

# Head of Governance & Trust Secretary Candidate Information Pack



Inclusion

Progression

Excellence



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## Welcome from the Chair of the Academy Trust Board

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the role of Head of Governance and Trust Secretary at New College Durham Academies Trust (NCDAT). As Chair, I am immensely proud of the Trust and of the service we provide to our children and the wider community.

NCDAT is an established multi-academy trust which currently consists of two large secondary academies located some six miles apart, in the heart of the communities in Stanley and Consett, North West Durham. Both Academies have fantastic purpose-built modern facilities that inspire students and colleagues to achieve all that they can.

The Trust is set up as a company limited by guarantee with exempt charity status and has Members and Directors. It is governed by company and charity law and bound by the Memorandum and Articles of Association, which set out the legal duties and responsibilities of the Trust and provides the underpinning authority for the proper governance of Trust business. Directors are drawn from business, the local community, stakeholders, partners, education and parents.



The Trust Board has a strategic and monitoring role whilst the Chief Executive Officer and Principals manage the day to day operations with their senior teams. The Trust Board meets at least four times per year and operates through a structure of committees that have clearly defined terms of reference and include a Local Governing Body for each academy.

The Trust is at an exciting and challenging time of transformation, with a new CEO taking up post on 1 September 2021 and as Chair, I am only 12 months into my tenure. One of the cornerstones for a successful trust is the quality of its governance. We are keen to recruit a proactive and creative individual as Head of Governance and Trust Secretary to join us on our transformational journey.

This candidate information pack provides details on the skills and experience we are seeking, but in summary we are looking for a Governance professional to be the Trust's Governance and Policy expert, providing key strategic guidance and support to enable the Trust to act effectively and efficiently in response to statutory requirements, but also developing and implementing best recognised practice in governance.

The successful candidate will bring valuable support and stewardship to our dynamic and forward-looking Trust Board, committees and Local Governing Bodies.

If you feel you meet the requirements of the person specification for this exciting role, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Karl Fairley', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Karl Fairley, Chair of New College Durham Academies Trust

## Vision and Ethos

Our Academies are at the heart of their local communities and strive to deliver on our founding principles of *Inclusion, Progression* and *Excellence* which supports a central vision of '*Students First*'.



The principle of *Inclusion* provides opportunities for students of all abilities, aspirations and backgrounds and involving staff, governors, students and the wider community in determining the direction of our Trust. Our curriculums are broad and challenging, with the academic success of students at the heart of what we do.

To encourage *Progression*, the Academy provides effective advice and guidance. This enables learners to make informed and appropriate decisions for future study and employment, encouraging them to take on new challenges and reach higher levels of achievement.

The focus on *Excellence* underpins all we do whether in learning areas; working in the community of governing and leading the Academy.

The Trust recognises that **safeguarding** our children and young people is core to all our activities, and we expect all staff, volunteers and wider stakeholders to share this commitment.

### Our Aims are:

- To ensure our Academies are centres of excellence with a focus on the nurture and achievement of all their members;
- To promote mutual support, encouragement and benefit between our academies;
- To develop, as the core foundation of academic achievement, a strong culture of professional development amongst our staff;
- To celebrate and maintain the unique identity of communities we serve with each Academy/School at the heart of its community;
- To recognise and enable all those who often remain invisible, through ethnic or cultural disadvantage, or through disability or poverty to achieve their full potential.

## Consett Academy



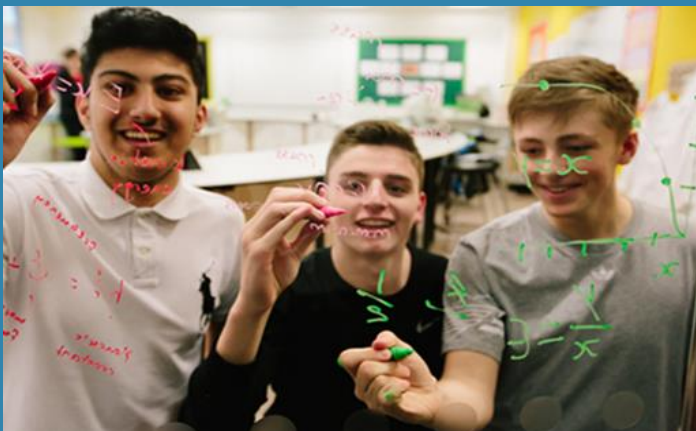
***“It was a pleasure to visit Consett Academy! The visit was well organised, the staff were all excellent and the students were brilliant.”***

**Mr P Wilson (prospective parent))**



**Consett Academy** is an over-subscribed larger than average 11-18 Academy with over 1400 on roll in years 7-11 (PAN 1500) and a sixth form of over 100. The Academy draws students from Consett town centre and the surrounding area. It successfully works with 11 partner primary schools but takes students from at least another 10 faith/non-faith primary schools in the area.

