Newcastle’s high quality of life rating

The Toon is tremendous

IT MAY be best known for its fog on the Tyne, Brown Ale and fanatical football fans.

By Marc Meneaud mmeneaud@sundaypost.com

But Newcastle has another claim to fame — it’s just been named as having one of the highest quality of life rankings in Europe.

Researchers rated 83 European cities on whether their residents were satisfied with the lives they lead. And Tynesiders put their city among the highest in Europe for things like health and education, leaving the likes of Madrid, Paris and Rome trailing. The results were revealed in a European Commission study.

Johannes Hahn, commissioner for regional policy said: “This survey provides a useful snapshot of how Europeans feel about the cities they live in.

“It reminds us of the many elements that contribute to a sense of wellbeing and a good quality of life in our urban environments.”

The results will come as a welcome boost for northern England as Government ministers have been urged to abandon “failing” towns and cities such as Middlesbrough, Hartlepool, Burnley and Hull.

The European report was devised by questioning 41,137 people in Europe’s major cities in 2012. Researchers asked whether residents were satisfied with how their home cities performed in areas such as health, education, jobs and housing. They also quizzed people on their views about their city’s streets and buildings, public spaces, noise, air quality, transport and safety.

It is the first major survey of its kind since 2009.

The only UK city placed better than Newcastle for city-dwellers’ “overall satisfaction” was Cardiff, while major urban centres such as London, Glasgo and Manchester lagged far behind.

Newcastle came eighth of all the European cities for its health care services with a whopping 91% of people saying they were satisfied with its doctors and hospitals.

Helen Lamont, patient services director at Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust said: “We are very proud of the state of the art healthcare facilities available to us in Newcastle, and the wide range of high quality services which are renowned locally, nationally and internationally.”

Proud Geordies were also contented with the city’s education system.

Of those questioned, 81% were satisfied with Newcastle’s schools, colleges and universities, putting it 14th in the study’s league of European cities for education. Fed-up people living in noisy, smoggy cities such as Bucharest, Madrid and Athens will be envious of the quiet life on Tyneside.

A massive 88% of people in Newcastle said noise levels were satisfactory – ranking the city top of all 83 in the study. It was second only to Rostock, Germany, for public satisfaction with the city’s air quality.

But the study shot down Newcastle’s reputation as a city for shopping and culture. The number of residents satisfied with museums, libraries and galleries fell by 16% when compared to the 2009 survey.

Shoppers were also disappointed, ranking Newcastle a lowly 66th, while Glasgow, London and Manchester all appeared in the top 30 cities.

Newcastle City Council leader Nick Forbes said: “Anyone who lives, works or visits the city knows what an amazing place it is. International recognition is a further boost to our reputation.”

Newcastle has been transformed over the past three decades, partly as a result of spending on regeneration schemes. Yet despite its success, ministers have been urged to forget about spending money on other “failing” northern towns and cities.

An editorial in the Economist magazine reads: “Middlesbrough, Burnley, Hartlepool, Hull and many others were in trouble even before the financial crisis. Governments should not try to rescue failing towns.

“Instead they should support the people who live in them. That means helping them to commute or move to places where there are jobs — and giving them the skills to get those jobs.”

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Photograph: www.istockphoto.com
Freeman Hospitals India, a ‘sister’ organisation of The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is setting up a network of super specialty hospitals in India, with its flagship centre in Ludhiana, State of Punjab, India.

The Ludhiana hospital design, development and protocols have been based upon the expertise of Newcastle Hospitals in these fields. A feasibility study was undertaken by PricewaterhouseCoopers.
The concept for the flagship centre is not just a 350-bedded multi-specialty hospital but an integrated healthcare campus, which is being developed on 20 acres of land. The campus will comprise the following:

- hospital complex
- a sophisticated Nursing training centre and a modernised nursing hostel complex
- doctors’ accommodation
- assisted living facility within the campus, consisting of a number of different types of accommodation designed to meet diverse needs:
  - **High End level** – consisting of small apartments in a tower block with secured entry, individualised assisted living support and communication and entertainment facilities within the building
  - **Medium Level** – 3-4 floor buildings with private living facilities - rooms/small suites – and with centralised areas for dining, community entertainment, laundromats etc., with shared assisted living support
  - **Community level** – community-based assisted living for the elderly in partnership with government/community organisations. The single-storey structure will have community type living quarters, centralised facilities and services with living assistance.

The state-of-the-art, modern hospital complex will have centres of excellence in Cardiac Sciences, Neurosciences, Orthopaedics, Mother & Child, Gastroenterology and Oncology; all of which will be aligned to the respective services in the Newcastle Hospitals.

The Hospital will also provide essential specialties such as Internal Medicine, General Surgery, Ophthalmology, ENT, Day Care Centre, Primary Care clinics, stand-alone Dialysis Centres, Wellness Centres, and high-end diagnostic services & support capabilities.

The Hospital will benefit from high-end medical technology and with the use of clearly defined care pathways, using an advanced Electronic Medical Record platform.

Additionally a modern and highly advanced Emergency & Trauma facility, along with comprehensive inpatient and outpatient medical services and a sophisticated Rehabilitative Care programme will be provided.

The Campus will house a ‘One-Stop Shop’ to manage all comprehensive healthcare services under one roof.
There are more than 700 volunteers providing a direct commitment in one way or another throughout our hospital sites.

For example, the League of Friends have been providing charitable support to the Freeman Hospital for over 37 years. Since their sterling efforts began in 1976, The League has supplied an enormous range of equipment, raising money through the sales of a wide variety of merchandise in the Main Concourse Shop (now in its third guise), the ENT Tea Bar, the Sales Table in Main Outpatients and the Craft Trolley.

