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Welcome to Sunderland

We are happy to welcome you to Sunderland! Everyone here, including local people and support teams wants you to feel safe and cared for while you are staying in Sunderland.

This Welcome Pack has lots of helpful information about the area. Please take your time to read it. If anything is confusing or hard to understand, don't worry, please ask us!

There are many friendly people and groups who can support you in Sunderland. You can find out about them and contact details in the "Support Networks" and "Extra Support" sections at the end of this pack.

About Sunderland

Sunderland is a friendly city in the North East of England. It is next to the sea and the River Wear. The city has long sandy beaches, big parks, and many green places to relax. There are interesting places to visit, such as the Sunderland Empire Theatre and Sunderland Museum and the Winter Gardens. Sunderland has a long and interesting history. There are sports, activities, events, and festivals for people of all ages. Many new communities enjoy living, learning and spending time here.

To find out more about Sunderland, you can visit the website www.mysunderland.co.uk or

download the [The Sunderland App - MySunderland](#).

You can also explore more opportunities, activities, and things to do on the [Links for Life](#) website.



This is Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens, city centre



This is Sunderland railway station, located in the city centre



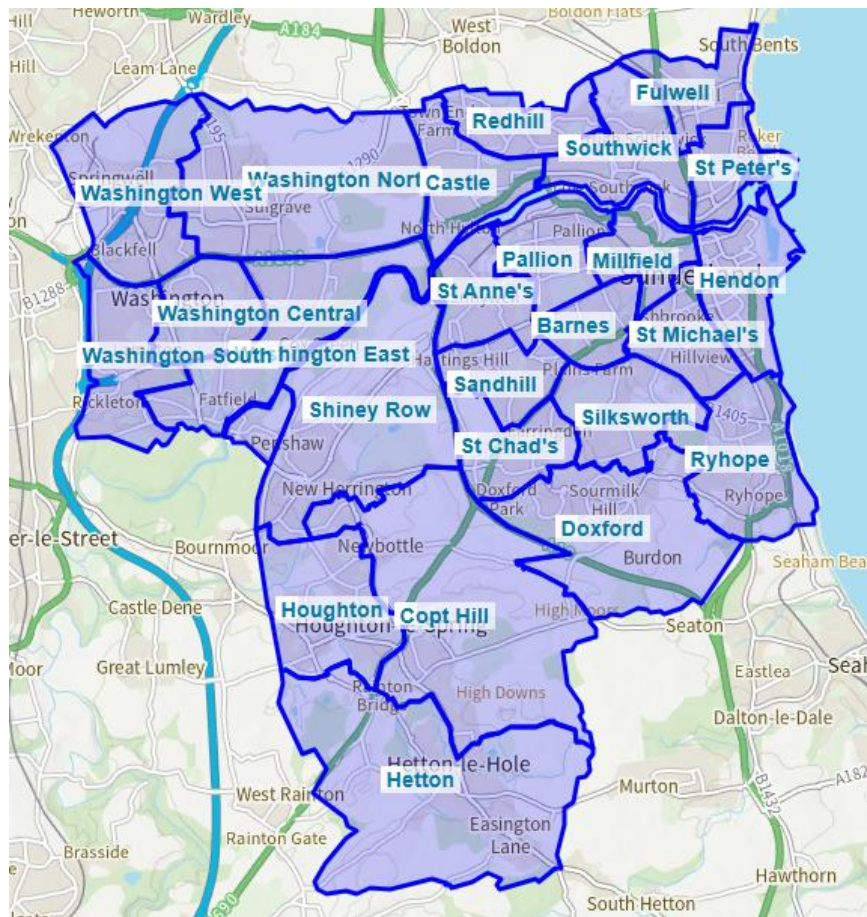
This is Barnes Park, the largest urban park in the city



Sunderland has many beautiful beach



Your postcode indicated on the map shows where your accommodation is located in Sunderland.



Source:- *Sunderland map of wards - SWC*

Support networks

Here are a number of local organisations providing practical support and advice for everyone, to help you settle in to Sunderland. There are more organisations listed in the 'Extra support' section. (Please phone first to make sure the times and services are still the same.)

Women's group

When: Every Friday, 10:00am-12:30pm

Where: Trinity Church, Stockton Road, Sunderland, SR2 7AQ

Offering all women the chance to socialise and enjoy free tea and coffee, as well as take part in a variety of arts, crafts, dance and other activities, in a safe and welcoming environment.

Creche facilities available.

Fortnightly drop-in (every two weeks)

When: Mondays, every two weeks, 12:00pm-1:30pm

Where: Sunderland Minster, 309 High St West, Sunderland, SR1 3ET

Food, toiletries, clothes, toys, equipment and general support for all asylum seekers and refugees

Friends of the Drop In for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (FODI)

Office: Unit 10, Bridge House, Bridge Street, Sunderland SR1 1TE

Phone: 07525 853913

Email: fodi.sunderland@outlook.com

Website: www.fodisunderland.org/

Drop-in

When: Every Wednesday, 12:00pm-3:00pm

Where: St Mary's Parish Centre, 28- 29 Bridge Street, Sunderland, SR1 1TQ

Offering practical support and advice, signposting, referrals, free tea and coffee, a chance to socialise, and access to IT services in a safe and welcoming environment. Attended by representatives from British Red Cross, North of England Refugee Service, MEARS, ICOS, and more.



Fightback Charity

Office: Units 4-6 Eagle House, Eagle Building, High Street East, Sunderland, SR1 2AX

Phone: 0191 565 2707

Email: fightbackcharity@hotmail.com

Website: <https://fightbackcharity.uk/>

Mondays: give out hygiene products

Thursdays: distribute food parcels

Drop-in and coffee morning

When: Every Monday and Thursday, 10:00am-2:00pm

Where: Address above

Offering practical support in the form of advice, mediation, advocacy, representation, access to information, reading letters, writing letters, use of phones, access to IT services and internet, as well as social support, free tea and coffee, and hot and cold snacks, in safe and welcoming environment.

Form-filling service

Providing help with housing application forms, housing benefit and council tax benefit forms, PIP, DLA, Universal Credit, ESA forms including medical questionnaire forms, driving licence, passports, immigration forms, etc.

Befriending service

Allow people from all communities to come together to make friends and encourage people to connect with others from their own ethnic communities who can offer support, advice and reassurance to reduce isolation.



New Horizon's Living Pride fortnightly drop-in (every two weeks)

NEW HORIZON SUNDERLAND

When: Thursdays, every two weeks, 12:00pm-3:00pm

Where: 30 Tatham Street, Hendon, Sunderland, SR1 2QD

Providing help and support with food parcels, everyday essentials, clothing, and much more, including practical support and advice, signposting, and opportunities to participate in activities and socialise.



International Community Organisation of Sunderland (ICOS)

Office: 14 Foyle Street, Sunderland, SR1 1LE

Phone: 07596 538482

Email: office@icos.org.uk

Website: www.icos.org.uk/

Opening times:

Monday to Friday 10:00am-6:00pm

Employment support and advice

When: Office times Where:

Address above

Providing information on your rights, as well as guidance on volunteering and job opportunities, how to apply for opportunities, how to apply for Universal Credit, and more.



North of England Refugee Service (NERS)

Main Office: Suite 12, Eagle Building, 201 High Street East, Sunderland, SR1 2AX

Phone: 0191 511 1410

Email: sunderland@refugee.org.uk

Website: www.refugee.org.uk/

Opening times:

Monday	9:30am-1:00pm
Wednesday	9:30am-12.00pm
Friday	9:30am-1:00pm



Integration Office: Suite 13, Eagle Building, 201 High Street East, Sunderland, SR1 2AX

Opening times:

Monday to Friday	9:30am-1:00pm
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Asylum advice service

Providing advice and guidance to people throughout all stages of their asylum process, from arrival, to the application process, through to receiving a decision. Also providing independent and impartial advice for those whose application has been refused and their support has been terminated.

Integration service for refugees

Providing support to those granted refugee status and Leave to Remain to help them rebuild lives in the UK. Offering advice on immediate needs, such as housing and finance, and also longer-term needs, such as finding educational and employment opportunities.

British Red Cross

Office: Suite 8-9, Eagle Building, 201 High Street East, Sunderland, SR1 2AX Phone: 0191 510 8753

Email: laylaegal@redcross.org.uk

Website: www.redcross.org.uk/

Opening times:

Monday to Friday	9:00am-5:00pm
Saturday and Sunday	Closed



Refugee support (appointment only)

Offering practical advice and guidance on a wide range of asylum seeker and refugee matters, including destitution, asylum support and issues around accommodation, registering with a doctor or dentist, completing forms and applications, moving on from NASS support and on to mainstream benefits, level 1 asylum cases such as applying to the Home Office for travel documents, and more.