The proportion of disadvantaged students who attend Consett Academy and are supported by the pupil premium funding is above the national average (30%). The proportion of students who have an EHCP is below the national average. The Academy currently has 15 Looked After Students on roll who are from a number of different authorities. The attainment on entry is generally above average in most year groups.



Visit us at: <http://www.consett-academy.org.uk>



## North Durham Academy

**North Durham Academy** is a broadly average-sized 11-18 Academy with approximately 1000 students on roll but with the capacity to grow to 1500. The Academy is served by a range of both high performing and improving primary schools and student admissions are healthy, increasing year on year. The sixth form is small and currently subject to review.

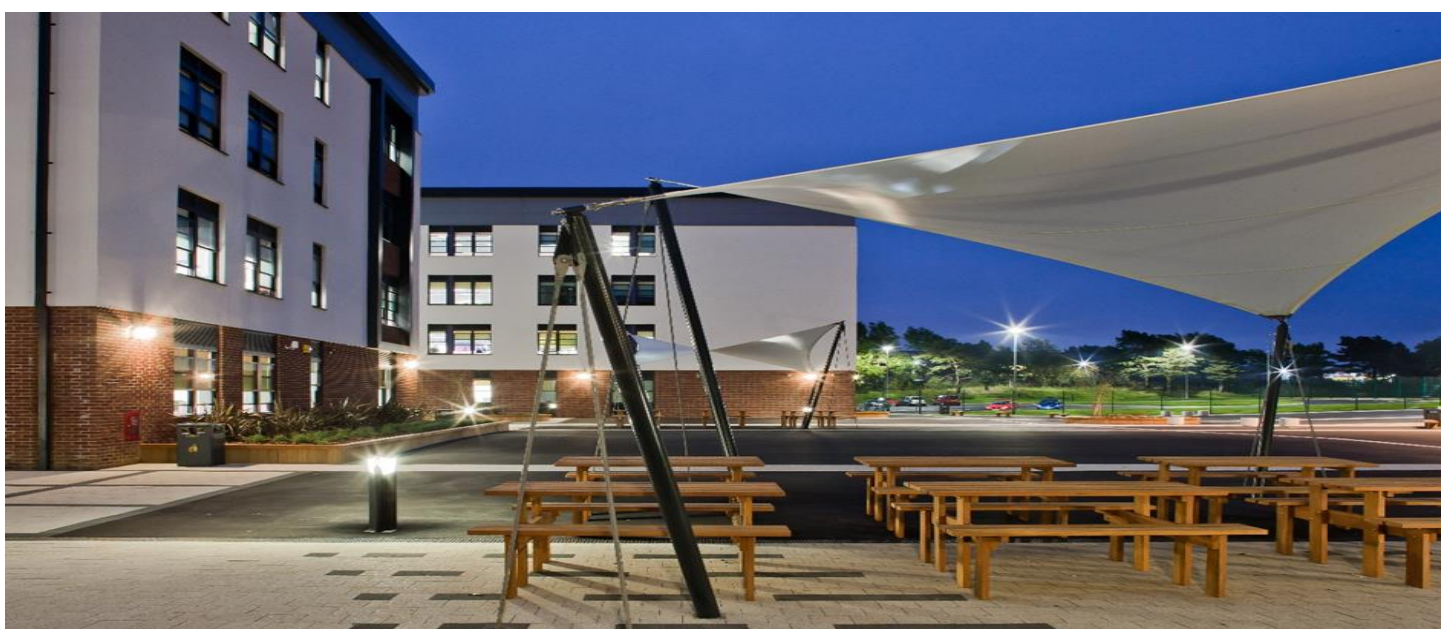
The Academy is situated on the main High Street in Stanley, a former mining town which is continuously developing. The catchment area encompasses students from a wide range of backgrounds, some of which present a number of social challenges. The proportion of disadvantaged students who attend North Durham Academy and are supported by the pupil premium funding is well above the national average (52%). The proportion of students who have an EHCP is also above average. The Academy currently has 4 Looked After Students on roll. Levels on entry range from the most able students to those where everyday school life presents regular challenges.

