

## **DAERA extends review of dog breeding regulations**

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has granted an expert advisory group further time to review dog breeding regulations in Northern Ireland.

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## **Kimmins provides over £30m to improve our roads**

Infrastructure Minister Liz Kimmins has provided additional funding of more than £30m towards improving our roads here, including £4m targeted specifically at the rural road network.

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## **Archibald encourages applications to the AI and Data Assured Skills Academy with EY**

Economy Minister Dr Caoimhe Archibald is encouraging all those who are eligible to apply for the AI and Data Assured Skills Academy with EY.

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## **Jamie Driscoll Joins Green Party as Newcastle Greens Build for 2026**

Newcastle Green Party has today welcomed Jamie Driscoll to the party, as local Greens continue to build momentum ahead of the all-out city council elections in May 2026.

Jamie Driscoll, former Mayor of the North of Tyne Combined Authority, said he

has joined the Green Party because its values align with his own and because he sees it as a serious force in fixing Britain's problems.

Jamie Driscoll said:

"Britain's a mess. British politics is a mess and it's not the fault of immigrants. Food prices, energy prices, housing prices are all too high. Our economy isn't working for workers, it isn't working for small businesses. It doesn't have to be like this. I'm joining the Green Party because I see an organisation that's serious about running our country in the long-term interests of all our people."

Driscoll joins a growing team of Green campaigners and councillors who are working year-round to deliver real change for communities across Newcastle.

Mothin Ali, Deputy Leader of the Green Party, said:

"Newcastle Greens are showing what happens when politics is rooted in communities. Our councillors work hard every single day for residents, community groups and local organisations, and people are responding. Where they have a Green councillor, they want more. Jamie joining the party is a recognition of that local record and the values-led politics Newcastle Greens are building ahead of 2026."

Zack Polanski, Leader of the Green Party of England and Wales, added:

"This is another example of the Green surge sweeping across the country. Jamie is a well known political figure with a proven track record of delivering real change to people's lives. People are looking for bold politics that offers hope rather than fear, and solutions rather than division. Newcastle Greens are growing fast because they're delivering for their communities. It's great to see Jamie Driscoll choosing to be part of a party that's building real momentum from the ground up."

The local party says this local record is reflected in rapidly growing public support. Newcastle Greens are now the fastest-growing political party in the city, with more than 1,000 new members joining in just the past few months.

With all-out local elections in May 2026, Newcastle Greens say their focus is on growing their team, deepening community links and offering a positive alternative to Reform's politics of fear, funded by billionaires and based on managed decline and culture-war division.

Green Party Councillor for South Jesmond, Sarah Peters said:

"Jamie Driscoll's decision to join the Green Party comes as Newcastle Greens position themselves as the only credible, values-led force for change, rooted in everyday action and long-term ambition for the city.

"After 14 years of Conservative austerity, and with many communities still feeling overlooked and left behind by this weak Labour government, Newcastle needs hope, fairness and ambition again, not more of the same politics that have failed local people.

“The Greens are the only party in Newcastle consistently offering bold, practical solutions – on housing, transport, climate, public services and community wealth. We’re the only party challenging narratives that pit communities against each other instead of tackling the real causes of inequality.

“Newcastle Greens currently have a strong and expanding group of councillors with a proven track record of hard work in wards across the city. From standing up for residents facing rising bills, housing problems and failing services, to supporting community organisations, protecting local green spaces and winning practical improvements street by street, Green councillors are focused on improving daily life for people in Newcastle.”

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## **Fast broadband to reach over 9,000 rural premises across Northern Ireland**

Economy Minister Dr Caoimhe Archibald has announced that Fibrus Networks Ltd have been appointed to deliver Project Gigabit.