History and heritage of Sunderland

Sunderland has a very interesting history, and local people are proud of it. The city is known for its past in shipbuilding, glassmaking, and coalmining. Today, Sunderland is also known for car manufacturing and digital technology. In the 7th century, St Peter's Church was the home of Venerable Bede, a famous scholar. At this time, Sunderland became an important place for early Christianity.

In the 13th century, Hylton Castle was built by Sir William Hylton to show the family's wealth. Today it is still one of the most important historic buildings in the city.

Other well-known places in Sunderland include:

- Penshaw Monument – Postcode: DH4 7NJ
- Fulwell Mill – Postcode: SR5 1Q
- Hylton Castle – Postcode: SR5 3PA
- Washington Old Hall – the family home of George Washington, the first President of the USA.

Sunderland also has a strong maritime (sea) history. The Port of Sunderland has been important for trade and travel for many centuries.

Heritage Walks

You can visit these places and learn more about Sunderland by joining a Heritage Walk, organised by Active Sunderland.

You can find details of walks, events, and other things to do on the

👉 [MySunderland](#) website, (Visit the "Things to See and Do" section.)

You can visit these places and learn more about Sunderland's history by joining a Heritage Walk organised by Active Sunderland.

You can find information about Heritage Walks, other walking routes, and many events and activities on:

👉 [Links for Life Sunderland](#) (Find local activities, groups, health and wellbeing support



Penshaw Monument. Postcode: DH4 7NJ



Fulwell Mill. Postcode: SR5 1QD



Hylton Castle. Postcode: SR5 3PA

If you are waiting for your asylum decision

Please find the names and contact details of your housing support officer below:

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Day of arrival

Your housing support officer will show you around your property and make sure that the house is free from hazards and that all furnishings have been provided. They will also go through the Occupancy Agreement with you and ask you to sign it. You will receive a copy of this Welcome Pack and a number of other guides. Please check that you have all of these guides. If you require further information on anything mentioned in this Welcome Pack, please refer to one of the followings:-



[Asylum Advice guide](#)



[Translated advice](#)



[Accommodation | Migrant Help](#)

[Applying for Asylum Support](#)

[Home - Self Service Portal](#)

Financial Support' or 'Living Allowance

You should now have your ASPEN card.

Your weekly allowance from the Home Office is put onto this card. If you receive Section 95 support:-

- You can withdraw cash from a cash machine (ATM) using your ASPEN card .
- You can also use the card in shops that accept Visa debit cards.

If you are unsure how to use the card, please ask your housing support officer for help.

If you receive Section 4 support, you cannot withdraw cash from an ATM

You can only use the ASPEN card in shops that accept Visa debit payments.

You cannot get your allowance as cash.



This is what an ASPEN card looks like. You can use this to withdraw cash or pay for things in shops that accept debit card payments



This is what an ATM cashpoint machine looks like. These can be found inside and outside of banks and some sho



These signs let you know that card payments are accepted here

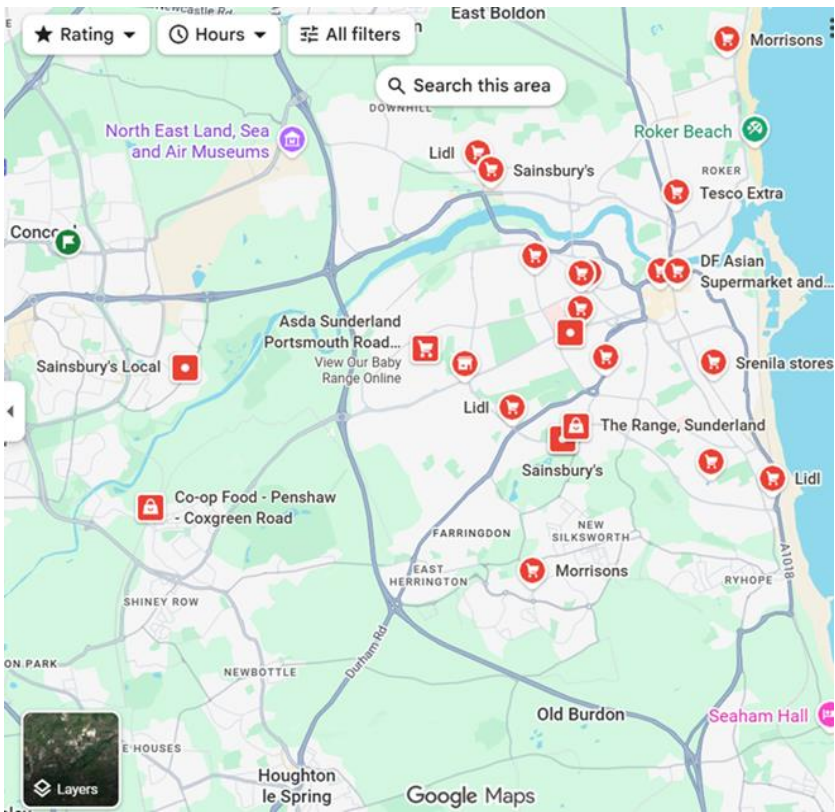
Shopping and supermarkets

There are many supermarkets, local shops and markets in Sunderland. Some of the main supermarkets are Asda, Tesco, Aldi, Lidl, Iceland, Sainsbury's and Morrisons. We have shown the shop logos so you can recognise them easily. Your housing support officer can tell you where the nearest supermarket is to your home. For more information, please look at the local area map we have provided. Your housing support officer will tell you where the nearest supermarkets are.



Your nearest supermarkets are:

1:
2:
3:



Locations of supermarkets in Sunderland:

Tesco Express- Sunderland (The Bridges) –Unit 62 Bridges Shopping Centre, SR1 3LD

TESCO at Newcastle Rd, Sunderland SR6 0DA

Iceland – The Bridges Shopping Centre, Sunderland, SR1 3DR

LIDL- Grangetown, Ivor Street, Sunderland, SR2 9ST

ASDA – Leechmere Road Industrial Estate, Sunderland, SR2 9TT

ASDA – 92 Ryhope Street South, Ryhope, Sunderland, SR2 0AB

LIDL – Durham Road, Springwell, Sunderland, SR3 4DF

Sainsbury's – Silksworth Lane, Sunderland, SR3 1PD

Morrisons – William Doxford Centre, Sunderland, SR3 2ND

ASDA – Portsmouth Road, Sunderland, SR4 9AS

Iceland – Unit 1, Pennywell Shop Centre, 1A Portsmouth Road, Sunderland SR4 9AS

Iceland – Unit 3, MFI Retail Park, European Way, Sunderland, SR4 6TY

ALDI – St Mark's Road, Sunderland, SR4 7EG

ALDI – Carley Hill Road, Sunderland, SR5 2EX

ALIDL – North Hylton Road, Sunderland, SR5 3FF

LIDL - Roker Avenue, Sunderland, SR6 0BN

LIDL – The Peel Centre, Washington, NE37 2PA

LIDL – Mautland Street, Houghton le Spring, Durham, DH4 4BJ

There are also some international local supermarkets in Sunderland:

Jomuna Halal Foodstore – 28 Tatham Street, Sunderland, SR1 2RU

Al-Huddah – 31 Borough Road, Sunderland, SR1 1LX

Hutchinsons Wholesalers – 175 Chester Road, Sunderland, SR4 7JA

City Wholesaler – 107 Chester Road Sunderland SR4 7EY

Sultan Halal Superstore – 140-142 Chester Road, Sunderland, SR4 7EY

There is an indoor market offering a huge range of products and services and plenty of wholesalers providing fresh fruit and vegetables in Sunderland

Jacky Whites Market – located inside The Bridges Shopping Centre, SR1 3DG

Getting around in Sunderland

On foot:



Stay on the pavements and avoid walking on main roads



Be safe when crossing roads by using Pelican crossings



Look both ways when crossing uncontrolled roads



Keep cycle paths free for cyclists

By bike:



Use cycle paths where possible



Wear a helmet



Wear reflective clothing and use lights when riding in the dark



Follow the rules to ensure safe riding at all times

The Highway Code is a set of rules that all cyclists must follow. You can find these rules [here](#).

By bus:

Sunderland has very good bus services. Buses travel around Sunderland, Washington and Houghton-le-Spring, and also go to Newcastle and Durham. You can get a bus from:

Park Lane Interchange (City centre's main bus station).