*"I have worked at the academy for 6 years now in various roles, starting as an Associate Teacher of Music, then trainee teacher, NQT and working my way up to head of department. NDA has given me plenty of opportunities to develop my teaching practice, from personalised CPD sessions to my current role of 'aspiring leader' where I have been encouraged to gain leadership and management experience by creating and leading on my own whole school project. The staff at NDA are incredibly supportive and there's a real sense of 'teamwork' across the directorates. Working at NDA is a challenging but rewarding experience where you can certainly make a difference to the lives of the young people in our care".*

Bethany Robson – Sport and Performing Arts



Visit us at: <https://www.northdurhamacademy.co.uk>



## Advertisement and How to Apply

**New College Durham Academies Trust (NCDAT) is seeking to appoint an exceptional, highly aspirational individual with a strong, proven track record of Governance to join us as our Head of Governance & Trust Secretary.**

**We currently have two secondary Academies housed in state-of-the-art facilities located in Stanley and Consett in North West Durham, where everyone matters equally. We are keen to grow the Trust and this role will be integral in our expansion plans.**

### **Head of Governance & Trust Secretary - 37 hpw – Term Time Only + 2 weeks**

**£45,861 - £51,096 pa whole time equivalent (£42,320 - £46,920 reflects actual salary)**

The primary purpose of the Head of Governance & Trust Secretary is to steward effective governance of New College Durham Academies Trust.

This is a strategic leadership position responsible for monitoring compliance with regulatory requirements, whilst consolidating local arrangements that provide robust challenge and support for our academies.

Reporting directly to the Chair of NCDAT, the postholder will be the lead in the Trust for ensuring high standards of governance, including the smooth and efficient administration of the Trust Board and its Committees, as well providing independent advice on governance process and practice. They will oversee compliance with regulatory and legislative requirements, ensure the Board's decisions are acted upon, are in accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and continue to provide public benefit.

At academy level, the postholder will be proactive and creative in identifying where governance is working well but also where interventions may be required. They will build strong relationships with the Chief Executive Officer, Principals, Chief Operating Officer and Chairs & Vice Chairs of NCDAT's Trust Board, ensuring governance at each Academy is fully 'Ofsted-ready'. As the Trust's Governance and Policy expert, the postholder will design and roll-out a professional governor training programme, and also lead on governor recruitment and retention, with a licence to be innovative in attracting high calibre volunteers.

This is a role with several dual elements: the need to provide strategic leadership as well as operational management; to be innovative and creative in developing system-leading governance for NCDAT, whilst also ensuring statutory and regulatory requirements continue to be met; to be an expert on the theory and approach to governance with the ability to implement and safeguard high standards of challenge and support; and to be equally comfortable operating at central as well as local level whilst ensuring all elements of governance combine to support driving improvements in standards across the Trust.

To arrange an informal and confidential conversation / virtual meeting about this post with the Chair of the Academies Trust Board, Mr Karl Fairley, please email Lyndsay Jordan at [lyndsay.jordan@newdur.ac.uk](mailto:lyndsay.jordan@newdur.ac.uk) or tel: 0191 375 4002, to arrange a mutually convenient time.

Interested? Candidate information packs are available on TES or via [www.ncdat.org.uk/current-vacancies](http://www.ncdat.org.uk/current-vacancies) Please submit your completed application via email to [hr@ncdat.org.uk](mailto:hr@ncdat.org.uk) CVs will not be accepted.

**Closing date for applications is: Middy, Monday 20 September 2021**

**Interviews will be held week beginning: Monday 27 September 2021**

*New College Durham Academies Trust recognises that it has a statutory and moral duty towards safeguarding the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. An enhanced DBS is required for this post and references will be taken up prior to interview.*



**POST:** Head of Governance & Trust Secretary

**RESPONSIBLE TO:** The Trust Board, New College Durham Academies Trust, through the Chair

**GRADE/LEVEL:** Grade 9

**CORE PURPOSE:** To steward effective corporate governance of New College Durham Academies Trust, (NCDAT). To provide support and advice to the Board of NCDAT and its committees, including the Local Governing Bodies, (collectively called the Governing Body), on governance, constitutional, legal and procedural matters.

