supporting and engaging young people are being encouraged to get involved in plans to establish a new Washington Young People's Board.

By Zoe Walker Online 19 October 2026
Continued at **sunderlandmagazine.com/washington-pride-in-place-invites-applications-to-lead-new-youth-board**

In brief



SUNDERLAND

Four Weeks Left to Have Your Say on £20m Investment in Two Sunderland Communities

Residents in two Sunderland communities have just four weeks left to give their feedback on how up to £20 million could be invested in their local areas over the next decade.

By Catherine Wilson Online 7 October 2026
Continued at **sunderlandmagazine.com/four-weeks-left-to-have-your-say-on-20m-investment-in-two-sunderland-communities**



NEWCASTLE

Restart a Heart Day Highlights Importance of CPR Training Across the North East

More than 200 Newcastle College students are learning life-saving CPR skills as part of Restart a Heart Day, while the North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) reunites with a woman whose life was saved by CPR after she suffered a cardiac arrest at work.

By Sara Janiszewska Online 20 October 2026
Continued at **newcastlemagazine.com/restart-a-heart-day-highlights-importance-of-cpr-training-across-the-north-east**



Photo: Steve Brock Photography

NEWCASTLE

Nick Atkinson Appointed Chair of the Freemen of Newcastle upon Tyne

Nick Atkinson has stepped into the role of Chair of the Freemen of Newcastle upon Tyne, pledging to uphold the organisation's rich heritage while driving new opportunities for engagement, participation, and growth.

By Sara Janiszewska Online 14 October 2026
Continued at **newcastlemagazine.com/nick-atkinson-appointed-chair-of-the-freemen-of-newcastle-upon-tyne**



NEWCASTLE

Newcastle Chef Scott John-Hodgson Named Runner-Up in National Chef of the Year 2026

Scott John-Hodgson, Executive Chef at Newcastle's Michelin-starred Solstice and House of Tides, has been named runner-up in the prestigious National Chef of the Year 2026 competition.

By Newcastle Magazine Online 9 October 2026
Continued at **newcastlemagazine.com/newcastle-chef-scott-john-hodgson-named-runner-up-in-national-chef-of-the-year-2026**

In brief



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NEWCASTLE

Peter Rabbit™ Art Trail Raises Record £300,000 for St Oswald's Hospice

A free public art trail featuring Peter Rabbit™ has raised a record-breaking £300,000 for a North East hospice following an exciting auction on 13 October.

By Sara Janiszewska Online 19 October 2026
Continued at **newcastlemagazine.com/peter-rabbit-art-trail-raises-record-300000-for-st-oswalds-hospice**



12

NEWCASTLE

Football Legends Gather in Newcastle as Sir Bobby Robson Institute Enters Final £500k Stretch

Fundraising for the Sir Bobby Robson Institute a world-leading regional cancer drug trials centre has reached its final milestone. Last night, footballing stars gathered at Newcastle's Tyneside Cinema for a special screening of the acclaimed documentary Bobby Robson: More Than a Manager.

By Sara Janiszewska Online 9 October 2026
Continued at **newcastlemagazine.com/football-legends-gather-in-newcastle-as-sir-bobby-robson-institute-enters-final-500k-stretch**



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NEWCASTLE

Newcastle Comedy Writer Holly Johnson Wins Prestigious Sketch for Sammy Award

Newcastle comedy writer Holly Johnson has won one of the North East's most prestigious awards for emerging talent, with her winning sketch potentially set to entertain thousands at the next Sunday for Sammy arena show.

By Catherine Wilson Online 27 October 2026
Continued at **newcastlemagazine.com/newcastle-comedy-writer-holly-johnson-wins-prestigious-sketch-for-sammy-award**



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DURHAM

County Durham Man Living with Parkinson's Inspires Others Through the Power of Rowing

A County Durham man who has discovered the benefits of rowing in managing the physical and mental challenges of Parkinson's disease is sharing his inspiring story to encourage other men to take positive steps towards better health and wellbeing.

By Albert Nelson Online 31 October 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/county-durham-man-living-with-parkinsons-inspires-others-through-the-power-of-rowing**

In brief



DURHAM

Bishop Auckland Celebrates Volunteers at Greener Together Awards

Bishop Auckland celebrated the people and partnerships behind its environmental success at the first Greener Together Celebration Awards, organised by the Town Council to recognise the volunteers, community groups, schools and organisations helping to make the town greener, cleaner and more sustainable.

By Yvonne Hawkey Online 29 October 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/bishop-auckland-celebrates-volunteers-at-greener-together-awards**



DURHAM

County Durham Creatives Awarded £78k in Funding for New Community Arts Projects

Twenty creative practitioners across County Durham have been awarded commissions to deliver a fresh wave of arts and cultural projects to local communities.

Online 23 October 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/county-durham-creatives-awarded-78k-in-funding-for-new-community-arts-projects**



DURHAM

Miss Durham GB Nicole Hanson Wins Public Choice Award at National Final

From the racetrack to the runway, Miss Durham GB 2026 is challenging stereotypes and showing that there is more to pageantry than meets the eye.

By Barbara Parker Online 22 October 2026
Continued at **durhammagazine.co.uk/miss-durham-gb-nicole-hanson-wins-public-choice-award-at-national-final**



NEWCASTLE

Determined Runner Tackles 100km Ultra Marathon for Newcastle Charity The People's Kitchen

A determined runner has completed a gruelling 100km ultra marathon to raise essential funds for Newcastle charity The People's Kitchen.

By Sara Janiszewska Online 23 October 2026
Continued at **newcastlemagazine.com/determined-runner-tackles-100km-ultra-marathon-for-newcastle-charity-the-peoples-kitchen**

In brief



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NEWCASTLE

Bake Off-Loving Crafters Work with Lady Gaga Designer on Stage Gown

The Knitters, Movers & Shakers group, based in Newcastle's west end, are creating a gown for a dance show.

The Bake Off-loving crafters have worked with a Lady Gaga designer to bring the ultimate confection-coated dress to life.

By Zoe Eastman Online 2 October 2026
Continued at **newcastlemagazine.com/bake-off-loving-crafters-work-with-lady-gaga-designer-on-stage-gown**

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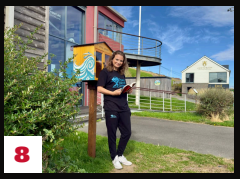
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