You can also catch a bus from many bus stops around Sunderland. When the bus is coming and you want it to stop, put your arm out so the driver knows you want to get on.



- You must pay before you sit on the bus. You can buy a ticket from the driver or use a smartcard/app (Pop PAYG) if you have one.
- If you don't know how much the fare is, tell the driver where you are going. The driver will tell you the cost.

• Types of tickets you can use:

- **Single ticket:** one-way from your start to destination.
- **Return ticket:** go to your destination and then come back again (on many bus services).
- **Day Rover ticket:** many journeys in one day, unlimited travel in the Tyne & Wear area.



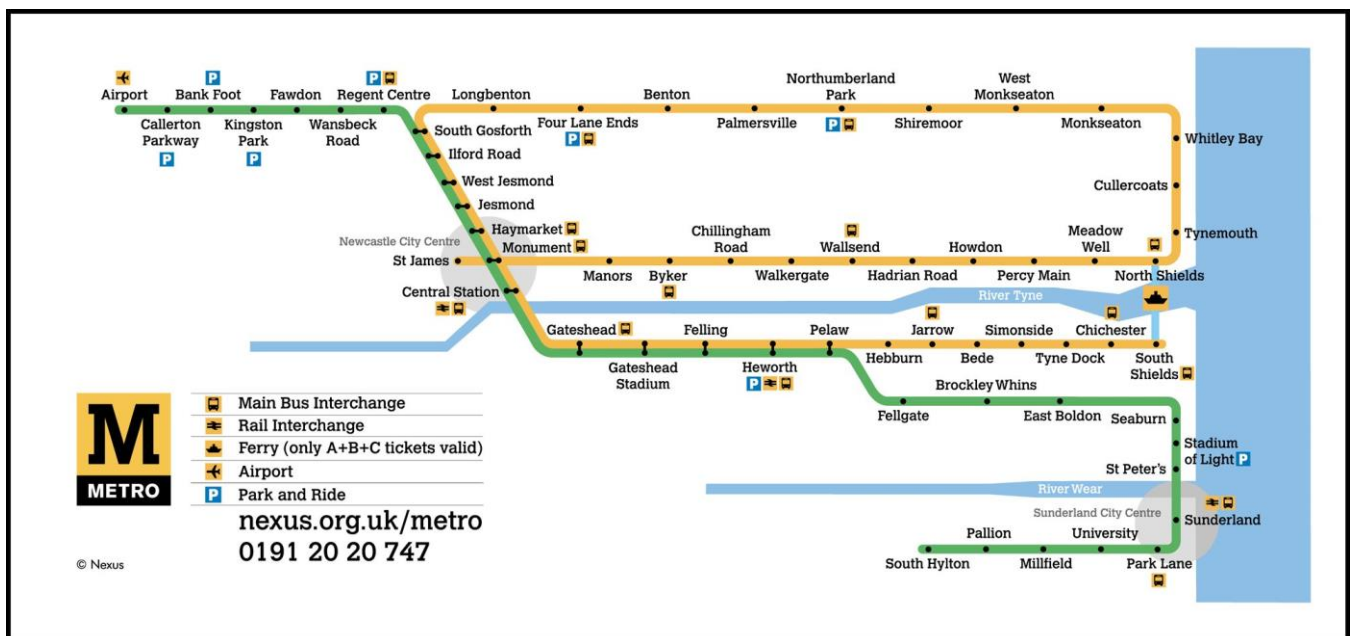
This is what a bus ticket looks like

- Ticket types and prices can change. Please check the current fare

with the driver or on the

 [Nexus website](https://www.nexus.org.uk).

If you want bus timetables, you can look at the poster timetables at bus stops, or visit Park Lane Interchange in the city centre. There are signs, information boards and ticket machines to help you plan your journey.



This is a map showing all of the Metro stations across Tyne and Wear

You must pay to use the Metro by buying a valid ticket at the ticket machine before entering the Metro



This is what a Metro ticket looks like



Metro cubes indicate that there is a Metro station here



This is what a Metro carriage looks like

By rail:

Sunderland Railway Station is in the city centre. Regional trains stop here and can take you to places in the North East such as Hartlepool, Stockton and Middlesbrough.

You can also get national trains from Sunderland. These trains go to other cities in England, including London King's Cross, which takes about **3/4 hours**.



*Sunderland Station is located in the city centre.
Postcode:SR1 3HP*

You have to pay to use the train by making a rail booking online

👉 www.trainline.com or at the station

For more information on train journeys and tickets, go to the train providers' websites

Northern Rail (regional)

👉 www.northernrailway.co.uk

LNER (national)

👉 www.lner.co.uk

Grand Central (national)

👉 www.grandcentralrail.com

By taxi:

There are many taxi companies in Sunderland. You pay a fare for your journey. Please remember that taxis can be expensive for long trips. You can book a taxi by phone or online. You can book one to come straight away, or you can book it for a later time. You can also get a taxi from one of the taxi ranks in the city centre.

Healthcare services

Most healthcare in the UK is free. But you must register to use these services.

[\(623\) Subtitled video on how to navigate the NHS for Refugees & Asylum Seekers. Set language in Settings - YouTube](#)

GP

Your doctor (called a GP) can help you with physical problems (your body) and emotional problems (your feelings). Please register with a doctor (called a GP) soon after you arrive in Sunderland.

Everyone in England can register with a GP. It does not matter what your immigration status is. You do not need a fixed address or ID to register, it will be easier if you have them.

If you find it hard to register with a GP, you can call Doctors of the World for help:
0808 164 7686 (Tuesday to Thursday, 10am–12pm)

It can help if you bring a letter from the Home Office with your address and some ID, such as your:

Asylum Registration Card
Immigration bail letter

When you register or book an appointment, please tell the service if you need an interpreter. Tell them the language you speak. After you register with a GP, you can also register for the NHS App. This makes it easier to book appointments and use NHS services., you will need your NHS number for the [NHS App](#).

If you know your postcode, you can use it to find the GP surgery nearest to you. 🗑️ [Find a GP](#)

Your nearest GP surgery is:

If you have an HC2 certificate, bring this too. It helps you get free treatment and medicine, and also to get free dental or eye care.

If you do not have an HC2 certificate, you can ask Migrant Help for support: 0808 8010 503

If you are an asylum seeker, your officer can help you, or you can speak to your housing support officer or a local community organisations for support (see contact list on page 6).

✅ What is an HC2 certificate?

An HC2 certificate helps you and your family get free healthcare With an HC2 certificate, you can get:

- Free medicine (prescriptions)
- Free dentist appointments
- Free eye tests
- Free glasses

You do not have to pay for these.

IMPORTANT: You should take this with you every time you visit a dentist or optician so that you can receive free treatments. You should also take it with you when collecting prescriptions so that you

(Some people, like students or on a visa, may still have to pay depending on their immigration status.)

✓ This is what an HC2 certificate looks like.



Pharmacist / Chemist / Community Pharmacy

There are many community pharmacies (also called chemists) across Sunderland. You can go to any pharmacy to collect your prescribed medicine or to get free health advice. If your doctor gives you a **prescription** and you have an HC2 certificate, show it at the pharmacy so you do not need to pay for your medicine.

Pharmacists can also:

- give you advice for minor illnesses (coughs, colds, rashes, stomach problems, etc.)
- recommend and supply over-the-counter medicines
- tell you if you need to see a GP or nurse
- offer services such as emergency contraception, stop-smoking support, flu jabs and blood-pressure checks



You do not need an appointment to visit a community pharmacy, and many are open late or at weekends.

Find Your Nearest Pharmacy

You can find the closest pharmacy by entering your postcode here:

👉 [NHS Find a Pharmacy](#)

👉 [Find Pharmacy Services - NHS](#)

Examples of Pharmacies in Sunderland City Centre

Here are a few community pharmacies located in or close to the city centre (useful for new arrivals):

- **Boots Pharmacy – The Bridges Shopping Centre**
The Bridges, Sunderland, SR1 3DR
- **Lloyds Pharmacy (in Sainsbury's)**
Riverside Road, Sunderland, SR1 1XN
- **Superdrug Pharmacy – High Street West**
13–17 High Street West, Sunderland, SR1 3EX
- **Monkwearmouth Pharmacy**
Newcastle Road, Sunderland, SR5 1JB (near Stadium of Light)

(Note: Always check opening times online before visiting.)

Hospital in Sunderland

If your health problem is more serious, your doctor (GP) can ask the hospital to give you an appointment with a specialist. The hospital will send you a letter with the date of your visit.