**Working within the Academies Trust, the post holder will:**

- Provide effective administrative support to the Academies Trust board and its committees.
- Ensure the Governing Body is properly constituted.
- Manage information effectively in accordance with legal requirements
- Perform the company secretarial duties for the company.
- Support and promote the implementation of the Trust's vision and values
- Ensure that the Trust policies are promoted and adhered to
- Contribute in the promotion and advancement of the Trust as an educational and corporate establishment and develop a culture of excellence across its centres and partners.
- Foster effective relationships with stakeholders in the Trust

**SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES**

This role requires the Head of Governance & Trust Secretary to work closely with the Corporation Secretary of New College Durham (the Lead Sponsor), the Chair of the Academies Trust Board, Committee Chairs and Chief Executive Officer of the Academies Trust on a daily basis, whilst ensuring at all times a professional balance between maintaining his/her independence and developing/maintaining the trust and confidence of the Academies Trust Board, Local Governing Body Members, Chief Executive and Senior Managers.

**Key Result Areas**

**1. Provision of Governance advice to the Governing Body**

**The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary should:**

- ensure that the Governing Body operates at all times within its legal framework and specifically complies with the Memorandum and Articles of Association;



- independently advise the Governing Body on the proper exercise of its powers with reference to relevant legislation, rules and regulations and obligations and on the application of the education acts, charity law, company law and other laws and guidance affecting its work;
- monitor changes to the legislative framework and advise on action as appropriate;
- have access to appropriate legal advice, support and guidance and, where necessary, seek advice and guidance from third parties on behalf of the Governing Body;
- liaise with the Chair, Committee Chairs and Chief Executive as required to ensure the effective conduct of Governing Body business;
- offer advice on best practice in governance, including on committee structures and self-evaluation;
- ensure that statutory policies are in place and are revised when necessary, with the assistance of staff;
- advise on the annual calendar of meetings and schedule of business
- facilitate the induction of new Directors and Local Governing Body Members

**The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary should be familiar with the provisions of the following documents in particular:**

- Memorandum and Articles of Association;
- Code of Conduct for Directors and Local Governing Body Members;
- Committee Terms of Reference;
- Standing Orders;
- Register of Interests and Conflicts of Interest Policy;
- Governor Induction
- Master and Supplemental Funding Agreements;
- Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures;
- Finance and Governance Handbooks published by the funding body.

## **2. Meetings of the Academies Trust Board and Committees**

- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary is required to attend all meetings of the Academies Trust Board and its committees, including Local Governing Bodies, give advice on procedure and prepare draft minutes of proceedings. The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary should ensure that all meetings are quorate.
- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary should take appropriate action if and when the Academies Trust Board, the Chair or one of its committees appears to be at risk of acting outside their powers or if actions are being proposed that may be unlawful.

### **3. Agendas and Reports**

- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary should plan the forward programme of meetings of the Academies Trust Board and its committees, identifying the main items to be taken at those meetings.
- In conjunction with the Chair, Committee Chairs and Chief Executive Officer, the Head of Governance & Trust Secretary should prepare draft agendas for the Governing Body and meetings of Committees based upon the previous minutes and the agreed work plan, at least six to eight weeks in advance of meeting dates. Approval by the Chair is required before circulation.
- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will liaise with those members of staff preparing reports and will administratively manage the collation, printing and despatch of written reports to meet the requirements of meeting agendas, with appropriate administrative support.

### **4. Minutes**

The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary is responsible for preparing draft minutes of meetings and will administer the approval of draft minutes by the appropriate Chair of the meeting. The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will ensure the safe custody of the official record of the Governing Body business and maintain a record of outstanding business.

