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# Record funding enhances Northumbria's global reputation for AI research and teaching

Northumbria University has been named as one of 12 Centres for Doctoral Training in Artificial Intelligence as part of a major £118m funding announcement by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

The centres, based at 16 universities, will train the next generation of AI researchers and innovators, benefitting the UK's economy and society. Doctoral students will specialise in areas such as developing a responsible and trustworthy future for AI, healthcare, agriculture, and environmental sustainability to media.

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# Newcastle International Airport waves off first flight to popular beach destination

TUI waved off its first flight to Sal, Cape Verde, this month from Newcastle International Airport. This marked the beginning of the global travel and leisure company's new year-round service to this popular beach destination. Cape Verde is an African country renowned for its Caribbean characteristics, with white-sand beaches, turquoise blue ocean and brightly coloured villages.

Located off the west African coast, Sal is the most popular island in the Cape Verde archipelago, and its geographical location makes it the perfect escape for holidaymakers looking to relax in a sunnier climate 12 months of the year.

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# The Tynemouth Castle Inn opens with a bang

The Inn Collection Group's latest reopening exploded into life this month as The Tynemouth Castle Inn threw open its doors following a 14-month programme of refurbishment.

Totally transformed by its new owners through the renovations, the venue is now a welcoming pub sited in prime position on the North Tyneside coast that also boasts 72 bedrooms for the perfect seaside break.

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# BAFTA-winning production company creates local jobs with new Gateshead HQ

Chatterbox, the acclaimed BAFTA-winning production company behind hit TV series Meet the Khans and Charlotte in Sunderland, has announced the establishment of a new Northern headquarters, known as Natterbox, in Gateshead

The Brighton based company has moved into offices in Gateshead's 'state-of-the-art' digital production facility, PROTO, alongside a host of other TV production and immersive technology companies, with plans to create 10 new job opportunities in the North East.

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# Sting gives an exclusive performance at the opening of The Exchange 1856 following £1m+ refurbishment

North East icon and multi-award winning musician Sting was the first ever artist to perform at North Shields cultural venue, The Exchange 1856, following completion of a £1m+ refurbishment programme.

Following a change of operator earlier this year, The Exchange 1856 on Howard Street, North Shields, now open to the public, has undergone extensive renovations, transforming the 167-year-old building back to its former glory and creating a world-class community space offering entertainment, health and wellbeing, culture, food and drink, weddings and business in the heart of North Shields.

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# Film funding in the North East- "our little company, is evidence that things are starting to change"

In October, Fullwell 73 cofounder Leo Pearlman called upon the government to back plans for a major studio complex in Sunderland describing the film industry of the North East as being 'utterly forgotten.'

To find out more about the state of the film industry in the North East, I reached out to Connor Langley, cofounder of Red Stamp Productions based in South Shields. Having originally met at the University of Sunderland, Connor, alongside co founders Michael Rowlands and Michael Lambert decided to found Red Stamp Productions after winning the World Television Society's award for best comedy.

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# Teesside University's brand-new London campus showcased to potential students

Teesside University's London campus is now complete and was showcased to potential students during an open day for those looking to study in the capital.

Several hundred students are now studying at Teesside University London, with a fresh intake enrolling this month. And, this week, visitors were invited to an open day to find out more about the academic offer and meet some of the students who are already settling into their studies.

Teesside University London, based at Here East, is bringing in-demand subjects to new markets, with an initial focus on digital technologies and enterprise.

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# Frasers Group opens sports and fitness destinations in the Metrocentre

As part of our 2023 Retail Week coverage, in association with [Metrocentre](#), we hear from Frasers Group plc after it has opened the doors to Sports Direct's brand new multifascia store in Metrocentre, Gateshead.

Spanning 50,000 sq. ft, the store offers customers access to more brands from the Frasers Group's ecosystem, including USC, Evans Cycles, and GAME.

Everlast Gyms has also opened a 37,000 sq. ft flagship, offering athletes the UK's largest hybrid gym and a world-class fitness experience.

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# Gateshead Metrocentre announces opening of 'next destination for new luxury'

As part of our 2023 Retail Week coverage, in association with [Metrocentre](#), we hear once again from Frasers Group plc, which has opened the doors to FLANNELS' fourth flagship store as it continues with its 'pioneering' expansion journey, bringing luxury destinations to new markets.

Heading back to its Northern roots, FLANNELS has opened a new 50,000 sq ft store in Gateshead's Metrocentre. This store boasts an expansive new luxury fashion edit housing a wide portfolio of brands, including Tom Ford, Dolce&Gabbana, Off-White, Marc Jacobs, Vivienne Westwood and contemporary brands Amiri, and Palm Angels.

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# Interview: Winter sports wear brand sets out to take "the industry by storm one base layer at a time"

As part of our 2023 Retail Week coverage, in association with [Metrocentre](#), I reached out to the founder of the North East based ski wear brand, Sloobie, Renee Fraser-Shepherd, to find out more about her journey establishing a winter sportswear brand.

Renee decided to found the company four years ago while packing for a ski-trip. Discussing her eureka moment, she said, "when I was packing for a ski trip, planning my outfits, I realised everything I owned was full in colour and made me feel like a hot sweaty mess half a day into skiing!

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# Northumbria University announces £50m space skills, research and development centre

Northumbria University, Newcastle has secured a total of £50m in funding to create a 'world-leading' space skills, research and technology centre in the North East of England.

Major funding awards that were confirmed today from the UK Space Agency and global aerospace giant, Lockheed Martin have been match-funded by the University itself to create the North East Space Skills and Technology Centre. The centre, which will be known as NESST, will be a "game-changer" for the UK space economy.

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# Nissan invests £1bn creating an EV manufacturing ecosystem in Sunderland

Nissan and partners' initial £1bn investment to create EV36Zero will transform its Sunderland manufacturing facility and create a world-first EV manufacturing ecosystem.

Complementing vehicle and battery production is the Sunderland City Council-initiated Microgrid project, which will have the capability to deliver 100 per cent renewable electricity to Nissan and its neighbouring suppliers, incorporating the existing Nissan wind and solar farms, including Nissan's brand new 20MW solar farm.

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# Newcastle's Eldon Square 'gets the luxury treatment' with seven-figure store revamp

Family-owned national diamond, jewellery and watch retailer, Beaverbrooks, has made its biggest investment of the year with a brand new relocated Newcastle store and the introduction of a luxury watch boutique.

Following investment of £1.4m, the retailer unveiled its refitted, upscaled new store location on Hotspur Way in Eldon Square Shopping Centre on 23 November, including a new, adjoining 600 sq ft TAG Heuer boutique, the 14th TAG Heuer addition to the Beaverbrooks portfolio.

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# Fenwick and Greggs collaborate to launch 'Bistro Greggs' at Fenwick Newcastle

This December, family-owned department store Fenwick is collaborating with food-on-the-go retailer Greggs on a one-of-a-kind pop up at Fenwick Newcastle.

Launching on Friday 1 December, and running to New Year's Eve, Bistro Greggs will be an all-day dining destination, serving breakfast, brunch and lunch dishes from a Parisian-inspired space on the department store's first floor.

Guests will access through a pergola, a playful nod to the Greggs' signature lattice pastry design. Bistro Greggs will offer a fine dining experience, with dishes served under silver cloches by waiters in Bistro Greggs aprons and traditional white shirts and ties.

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