This is **Sunderland Royal Hospital**, 📍 [Kayll Rd, Sunderland SR4 7TP](#)

You can also go to the hospital's Emergency Department (A&E) if you have a life-threatening emergency, such as:

- Fainting or passing out
- Feeling very confused or having fits that won't stop
- Chest pain
- Trouble breathing
- loss of consciousness
- acute confused state and fits that are not stopping
- chest pain
- breathing difficulties
- severe bleeding that cannot be stopped
- severe allergic reactions
- severe burns or scalds
- stroke
- major trauma such as a road traffic accident

Heavy bleeding that won't stop

- A strong allergic reaction
- Bad burns or scalds
- Signs of a stroke
- A serious injury, like a car accident

Emergency Treatment

If you need help very quickly, for example a serious accident, heart attack, or a life-or-death situation

Call 999 and ask for an ambulance. Tell the operator your address and what has happened.

Calling 999 is free. If you use a public phone box, you do not need any money.

111

If you feel sick and your GP is closed, you can call 111 for help. This call is free.

You might get advice over the phone, or they may ask you to go see a nurse or doctor. If so, they will tell you the date, time, and place of your appointment. You might be asked to go to the hospital. If you are unwell and need advice when your GP is closed, please telephone 111. This phone call and service is free of charge.

Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC)

You can go to a UTC if you need medical help quickly, but it's not an emergency.

✔ **Sunderland's Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC)**

Sunderland Royal Hospital, Kayll Rd, Sunderland SR4 7TP, next to the Adult Emergency Department.

✔ **Other areas**

Here are more Urgent care services available nearer Sunderland [Urgent care services South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust](#)

The UTC provides care for minor injuries and illnesses that require urgent treatment, but are not life-threatening. It is open from 8am to midnight (12 midnight), seven days a week, including bank holidays. Patients

are advised to book an appointment via NHS 111 or through a GP referral, however patients can just 'walk in.'

They can help with:

- sprains and strains
- suspected broken limbs
- minor head injuries
- cuts and grazes
- bites and stings
- minor scalds and burns
- ear and throat infections
- skin infections and rashes
- eye problems
- coughs and colds
- high temperature in child and adults
- stomach pain
- being sick (vomiting) and diarrhoea
- emergency contraception

✔ **NHS Advice**


You can also find helpful advice on the 🖱️ [NHS website](#).



Please note

It is very important to arrive **at least 5 minutes early** for all medical appointments. This includes appointments with your **doctor (GP), hospital, health clinic, dentist, or optician**. If you arrive **late**, you may **not be seen**, and it can be **hard to get another appointment**.
For **Example**:
If your appointment is at **10:00**, please arrive by **9:55**.

Dentist

It is important to see a dentist, if you have problems with your teeth. Take your HC2 certificate to your appointments so you don't have to pay. Not all dentists are free and can take new NHS patients. You can find a dentist near you at:  [Find a dentist - NHS](#)

Your nearest dentist is:

Please check that this dentist has available spaces for new patients

Optician


If you have problems seeing clearly, book an appointment with an optician for your eye test. There are opticians in The Bridges Shopping Centre and nearby. Take your HC2 certificate with you. Some glasses are free with the certificate, but others may cost money.

Mental Health

If you feel sad, worried, stressed or upset, there are people who can help you. If these feelings make everyday life hard, talk to your doctor (GP).

Talking Therapies (Sunderland)

Talking Therapies can help with anxiety, stress, low mood and other emotional problems. You can:

- Ask your doctor to refer you, or
- Refer yourself by phone: 0191 566 5454
- Or refer yourself online with  [Sunderland Talking Therapy](#)

Address:

Sunderland Talking Therapies
Grange Park Clinic
Monkwearmouth Hospital
Newcastle Road
Sunderland, SR5 1NB

Crisis or Emergency Mental Health Support

If your thoughts or feelings are putting you or someone else in danger, call the:

Initial Response Team (IRT)

0303 123 1145

This service is open 24 hours a day.

Samaritans of Sunderland – 24/7 confidential emotional support for anyone in distress.

Phone (free from any phone): 116 123

 [Samaritans](#) Local branch address: 13 Grange Crescent, Stockton Road, Sunderland, SR2 7BN

Other useful services for Mental health

- 👉 [Sunderland Mind](#) local charity offering counselling, support groups, help for young people, families and carers.
- 👉 [Mental Health Support Service](#): Healthy Heads Team (children & young people)
- 👉 [Mental wellbeing support](#) in Sunderland information page



For more information on health services, including information about pregnancy and maternity care, as well as arranging social care for disabled adults or children, please refer to **A Home Office Guide to Rights and Expectations in the UK**, pages 19 to 25.
 Online: [Rights and Expectations](#)

Health Visitor & School nurses

✔ Health visitors

In the UK, all families with children under the age of 5 years have a health visitor. Health visitors help children and their families stay healthy. The health visiting team will visit pregnant women and parents with babies and children under 5 years old in their homes; they can give advice on growth, development, and wellbeing.

✔ School nurses

When children reach 5 years they may be seen in school by a school nurse. School nurses work with children aged five to nineteen, offering health and wellbeing advice, and emotional support.

Both services promote good health, spot problems early, and help keep children safe at home and in school. The health visiting and school nursing service (0-19 Public Health Service) is provided by Harrogate & District Foundation Trust.

You can find out more information on our webpage [Growing Healthy 0-19 Sunderland | HDFT Childrens Health Service](#) or download the app

This block contains promotional information for the 'Children's Health Services' app. At the top is a logo with the text 'Children's Health Services' in colorful, rounded letters, and 'HDFT' in a blue box below it. Below the logo are two buttons: 'Download on the App Store' with the Apple logo and 'GET IT ON Google Play' with the Google Play logo. At the bottom are two QR codes, one for the App Store and one for Google Play, each enclosed in a light blue square.

Maternity Services

✔ **Pregnancy**

South Tyneside & Sunderland Foundation Trust have a **maternity service**. The maternity team has lots of experience in what they do. They will be there for you throughout your pregnancy. The aim is to make sure you get excellent care. The pages in the link below explain everything you need to know.

Virtual tour link. 🖱️ [Maternity: South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust](#)

Virtual Tour of Maternity 🖱️ [Having your baby with South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust - YouTube](#)

Ageing Well

Services help older residents live well and stay connected. From advice and activities to volunteering opportunities.

✔ Age UK Sunderland: [Age UK Sunderland | Our Services](#) **0191 514 1131** | enquiries@ageuksunderland.org.uk

Become an Ageing Well Ambassador in Sunderland!

Help make our city more age-friendly by sharing ideas, promoting positive change, and supporting older residents to live well. Flexible, voluntary role for anyone aged 50+ or passionate about ageing issues.

✔ Ageing Well Team [Sunderland Ageing Well Ambassadors - Sunderland City Council](#)

Adult Social Care

Adult Social Care supports people who may need extra help because of age, disability, illness, or other vulnerabilities. Support can include help at home, equipment to make daily life easier, support for carers, or being assessed for long-term care.

If you think you or someone in your household needs support:

- You can contact **Sunderland Adult Social Care** on **0191 520 5552**.
- You can also ask your GP, support worker, or a trusted organisation to help you make the referral.
- An interpreter can be arranged if you need one.

Adult Social Care will talk with you about your situation and may carry out an assessment to understand the type of support you need.

This service is **confidential** and based on your needs. [Adult Social Care - Sunderland City Council](#)

Education

Children in England must be in full-time education from when they reach compulsory school age. Compulsory school age begins on the first of 31 December, 31 March or 31 August after the child's fifth birthday. You can also choose to send your child to school full-time in September after they turn 4. If you have a Housing Support officer, they will send your family's details to the School Admissions Team. Then an Attendance Officer or Early Help Worker will contact you and help you arrange a school place for your child.

School attendance

School is open Monday to Friday. The school day is usually around 6½ hours. Children must go to school every day, unless the school has agreed to a special absence or it is a public holiday.

How to apply

Online

You can find out how to apply for a school place by visiting the local admissions webp

👉 www.sunderland.gov.uk/schools-admissions



If you need help, you can **contact Together for Children's Early Help service**

They will provide family support for new arrivals and help you register at a school

Address: Stanfield Business Centre, Addison St, Sunderland, SR2 8SZ Phone: 0191 561 4084

Email: EHAAT@togetherforchildren.org.uk

Website: www.togetherforchildren.org.uk/families/early-help

If you have a Housing Support Office, ask if they can help you to contact the appropriate people on your behalf. They will be able to ask for a school application to be sent out to you

Visit your local school

The school will be able to assist you with registering for a place if they have available spaces.