### **5. Membership of the Governing Body**

The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary is responsible for all matters in relation to the administration of Governing Body membership. The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will ensure that all statutory registers are maintained, including the following:

- Register of Directors and Local Governing Body Members
- Register of Members (Guarantors)
- Register of Interests
- Register of Persons with Significant Control

In addition, the Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will maintain the following records to enable effective administration of the Governing Body:

- Attendance at meetings
- Training & development events (internal and external)
- Governing Body member expenses
- Governing Body Skills audit
- Governance self-assessment, including meeting evaluation.

- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will ensure that the governance pages of the Trust and Academies' websites are up to date and accurate.
- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will prepare material for the appointment of new Directors and Local Governing Body Members and will liaise with the Sponsor (via the Head of Governance & Corporation Secretary) and Co-Sponsor about nominations for current or forthcoming vacancies.

- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will make arrangements for staff and parent elections as appropriate.
- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will facilitate the induction and ongoing training of Directors and Local Governing Body Members.
- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will ensure that Disclosure and Barring (DBS) clearance has been carried out as appropriate.
- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will advise the Governing Body on succession planning of all roles, not just the Chair.

## **6. Standing Orders**

The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will maintain and regularly review the Standing Orders.

## **7. Terms of Reference of Committees**

The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will maintain and regularly review the Committee Terms of Reference.

## **8. Code of Conduct of the Governing Body**

The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will maintain and regularly review the Code of Conduct for Directors and Local Governing Body Members.

## **9. Register of Interests and Hospitality – Governors and Senior Staff**

- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will maintain and regularly review the Conflicts of Interest Policy and advise the Governing Body on declaring interests.
- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will formally request Directors and Local Governing Body Members to review their entries in the Register of Interests each year and to confirm their continued eligibility to serve on the Governing Body.
- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will formally request senior Academy staff to review their entries in the Register of Interests each year.
- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will keep the Governing Body hospitality register up to date.

## **10. Correspondence, Contact**

The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will provide administrative support for the Chair and Committee Chairs outside meetings as required, including acting as correspondent for the Governing Body.

## **11. Company Seal**

The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will hold the company seal and ensure proper procedures are taken in the execution of any document under seal.



## **12. Public Interest Disclosure**

The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary will act as Designated Officer under the Public Interest Disclosure Procedure.

## **13. General**

- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary must demonstrate independent thinking and advice.
- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary is expected to demonstrate the highest standards of integrity, attention to detail, time management and communication.
- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary should have the ability to support the conduct of a meeting, take and produce minutes to the standard expected by the governing body, follow and advise upon agreed policies and procedures, and be motivated to achieve the highest standard of governance for New College Durham Academies Trust.
- The Head of Governance & Trust Secretary is expected to undertake continuous and relevant professional development in support of the role.

## **14. Other Duties**

- Provide professional advice and assist the Chief Executive Officer in areas of company law, company secretarial practice and governance.
- Manage the evaluation of the performance of the Governing Body including annual governance self-assessment, appraisal of the Chair, Committee Chairs and meeting evaluations. Advise the Governing Body on best practice in this area.
- Provide support for Local Governing Body members in the governance inspection process (eg Ofsted)
- Ensure copies of statutory policies and other school documents approved by the Governing Body are kept in the school and published as agreed, for example, on the website.
- Manage the allocated budget for Governing Body business and review monthly budget reports on expenditure.
- To maintain the records of the Governing Body and make appropriate use of any electronic records management system.
- Clerk any statutory appeal committees / panels the Governing Body is required to convene and ensure that appropriate advice is given to Governing Body members who are involved in these appeal procedures.
- Develop and maintain the Governing Body members' area on the website with access to key governance material, including meeting papers and minutes of meetings.
- Comply with all Academies Trust policies and statutory provisions relating to Health and Safety at work, Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Equal Opportunities.
- Undertake any other duties commensurate with Grade.

**VARIATION IN THE ROLE**

Given the dynamic nature of the role and structure of the Trust, it must be accepted that as the Trust’s work develops and changes, there will be a need for adjustments to the role and responsibilities of the post. The duties specified above are therefore not to be regarded as either exclusive or exhaustive. They may change from time to time commensurate with the grading level of the post and following consultation with the post holder.

**EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

The Trust is committed to equality and diversity for all members of society and will act to discharge this responsibility. Many of the actions, however, will rely on individual staff members to embrace their responsibilities with commitment, to ensure a positive and collaborative approach to Equality and Diversity. This will require staff to support the Trust’s initiatives on Equality and Diversity that will include development and training designed to enhance practices and the experiences of staff, students and visitors to the Trust, with an all- inclusive approach that celebrates differences. Failure to embrace these commitments may lead to formal action.

**COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE GROUPS**

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, as well as vulnerable adults, and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This postholder must ensure that the highest priority is given to following guidance and regulations to safeguard children and young people.

Name of Post holder:	
Signature of Post holder:	Date:

## PERSON SPECIFICATION – HEAD OF GOVERNANCE & TRUST SECRETARY

Training and Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
Relevant degree and/or professional qualification, e.g. Advanced Certificate in Corporate Governance; The Chartered Governance Institute (formerly ICOSA), law, accountancy, audit, business management.	✓	
Experience		
Experience of working in a Company Secretarial or similar senior capacity with exposure to board level interaction.	✓	
Extensive and relevant recent experience of note/minute taking at Board Level.	✓	
Recent experience of working with a School or similar organisation in supporting Governance roles.		✓
Professional Knowledge and Understanding		
Knowledge of formal conduct of committee business, including legal and financial framework.	✓	
Availability to work flexibly, including evenings when required.	✓	
Personal Skills & Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Ability and confidence to operate independently of the senior management team and to provide advice which is unbiased and impartial.	✓	
Ability to rapidly develop confidence and trust with Governors and staff throughout the organisation.	✓	
Ability to prioritise and to keep to deadlines within a challenging environment.	✓	
Ability to deal professionally with staff and students in person, by phone or by correspondence.	✓	
Possess drive, enthusiasm and a commitment to provide an excellent service to governors.	✓	
Recent experience in effectively organising and scheduling tasks to meet deadlines.	✓	
Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, both written and verbal.	✓	
A commitment to resolving problems and to improving own performance.	✓	
Proficient ICT skills and knowledge and experience of Microsoft Office Suite.	✓	
Possess drive, enthusiasm and a commitment to provide an excellent service to both internal and external customers.	✓	
Demonstrate the ability to work with accuracy and attention to detail in a constantly changing environment.	✓	
A methodical and meticulous approach.	✓	
Suitable to work with young people and vulnerable groups.	✓	
Willingness and commitment to continuous professional development/ further training as required, in accordance with Head of Governance & Trust Secretary.	✓	
Ability to drive/ current licence or have access to mobility support.	✓	



## Living and working in the North East



We have some of the most stunning landscape in the country on our doorstep. From the Northumberland Coast to the North Pennines, Kielder Forest and Park, to Durham Heritage Coast and Hadrian's Wall, to Whitley Bay, there are some beautiful places to spend your leisure time. Travel south and within an hour you can be in the North Yorkshire Moors or due North are the wilds of Northumberland – now officially a 'dark sky' national park. There are plenty of places to explore. If you enjoy a stroll on the beach with the dogs; a hike with the camera, or even something a bit more adventurous, you can find it all in the North East.

When people think of the North East, most picture mining, steel and football. But there are plenty of museums and galleries here to rival those in other areas.

There's the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, the Sage, Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (mima), Beamish Museum, The National Glass Centre, and many, many more. Plus, there are hundreds of historical sites and museums to visit, from Hadrian's Wall to Alnwick Castle and Gardens.

If food and drink is your thing, the region has a diverse and vibrant nightlife and you are spoilt for choice for places to eat from quality street food to Michelin star restaurants.

Our rugged coastline has idyllic beaches and quaint seaside towns. You can travel out by boat to the Farne Islands to see the wildlife, or drive over the causeway



to Lindisfarne when the tide is out. To the East you have the beaches of Roker, Seaburn and Tynemouth as well as the beautiful Northumberland coast line. One of the best things about living in the North East is how easy it is to access other places. You can travel anywhere in the region in less than two hours, plus we have Yorkshire, the Lake District and Scotland on our doorstep. The excellent rail and air links are in close proximity and provide a platform from where you can travel further afield.

The North East of England has housing that caters to all budgets, whether you prefer the urban bright lights of

city living or a slower pace within a rural village and everything in between; it has some of the cheapest property to be found anywhere in the UK. Whilst often overlooked by people in other parts of the country, the North East of England is a brilliant, welcoming and diverse place to work, rest and play.