



# Labour market information

All the latest job and  
recruitment news!



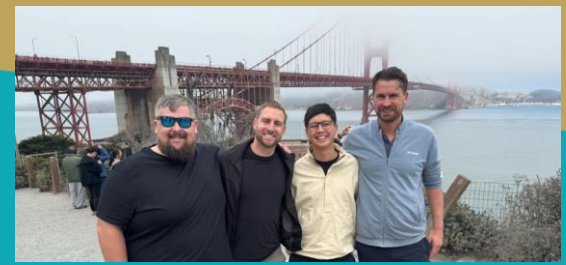
# £500 million Hitachi train deal secures hundreds of jobs

- Hundreds of train building jobs have been secured thanks to a £500 million deal.
- Hitachi will make 14 “award-winning, British-built” trains at its County Durham plant.
- The agreement – between Hitachi, FirstGroup and Angel Trains – eases fears of job losses at the Newton Aycliffe base
- The deal will see the factory, based in the cradle of the railway, build five-car class 80X electric or bi-mode trains.
- Work is expected to start in 2027, and bosses say it could be extended to include an additional 13 trains leased for services provided by North East-based operator Lumo.

[Read more here](#)



# BeamXR expands with £532,000 backing



A tech company has secured significant funding it says will revolutionise augmented reality, virtual reality and mixed reality gaming experiences.

BeamXR has raised £266,000 through equity investment from Creative UK's North East Culture and Creative Investment Programme, with additional backing from angel investors.

The funding was matched by a £266,000 grant from Innovate UK, bringing the total to more than £500,000.

Bosses at the firm, based in North Shields, North Tyneside, say the cash will “bring new levels of communication” and “exciting new social spaces” into virtual reality gaming by enhancing BeamXR's pioneering streaming software development kit, the first designed exclusively for standalone XR headsets.

[Read more here](#)

# 'Transformational' NZT Power plan moves forward

Teesside has cemented its place at the forefront of clean energy innovation, as two “transformational” carbon capture and storage projects enter the execution phase, promising thousands of jobs and substantial economic growth, industry bosses have said.

Net Zero Teesside Power (NZT Power), alongside the Northern Endurance Partnership (NEP) and global energy firms BP, Equinor and TotalEnergies will establish the world’s first gas-fired power station with carbon capture at Teesworks, on the site of the former Redcar steelworks, generating up to 742 megawatts of low-carbon electricity - enough to power more than one million UK homes annually.

[Read more here](#)



## Wordnerds raises £1.6 million to “scale at pace”



A Gateshead-based AI company is set to transform how businesses analyse customer feedback, following a £1.6 million funding round, including £720,000 from Newcastle-based venture capital firm Northstar Ventures.

Wordnerds, known for its AI-powered customer insight tools that are used by organisations such as Sainsbury’s, M&S and Network Rail, intends to use the investment to grow its commercial and product development teams, as the company looks to “scale at pace”.

By combining artificial intelligence with behavioural science, Wordnerds’ platform transforms data into actionable insights, helping to make sense of unstructured feedback from sources such as surveys, emails and social media.

[Read more here](#)

# Staff retention is the biggest challenge for UK employers in 2024

A technology firm backing Elon Musk's space odyssey has upped financial forecasts following strong demand.

Sedgefield-based Filtronic says it expects to "deliver stronger full-year results than current market expectations", with "significant growth in revenue and profits".

Bosses at the NETPark-headquartered company say its progress has been boosted by "robust" demand, with a "pull-forward" of customer orders accelerating momentum across the second half of its financial year.

The update comes just days after the business – which is working with Elon Musk's rocket and spacecraft maker SpaceX – revealed it was in "advanced discussions for further contracts in the space, aerospace and defence market".

[Read more here](#)



# NorthStandard expands with £23.5 million move

A Newcastle-headquartered marine insurer is expanding its offshore renewable energy offering through a £23.5 million partnership to meet growing global demand in the sector.

NorthStandard, one of the world's largest mutual maritime insurers with a team of over 600 professionals across 11 countries, has partnered with NIORD, a subsidiary of the Norwegian Hull Club, to provide additional capacity for insuring fixed and floating wind farms and renewable energy devices. The long-term partnership will take effect from January 2025.

[Read more here](#)



# Increases in minimum pay rates

A Newcastle-based HR firm that “uplifts other businesses” is set to expand its services and client base following a five-figure investment from the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund II (NPIF II), managed by NEL Fund Managers.

Sapphire HR, which offers tailored HR solutions for small businesses, has been preparing for growth after moving to larger premises in Newcastle’s city centre earlier this year.

Bosses say the funding will enable the firm to recruit two additional HR advisers, implement a targeted marketing strategy, “dramatically” grow its client base, and “significantly” increase its turnover over the next 12 months.

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# Northumberland Line returns after 60-year wait

A long-closed railway line in the North East is set to welcome passengers once again following a multi-million-pound project to reconnect communities.

The Northumberland Line, which links Newcastle to Ashington, is now open to the public after more than 60 years.

The line was one of many to be axed as part of the Beeching cuts to the railway in the 1960s. Its return follows a £298 million investment, having to overcome delays and spiralling costs due to severe weather and the discovery of unmapped mine works.

[Read more here](#)



# Learning centre sees success in supporting young people into higher education

A new air link is set to enhance connectivity between the Channel Islands and the North East of England, offering convenient travel options for leisure and family visits.

Blue Islands, a Channel Islands-based airline, will launch direct flights from Guernsey and Jersey to Newcastle International Airport, starting from 3 May. The service will operate up to three times a week - on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays - throughout the summer season, extending into November for the school half-term holidays.

[Read more here](#)



# University of Sunderland supports local film studio project as 8,000 new jobs created

North East leaders have unveiled a bold strategy to protect the region's natural landscapes and boost opportunities for rural and coastal communities, with ambitions to unlock jobs and drive growth across the area's vast countryside and coastline.

Spanning over 3,000 square miles, the region boasts iconic landscapes such as Northumberland National Park, as well as over 500km of coastline. With a thriving visitor economy and roles in farming, food and forestry, these areas are integral to the North East's identity and economic potential.

Following the approval of a £17 million investment for initial projects, the North East's Rural, Coastal and Environment Advisory Board has launched an investment plan targeting six priorities.

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