Complete a School Transfer application form

You may also be able to register your child for education by completing a **School Transfer application** form

online:- 👉 [here](#) or by returning a paper copy the School Admissions Team at Sunderland City Council. They will contact the school on your behalf. The Early Help Worker or Attendance Worker from Together for Children can help you complete application forms.

Your nearest schools are:

Primary:

Secondary:

IMPORTANT NOTICE: It is not always possible to find a place at your nearest school. You may have to register with a different school to your first choice.

For more information, visit 👉 [School Information - Together for Children](#)

Free School Meals

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 get Free School Meals automatically through the Universal Free School Meal Initiative.

For children in Years 3–6 and secondary school, Free School Meals depend on your family's eligibility.

You can apply online through your [Family Portal](#) on the Together for Children website.

If you have questions or need help, you can contact the [Free School Meals Team](#):

Phone: 0191 561 1417

Email: freeschoolmeals@togetherforchildren.org.uk

School uniforms

All schools in Sunderland have their own school uniform. The school will tell you what your child needs to wear before they start. Every school has a different uniform, so please make sure your child wears the correct clothes for their school. You can buy school uniforms from uniform shops and some supermarkets. If you are having money difficulties, there is support available:

- Some charities and local organisations can help with free school uniform items.
- You can tell your child's school teachers if you cannot afford the uniform or PE kit.
- You can also ask your housing support officer for help.

Sunderland City Council also provides information about support here:

 [School Uniform](#)



For more information on education, including information about adult education please refer to **A Home Office Guide to Rights and Expectations in the UK**, pages 14 and 15. Online: [Rights and Expectations](#)

Young people aged 16 to 18

Education for Young People (Ages 16–18)

If you are 16 to 18 years old, you must stay in education, training, or work with training.

In Sunderland, young people have many choices.

Study full-time at a college or school

You can study:

- A Levels
- Vocational courses (such as health, IT, construction, beauty, childcare, engineering)
- English (ESOL) and maths
- Supported learning if you need extra help

Sunderland College offers many courses for young people:

 www.sunderlandcollege.ac.uk

City of Sunderland also has sixth forms in some schools.

Start an apprenticeship or traineeship

An apprenticeship lets you:

- Learn new skills
- Work and earn money
- Study part-time

Find apprenticeships in Sunderland:

👉 www.sunderlandcollege.ac.uk/apprenticeships

✅ **Work or volunteer (20+ hours a week) with part-time study**

You can also:

- Work or volunteer 20 hours or more each week
- AND study part-time (for example English, maths, or a skills course)

This helps you build skills while still staying in education.

👉 **More information for young people in Sunderland**

Sunderland has education and training options for all young people, including those new to the UK.

You can find more help here:

- **Sunderland College** – Courses for 16–18 year olds
www.sunderlandcollege.ac.uk
- **Skills and training in Sunderland**
www.mysunderland.co.uk
- **Links for Life (activities, learning and support)**
www.linksforlifesunderland.co.uk

Support for Children and Young People

Together for Children

If you are a child or young person in Sunderland and need more support, there are many services that can help you. Together for Children offers support with:

- Education and learning
- Emotional and mental health
- Safety and wellbeing
- Support for young carers
- Youth services and activities
- Support for young people with SEND (special educational needs or disabilities)

You can find information, advice and services for young people here:

👉 www.togetherforchildren.org.uk/children-and-young-people

If you need help to find the right service, you can ask:

- Your school or college
- Your Housing Support Officer
- [A Family Hub](#)

Here are more information

👉 [Youth Voice groups](#)

👉 [Holiday Activity and Food provision in the holidays](#)

👉 [Sunderland Communicates Together for families - Together for Children](#)

Family Hubs

Sunderland now has **Family Hubs**. These are places where families can get support, advice and activities all in one place. Family Hubs help by:

- Bringing services together so they are easy to find
- Helping families connect with professionals and support services
- Supporting strong and healthy family relationships

Family Hubs support:

- Babies and parents from pregnancy to age 2
- Children and young people up to age 19
- Children with SEND up to age 25

There will be **five Family Hubs** in Sunderland. You can also register with the Family Hubs online.

Find your closest Family Hub:-

 [Family Hubs - Together for Children](#)

Alternatively, you can find information on the many childcare providers in Sunderland, including babysitters, childminders, toddler groups and nurseries [here](#).

Community safety and the law

Police

The police in the UK are here to help everyone, including asylum seekers and refugees. The police should treat you fairly and with respect.

✔ Emergency – Call 999

Call 999 if you need help straight away, for example:

- Someone's life is in danger
- A crime has happened
- A crime is happening right now

When you call, say "Police".

✔ Non-emergency – Call 101

Call 101 if it is not an emergency, for example:

- Your property has been damaged
- You want to give information about a crime
- You need advice about a police matter

✔ Interpreter:- If you need an interpreter, say the language you speak at the start of the call on 999 or 101. Interpreting is free.



If you are a victim of crime, there is help available in Sunderland and the surrounding area.

Visit the Sunderland City Council page:

👉 www.sunderland.gov.uk/article/12182/Advice-and-support-for-victims-and-crime-prevention-tips
Sunderland City Council

This site offers information and support on crime prevention, help agencies, and how to stay safe.

✔ You can also contact **Victims First Northumbria**

Victims First Northumbria is a free and confidential service for anyone affected by crime in Tyne and Wear and Northumberland. They can help you even if you have not reported the crime to the police. They offer emotional support, practical advice, and help you feel safe again.

How to contact them

- **Phone:** 0800 011 3116
- **Email:** enquiries@victimsfirstnorthumbria.org.uk
- **Opening hours:** Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:00pm
(These are the hours shown on the official NVWS website.)
-

Live Chat

You can also use their **live chat** on the website during office hours:

👉 <https://victimsfirstnorthumbria.org.uk/live-chat>

Hate crime

A hate crime is when someone hurts you or abuses you because of your:

- disability
- race or ethnicity
- religion or beliefs
- sexual orientation
- transgender identity

Hate crime can be physical, verbal, online, or damage to your property. If this happens to you or someone you know, please report it.

How to report a hate crime

Police (non-emergency)

Call 101 to report to the police.

If you or someone you know is a victim of a hate crime, and it is not an emergency, you can report it online to the police. If it *is* an emergency, call 999 instead. Online reporting is an option if:

- The crime is not happening right now
- You are not in immediate danger

Visit their webpage and report, [👉 Hate Crime](#)

Sunderland City Council

Phone: 0191 520 5550

(Monday to Friday, 8:00am – 6:30pm)

You can also report hate crime online on Sunderland council's website:-

[👉 Hate Crime](#)

Please note: The online form may take a short time to appear or load, especially on mobile phones. Please wait for the form to be fully loaded before starting.

Contact details:

Please provide the information requested below and click Next to continue. Fields marked * are required.

Before proceeding please ensure that you have read and accept our privacy policy, terms and conditions.

We collect, hold, and manage all information in accordance with our data protection regulations.

Submit anonymously

Title*

First name *

Surname*

Do you live outside the City of Sunderland boundaries?

Address details: *

Street or Postcode*

[Find Address](#)

Telephone number

Mobile number

Email address

Confirm your email address

[Next](#)

✔ Local organisations

If you do not feel comfortable reporting it yourself, many local community organisations can report it for you.

CrimeStoppers (anonymous)

Phone: **0800 555 111**

[Our Contact Centre | Crimestoppers](#)

You do **not** have to give your name. You can report any crime, including hate crime, confidentially.

Note:-

- Your report is private and confidential.
- You do not have to give your name if you don't want to.
- Reporting a hate crime will NOT affect your immigration status or asylum application.



CrimeStoppers.
0800 555 111
100% anonymous. Always.

Domestic violence

Domestic abuse is when someone hurts, threatens, or controls you in your home or relationship. It can be physical, emotional, verbal, sexual, financial, or any behaviour that makes you feel scared or controlled. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic abuse, please reach out for help. You are not alone and support is available.

✔ ***Wearside Women in Need (WWiN)***

WWiN is a local organisation in Sunderland that supports women and children who are at risk of, or experiencing, domestic abuse.

- Phone (Free Helpline): 0800 066 5555
- They offer confidential help, advice, safety planning and emotional support.
- They can also help you find safe accommodation if needed.

✔ **More Support**

You can find more advice and links to support services on the Sunderland City Council website:

👉 www.linksforlifesunderland.co.uk (search "Domestic Abuse")

Note

- You can get help even if you do not want to report the abuse to the police.
- Seeking help will NOT affect your asylum claim or immigration status.

In the UK, the law is taken very seriously. If someone breaks the law, the police can arrest them. The police will investigate, and a court will decide what happens next. For serious crimes, a person can be sent to prison.

Examples of illegal acts (These laws apply to everyone.)

You must not do the following:

- Carry a knife or weapon

- Use or have illegal drugs, including cannabis
- Have sex without consent
- Have sex with anyone under 16, even if they agree
- Use threatening or abusive words or behaviour
- Be involved in prostitution
- Use violence, including against your own family
- Steal or take things that are not yours

Looking after children

In the UK, keeping children safe is very important. Parents and carers must follow the rules to protect their children. It is against the law to neglect a child or to put a child in danger. If social services think that a child is not being properly cared for or protected, they may get involved to help keep the child safe. In very serious situations, a child may be taken into the care of the council. Please follow the guidance below to help keep your children safe.

- ✓ Children should not be left alone for long periods of time – this includes at home.
- ✓ Young children are not allowed to walk to and from school on their own. This means that you must always go with your children to school and pick them up when school is finished.
- ✓ Parents should not smack or beat their children.



For more information on protecting and caring for your children, including what child abuse is and how the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) can support you if you need advice, please refer to **A Home Office Guide to Rights and Expectations in the UK**, pages 27 and 28. Online: [Rights and Expectations](#)



Safeguarding

Safeguarding means keeping children and adults safe from harm, abuse or exploitation.

Everyone has the right to feel safe, respected and protected.


If you are worried about your own safety or the safety of another person, you can ask for help.

✔ Safeguarding Adults (18+)

If you are worried that an adult is being:

- abused
- neglected
- controlled
- harmed

you can contact the **Safeguarding Adults Team**:

 **0191 561 8934**

 Report a concern online:

www.sunderlandsab.org.uk


This service is **confidential**, and you can ask for an **interpreter** if needed.

✔ Safeguarding Children (0–18)

If you are worried that a child is:

- unsafe
- being harmed
- not being cared for properly
- or at risk of abuse

you can contact **Children's Services**:

 **0191 520 5560**

 More information:

www.safeguardingchildrensunderland.com

You can ask for an **interpreter** when you call.

Emergency

If someone is in **immediate danger**, always call:

 **999**

The police, ambulance or fire service will help.

Fire and rescue service

If there is a fire in or near your home, you must act quickly.

- Make sure everyone in your home knows what to do in an emergency.
- Leave the building immediately.
- Once you are outside, call 999 and ask for the Fire and Rescue Service.

- Calling 999 is free.

When you call, try to tell them:

- Your address
- What is on fire
- If anyone is trapped inside

Do NOT go back inside the building for any reason.

Wait outside until the Fire and Rescue Service arrive and tell you it is safe to enter.



**Tyne and Wear Fire
and Rescue Service**

Creating the Safest Community



Legal advice & support

There are several organisations in Sunderland and the North East that offer **free and confidential** advice on legal issues. These services can help you with problems about immigration and legal rights.

North East Law Centre

Provides free legal advice on immigration, asylum, family law, discrimination, housing and other legal issues.

👉 www.nelawcentre.co.uk

Migrant Help

Offers free support with the asylum process, ASPEN cards, reporting problems, and understanding your rights as an asylum seeker.

👉 www.migranthelpuk.org

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Gives free and confidential advice about legal issues, money problems, benefits, housing, and consumer rights.

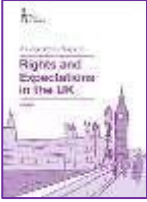
👉 www.citizensadvice.org.uk

North of England Refugee Service (NERS)

Provides free and confidential advice to asylum seekers and refugees, including legal advice and support with local services.

👉 www.refugee.org.uk

Details of all organisations can be found at the back of this pack.



For more information on law and crime, including information about extremist behaviour and anti-social behaviour, please refer to **A Home Office Guide to Rights and Expectations in the UK**, pages 9 to 12. Online: [Rights and Expectations](#)

The council

Sunderland City Council is the local authority for Sunderland. It is made up of elected ward councillors who represent communities across the city. You can find out who your local councillors are and how to contact them at www.sunderland.gov.uk/committees/.

If you wish to raise an issue with your Member of Parliament (MP), you can find their contact details at <https://members.parliament.uk/constituencies>.

Sunderland City Council provides a wide range of services to residents, including public health, housing, adult social care, education, children's services, sport and leisure, and community safety. More information about these services is available on the council's website at www.sunderland.gov.uk.

Contact Sunderland City Council

Please check our website:- [👉 Contact us - Sunderland City Council](#)

If you need face-to-face advice on any of the services mentioned above, such as making a complaint about noise or rubbish, you can book an appointment with our trained staff who can provide specialist advice and information.

Location: City Hall, Plater Way, Sunderland, SR1 3AA

[👉 Getting to City Hall - MySunderland](#)

Booking an Appointment: [Visit our website](#) or call 0191 520 5555 to schedule your visit.

More Support in Sunderland

If you need additional help while settling into life in Sunderland, there are several local sources of information and support available. These services can help you find advice on housing, education, health, community services, and day-to-day living. The websites below provide reliable guidance to help you and your family navigate life in the city.

[👉 Links for Life \(Sunderland regional Offer\)](#)

[👉 sunderlandinformationpoint.co.uk](http://sunderlandinformationpoint.co.uk)

[👉 Sunderland College ESOL provision](#)

The council provides a dedicated section for refugees which includes guidance on moving to Sunderland, settling in, housing, education, employment, and accessing support services. You can access it here: [👉 A guide to Sunderland for refugees](#) –

Also relevant is their page on supporting vulnerable people (including asylum seekers and refugees) into housing:

[👉 Supporting vulnerable people to access and maintain housing](#) –

Waste and recycling

To help keep your accommodation and the surrounding area clean and hygienic, please make sure you dispose of your waste correctly. Sunderland City Council provides each household with bins for different types of waste:

- Green bin – for general household waste that cannot be recycled
- Blue bin – for items that can be recycled
- Brown bin – (where applicable) for garden waste

Putting the correct waste into the correct bin helps the council recycle more efficiently and supports better environmental health across the city. If your bin is lost, damaged, or stolen, you can request a new or replacement bin. In many cases, replacements are free, but this depends on the circumstances. You should always check your bin collection day online and only put your bin out on the scheduled day. Make sure your bin lid is fully closed and bring the bin back in as soon as possible after collection to prevent it being lost or stolen.

Please note: Sunderland City Council does not collect side waste (rubbish left next to your bin). All waste must fit inside the bin.

Useful Links (Sunderland City Council)

- [What goes in each bin \(Green / Blue / Brown\)](#)
- [Check your bin collection day](#)
- [Request a new or replacement bin](#)
- [Household side waste rules \(no side waste policy\)](#)
- [Household Waste & Recycling Centres \(to dispose of extra waste\)](#)

Collection days: -

Green bin:

Blue bin:

Brown bin:

Please note: Littering is a criminal offence in the UK and can result in a fine. This means that you must not throw, drop or put rubbish outside, either on the floor or anywhere else. Please always put any rubbish in a bin. If you are found to be littering, you may have to pay a fine of up to £50.

For more information on waste and recycling go to www.sunderland.gov.uk/householdwaste.



Libraries in Sunderland

Sunderland has a network of public libraries offering free access to books, computers, Wi-Fi, study spaces, events and learning activities for all ages. Library services in the city are now coordinated through the Culture House Sunderland service. For the most up-to-date information on library locations, opening times, facilities, events and activities, please visit:

👉 <https://culturehousesunderland.co.uk/libraries>

You can also register for free library membership either online or at any library.

If you need help or support using library services, friendly library staff are always available to assist you. You can register at any library, where you will be issued a library card and login details, or you can register online at:

👉 www.sunderland.gov.uk/libraries

Your library login allows you to access e-books, e-magazines, audiobooks and online resources from home at no cost.

Activities and Opening Times

All Sunderland libraries offer programmes of craft activities, clubs and events for children and adults.

For full information about library opening times, events and services, visit:

👉 www.sunderland.gov.uk/libraries

Wi-Fi, Computers and Internet Access

✔ Free Wi-Fi in Sunderland City Centre

If you're out and about in Sunderland, you can access free public Wi-Fi in many outdoor locations and public buildings. The service named "**Free Sunderland Wi-Fi**" covers large parts of the city centre (from City Campus to City Hall, Mackie's Corner, and surrounding pedestrian areas) as well as some coastal stretches.

✔ Learn [How to Connect](#)


You can access free Wi-Fi, computers and digital support at a number of places across Sunderland, including libraries, Digital Community Hubs and Go Hubs. These spaces are designed to help you get online, access public services, study, look for work or learn digital skills.

✔ Libraries (Culture House Sunderland)

All Sunderland libraries offer:

- Free Wi-Fi
- Public computers
- Printing and scanning (charges may apply)
- Help from staff with using the internet or online services

You can check opening times and locations here:

 [Cultural House](#) To use library computers, you need free library membership, which you can register for online or in person at any library.

✔ Digital Community Hubs (Community Venues Across the City)

Digital Community Hubs are friendly neighbourhood centres where you can:

- Use free Wi-Fi and computers
- Get help with digital skills, online forms, emails, and benefit applications
- Attend digital courses or one-to-one support sessions
- Access community activities and local support

They are run across the city by community organisations in partnership with Sunderland City Council.

You can download the full leaflet (locations + opening times) here:

 [Digital Community Hubs \(PDF\)](#)

✔ Go Hubs (Free Wi-Fi + Internet-Enabled Devices)

Sunderland also has several Go Hubs, which are dedicated public spaces offering:

- Free Wi-Fi
- Internet-enabled devices (computers, tablets or screens)
- Support accessing council services online
- Assistance with digital tasks such as form filling, job searches, housing applications and more

 [Find your nearest Go Hub](#) here

✔ If You Need Help, if you are unsure where to go or need help using a computer or the internet, you can:

- Ask staff at any library or Digital Community Hub
- Speak to your Welfare Officer or Housing Manager
- Visit the above websites for opening times and locations

Religion and places of worship

Religion and Places of Worship

Sunderland is home to a wide range of places of worship, representing many faiths and traditions. Your housing support officer can help you find the nearest and most suitable place of worship for your religious needs. They can also provide addresses and contact details for other faith communities across the city.

You may also find opportunities to connect with people from your religious background through local community groups, cultural associations and support networks included in this welcome pack.

Below are examples of the types of places of worship you can find in Sunderland:

- **Christian churches** (including Anglican, Catholic, Baptist, Methodist and Pentecostal)
- **Mosques and Islamic centres**
- **Hindu temples**
- **Sikh gurdwaras**
- **Buddhist centres**
- **Interfaith and multicultural community groups**

For the most up-to-date information, visit this [link](#).

Please speak to your Welfare Officer or Housing Manager, who can help you locate a place that meets your needs.



*Sunderland Minster
309 High St West, Sunderland, SR1 3ET*



*Anware Madina Mosque
St Marks Road North, Sunderland, SR4 7EG*



*Guru Gobind Singh Sikh Temple
Ryhope Road, Sunderland, SR2 8ED*



*St Mary's RC Church
27 Bridge St, Sunderland SR1 1TQ*

You can find details of more places of worship in Sunderland [here](#).

Things to see and do in Sunderland

Sunderland offers a wide range of attractions and activities, many of which are **free or low cost**. For a full, up-to-date list of things to see and do — including opening times, prices, and special events — visit: 🖱️ <https://www.mysunderland.co.uk/see-and-do/things-to-do>

Museums and Galleries

- **Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens**
Address: Burdon Road, Sunderland, SR1 1PP
Phone: 0191 561 2323
Email: museums@sunderland.gov.uk
Website: www.sunderlandmuseum.org.uk
- **National Glass Centre**
Address: Liberty Way, Sunderland, SR6 0GL
Phone: 0191 515 5555
Email: info@nationalglasscentre.com
Website: www.nationalglasscentre.com
- **Ryhope Engines Museum**
Address: Waterworks Road, Sunderland, SR2 0ND
Phone: 0191 521 0235
Website: www.ryhopeengines.org.uk



Sport and Leisure

- **Sunderland Aquatic Centre**
Address: Stadium Park, Sunderland, SR5 1SU
Phone: 0191 561 6161
Website: www.everyoneactive.com/centre/sunderland-aquatic-centre/
- **Stadium of Light**
Address: Sunderland Stadium of Light, Sunderland, SR5 1SU
Send a message: www.saafc.com/club/contact-us
Website: www.saafc.com/club/stadium-of-light



- **Silksworth Sports Complex and Ski Slope**
Address: Silksworth Lane, Sunderland, SR3 1PD
Phone: 0191 528 5101
Email: silksworthscinfo@everyoneactive.com
Website: www.everyoneactive.com/centre/silksworth-sports-complex-and-ski-slope/



Beach

- **Roker and Seaburn Beaches**
Address: Marine Walk, Sunderland, SR6 9LX



Parks and Gardens

- **Mowbray Park**
Address: Burdon Road, Sunderland, SR1 1PP
- **Backhouse Park**
Address: Ryhope Road, Sunderland, SR2 2EF
- **Roker Park**
Address: Park Parade, Sunderland, SR6 9PF
- **Herrington Country Park**
Address: Houghton-le-Spring, Sunderland, DH4 7EL
- **Albany Park**
Address: Washington, Sunderland, NE37 1AS



Sport & Leisure

Active Sunderland

Active Sunderland is a city-wide initiative supported by Sunderland City Council. Its aim is to help residents become more active by providing information on sports, physical activities, local clubs, volunteering opportunities, and coaching routes. The programme promotes a healthy, active lifestyle for all ages and abilities. To explore sports clubs, join activities, find coaching opportunities, or get involved in volunteering, visit:

👉 [Active Sunderland \(Sunderland City Council\)](#)

For a full list of sports, leisure activities, and events happening across the city, including free and family-friendly options, visit:

👉 **What's On – [Sport & Leisure \(MySunderland\)](#)**

You can use these websites to discover activities near you, check timetables, find community groups, and learn how to get involved.

Wellness Walks, Cycling and Swimming in Sunderland

Sunderland offers a wide range of free and low-cost activities to help you stay active and healthy. Many of these are part of the [Swim Bike Run Hubs network](#), which brings together opportunities for walking, cycling, running, and swimming across the city.

Below is an overview of some popular activities you can take part in:

[Walking](#)

[Active Sunderland Walking Programme](#)

[Cycling](#)

Sunderland has an extensive and growing network of cycling paths and routes that link the city centre with parks, suburbs and the coastline. Whether you are a beginner or a more experienced rider, you will find many routes to enjoy for leisure, commuting or longer rides.



Swimming & Leisure Centres

Sunderland has several leisure centres with swimming pools, gyms and sports courts. These centres offer swimming lessons, recreational swimming, fitness classes, and sports such as badminton, basketball and five-a-side football.

You can find local pools and activities through:

👉 [Everyone Active \(Sunderland leisure centres\)](#)

Please note that although many events and activities are free, there are also some that you must pay for.

Volunteering

Volunteering

Volunteering is a wonderful way to engage with your local community in Sunderland, develop new skills, make friends, and build confidence while you are waiting for your asylum claim decision.

How to Get Started

👉 Visit [Links for Life Sunderland](#) to explore volunteering opportunities, champion programmes and community-roles.

👉 The [Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance \(SVSA\)](#) can help you find meaningful volunteering roles across the city, matched to your interests, availability and skills. You can contact them for free support, guidance and next-steps. If you have a housing support manager, they may be able to help you to identify roles suitable for you, including options that may help with access to training, language skills, or community networks.



Extra support



✓ Migrant Help

- [Free asylum helpline](#) (open 24/7/365): 0808 8010 503
- You can also contact us via our [webchat](#) or via our [self-service portal](#), where you can sign in, track the status and receive updates directly.
- Email addresses for various queries can be found [here](#).

Email: info@migranthelpuk.org

Website: www.migranthelpuk.org/contact

Asylum services

Providing independent advice and guidance to assist asylum seekers in the UK move through and understand the asylum process. Migrant Help teams are based across the country and offer face-to-face advice to asylum seekers in the initial accommodation sites, as well as outreach services to vulnerable clients. Those seeking asylum in the UK can go to Migrant Help to seek help with applying for accommodation and financial support, to report issues with asylum accommodation, and any other advice needed during their asylum journey. Migrant Help also provide support during the post-decision period, whether the decision has been positive or negative

✓ Sunderland City of Sanctuary

Office: Interfaith Chaplaincy Centre, Charles St, Monkwearmouth, Sunderland, SR6 0AN

Phone: 0784 6099 643

Email: chris.howson@sunderland.ac.uk

Website: sj.sunderland.ac.uk/wellbeing/

- **English conversation class drop-in**
When: Every Friday, 3:00pm-5:00pm
Where: Interfaith Chaplaincy Centre, Charles St, Monkwearmouth, Sunderland, SR6 0AN
Learn English through conversations with others in a safe, welcoming and friendly environment
- **Film night**
When: Every Friday, 5pm
Where: The David Puttnam Media Centre, University of Sunderland, Sunderland, SR6 0DD
Watch great films for free, make friends and socialise in a safe, welcoming environment



✓ **Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre** 

Address: 30 Tatham Street, Hendon, Sunderland, SR1 2QD

Phone: 0191 564 0888

Email: info@sb-international.org.uk

Website: www.sb-international.org.uk

Opening times:

Monday to Friday: 10:00am-4:00pm

One to One support with individuals and language support also available to access.



✓ **New Horizon's African community support**

When: Every Friday

Advice and guidance for the African community for all their needs, including mental health and wellbeing support



- **Immigration advice**

When: Every Friday

Drop-in session providing information, advice and guidance to support individuals with immigration, including help with completing application forms. Telephone support also available

- **International coffee morning**

When: Mondays, 10:00am-12:00pm

Encouraging women to build social networks and friendships to improve their mental health and wellbeing

- **Welfare and community support**

When: Tuesdays, 10:00am-12:00pm

Information, advice and guidance on a range of topics, including claiming benefits and applying for Universal Credit, as well as help with filling in forms such as passport application and renewal forms, driving license forms, and housing application forms

- **Enterprise For All**

When: Mondays and Thursdays, 12:00pm-2:00pm

Enterprise and employment support to set up own business and become your own boss. Support given to identify potential business ideas, conduct research and explore viability. Guidance from CV writing to interview skills

- **Future Leaders Academy**

When: Every Wednesday

Empowering leadership in the BAME community and encouraging individuals to find their voice to overcome barriers and access opportunities

- **We Are Together**

When: Tuesdays, 10:00am-12:30pm

Promoting awareness of and improving BAME health and wellbeing to reduce loneliness and isolation

- **ESOL**

When: Tuesdays and Thursdays between 11:00am and 3:00pm (various groups and levels)

Weekly English classes to help improve language skills, build confidence and give learners a chance to socialise with others. All enthusiastic learners gain a qualification at the end of each level achieved

- **Volunteering Hub**

Providing individuals with the best opportunities for personal and team development, and supporting them to develop existing skills, learn new skills and gain qualifications

- **Training courses**

Help individuals build confidence and self-esteem with a variety of training courses. Short courses are available to start your employment journey. Upon completion of courses, individuals achieve an accredited certificate

✓ **Sunderland STAR** 

Email: staratsunderland@gmail.com

- **English conversation classes**

When: Mondays, 4:00pm-5:30pm

Where: Online via Zoom

Learn English through conversation at home with friendly and supportive volunteers. This class is aimed at intermediate to advanced students



✓ **Bethany City Church**

Address: Bede Tower, Burdon Road, Sunderland, SR2 0DA

Phone: 0191 565 4000

Email: info@bethanycitychurch.org Website: www.bethanycitychurch.org/

✓ **Globe Café**

When: Every Thursday, 7:00pm Where:

Address above

A drop-in café for asylum seekers and refugees offering an opportunity to relax, use the sports hall, play board games, use the Wi-Fi to access the internet or call home, and develop English speaking skills. Food is provided for free.



✓ **Sunderland Mind**

Address: Church Street East, Sunderland, SR1 2BB Phone: 0191 565 7218

Email: admin@sunderlandmind.co.uk Website: www.sunderlandmind.co.uk/

✓ **Mental health support and advice**

Providing confidential, high-quality services for individuals, carers and families experiencing emotional or mental health problems in a safe, caring, non-judgmental and supportive environment



✓ **Washington Mind**

Address: Grasmere Terrace, Washington, Sunderland NE38 7LP Phone: 0191 417 8043

Email: info@washingtonmind.org.uk Website: www.washingtonmind.org.uk/

- **Mental health support and advice**
Providing mental health and wellbeing support, services and training for the local community



✔ **Citizens Advice Bureau**

Office: 5a Waterloo Place, Sunderland, SR1 3HT

Phone: 0300 330 1194

Send a message: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/470-2/

Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/



- **Support and advice**

Offering good quality, independent and confidential advice online, over the phone, and in person, for free on a range of issues, including preparing for an asylum interview, what happens once granted refugee status, employment, navigating the welfare system, housing, law and court, and more

✔ **North East Migration Partnership (NEMP)**

Address: Middlesbrough Council, PO Box 504, Civic Centre, Middlesbrough, TS1 9FY

Email: nemp@middlesbrough.gov.uk

Website: www.nemp.org.uk/



✔ **Regional Refugee Forum (RRF)**

Address (Gateshead): Design Works, William Street, Felling, Gateshead, NE10 0JP

Phone: 0191 423 6255

Address (Middlesbrough): Newport Settlement Centre (The Hub), St Paul's Road, Middlesbrough, TS1 5NQ

Phone: 01642 232 446

Email: info@refugeevoices.org.uk

Website: www.refugeevoices.org.uk/



✔ **Lightning Reach** is a free, secure online platform in the UK that helps individuals find and apply for financial support such as grants, benefits, and local hardship schemes, from one convenient portal. You can check your eligibility for financial support quickly and easily through Lightning Reach's secure platform. 🖱️ [Find & apply for financial support | Lightning Reach](#)

Moving on

Moving On (Refugees)

When you receive a decision on your asylum claim, your entitlement to Home Office support will normally change. You will receive a letter explaining when your financial support will stop and when you must leave your asylum accommodation.

The charity **Migrant Help** will contact you shortly after your decision (whether positive or negative) to explain your next steps and guide you through any support available.

👉 Migrant Help: <https://www.migranthelpuk.org/>

If You Receive a Positive Decision

A positive decision means you have been granted **leave to remain** in the UK. This may be:

- Refugee Status
 - Humanitarian Protection
 - Discretionary Leave
- Once granted, you will have the right to:
- work
 - claim mainstream benefits
 - access social housing and private rental accommodation
 - open a bank account
 - study and access further education

Your Home Office financial support and asylum accommodation will normally end:

- within 28 days (for single adults), or
- up to 56 days if you have children or other vulnerabilities.

During this time, you should begin applying for benefits, housing and employment. Migrant Help can support you through this transition.

✅ **Sunderland City Council** will help you find new accommodation and apply for benefits to help you pay towards your new home when you receive a positive decision. The Housing team will talk you through your options and help you find accommodation that is suitable for you and your family. You can contact the Housing team on **0191 520 5551**. [Housing and accommodation - Sunderland City Council](#)

If You Receive a Negative Decision

A negative decision means your asylum claim has been refused. If all appeal options have been used, you become Appeal Rights Exhausted (ARE). At this stage:

- your Section 95 asylum support will stop, and
- you will be required to make arrangements to leave the UK.

However, you may be eligible for support if you meet strict criteria, such as:

- being destitute,
- taking steps to return to your home country, or
- being unable to leave the UK for medical or other reasons.

This support is known as Section 4 asylum support, and provides:

- basic financial support (via an Aspen card), and
- accommodation (if needed).

More information:

👉 Section 4 support guidance: <https://www.nrpfnetwork.org.uk/information-and-resources/rights-and-entitlements/support-options-for-people-with-nrpf/home-office-support/section-4-asylum-support>

You can also discuss voluntary return options through the Home Office's **Voluntary Returns Service**.

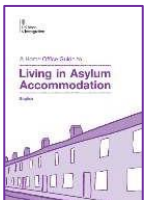
Support During This Time

Migrant Help is your main point of contact and can:

- explain what your decision means
- help you understand deadlines
- support you to apply for benefits or housing (positive decisions)
- guide you on Section 4 support or voluntary return (negative decisions)

👉 Contact Migrant Help: <https://www.migranthehelpuk.org/>

If you need help, you can also speak to your Welfare Officer or Housing Manager, who can support you during your transition.



For more information on what happens after you receive a decision on your asylum claim, whether positive or negative, please refer to A Home Office Guide to Living in Asylum Accommodation, pages 29 and 30. Online: [Living in Asylum Accommodation](#)

Useful contacts

✅ **Migrant Help** will support you through every step of the post-decision process. If you receive a positive decision, they will offer advice and guidance on applying for a job and benefits, opening a bank account, applying for housing, and more. If you receive a negative decision, they will explain what kind of support is available to you and how to access legal advice if this is necessary. They should be your first point of contact for enquiries regarding your decision. Please find their details in the 'Extra support' section of this pa