All volunteers work tirelessly to help provide major pieces of equipment to the benefit of patients and staff alike. However it is often the smaller items which though not highly technical, provide comfort and relaxation which are in many ways, just as important.

Many, many thanks to everyone involved.
We are very grateful to the many individuals and organisations who support much of what we do.
These are some of the voluntary and charitable fundraising groups with whom we are proud to be associated. There are many others and a host of individuals - a huge thank you to all concerned.
Heart Transplant Association

North East Diabetes Trust

Heart Transplant & Families Together

Registered Charity No.510339

People with cancer need places like these

British Kidney Foundation

NEPAC

Tyneside Thrombosis Association

Disability

British Lung Foundation

Children’s Heart Unit Fund

Radio Tyneside Hospital Broadcasts
Pioneering centre will save more patients’ lives

Helen Rae
Health Reporter
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A PIONEERING transplant unit in the North East has been officially opened by world leaders in transplantation.

Medical and research experts packed the foyer of the £30m facility yesterday at Newcastle’s Freeman Hospital for the unveiling of the plaque during a special ceremony.

The Institute of Transplantation brings together four operating theatres, a 22-bedded intensive care unit, recovery wards, an outpatient department, a screening and imaging department, office accommodation and a lecture theatre all under one roof.

Sir Roy Calne, who performed the first liver transplant in Europe in 1968 followed by the world’s first liver, heart and lung transplant in 1987, and Prof John Wallwork, who performed Europe’s first successful heart-lung transplant in 1984, officially opened the facility.

“It is a wonderful building and gives added value to patients”, said Prof Wallwork. “It really does bring together all the services that a patient needs in one place.

“The facility will attract really good medical people to the region and it will make it easier to get more funds for clinical trials, that will lead to better patient care.”

The opening ceremony was part of a conference with a number of eminent clinicians visiting from all over the UK, leading on lectures covering the history of transplantation, current clinical activity and research in Newcastle, and the future of transplant surgery.

Sir Calne said: “Everybody feels this facility is something surgically and educationally of value.”

It is expected that as many as 300 adult transplants will be carried out at the centre each year and pioneering research will take place in partnership with experts at Newcastle University.

Pam Yanez, directorate manager at the Institute of Transplantation, said: “This is the first centre of its kind in the UK and it is exciting to have such a fantastic facility in the region.

“Having all the services in the same place will lead to better patient outcomes.”

The new centre will allow heart and lung, kidney and liver transplants to all be carried out under one roof.

Patient-to-patient kidney donations, which require two next-door operating theatres, could be carried out more easily.

The Institute of Transplantation, which covers 9,500 square metres over a number of levels, has been funded by Newcastle Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Sir Leonard Fenwick, chief executive of Newcastle Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, said: “We are extremely proud of the Institute of Transplantation here in Newcastle - the first centre of its kind dedicated solely to the provision and advancement of solid organ transplant surgery for those whose lives depend on it.

“Is this a five star NHS facility and patients will come from all over the UK to use it. The Institute of Transplantation is about quality, time, ambiance and compassion.

“I am delighted to be providing a service like this and to have such distinguished guests to help us celebrate the official opening is a great honour for the NHS here in the North East of England.”
Play facilities opened at specialist heart unit

by Gavin Havery, Reporter (Derwentside & Tyneside)

PLAY facilities for children undergoing heart surgery were opened at a specialist centre in the North-East by a family who have raised thousands of pounds for the unit.

The £300,000 of play equipment at the Children’s Heart Unit at Newcastle’s Freeman Hospital was unveiled on Saturday.

The indoor and outdoor facility was funded by Seb4CHUF, a group organised by Whitley Bay husband and wife, Ivan and Nadine Hollingsworth, after their son Sebastian had a life-saving heart operation when he was born five years ago.

Since then, the couple have organised and taken part in a wide range of charity fundraising events, which have been supported by friends, family and complete strangers.

The events include five coast-to-coast runs, cycles and swims and Mr Hollingsworth has skied down an Alpine mountain wearing nothing but a mankini in sub-zero conditions.

At the official opening, where Seb undertook the official ribbon-cutting duties, Mr Hollingsworth, who now has a place on the board of trustees for CHUF, said: “I have this unit to thank that my son Seb is here at all.

“It’s testament to the care, dedication and skills of everyone here that one of their own heart patients is fit and healthy enough to be bouncing around the play facilities today so much so that he had no interest in actually cutting the ribbon.”

The play facility includes special zones for all ages, including messy areas, tech zones with video games and widescreen 3D TVs, play kitchen, arts and craft and a mini outdoor ‘city’, complete with a railway station and painted train tracks and roads.

Joanne Moore, play specialist at the Children’s Heart Unit, said children can be emotionally traumatised by the situations they find themselves in and the facility will be used for role-playing scenarios that can help put them at ease both before and after their operations and treatments.

Mrs Moore said: “As well as allowing the kids just to be kids, a fully equipped play facility is crucial in both the pre and post operative care of the child.

“We’ll be forever grateful to everyone who has helped the Seb4CHUF cause over the last few years and want to publicly thank them for their support of the unit.”

Later this year, a brand new ‘home from home’, funded by CHUF and The Sick Children’s Trust, is being opened to provide specially-built accommodation for the families of those who have children on the ward, some of whom have to stay for up to a year.
A big day for cancer patients see the arrival of seven brand new ambulances to help cancer outpatients on their journey to recovery!!

Over a hundred school children from nine primary schools went to Daft as a Brush House on the Great North Road, Gosforth welcomed the arrival of the ambulances their schools have adopted – Newsham Blyth, Broomhaugh Riding Mill, Shaftoe Trust Haydon Bridge, Stocksfield Avenue, Fenham, Langley West Monkseaton, Cragside High Heaton, Gosforth Park/Broadway East/St. Oswald’s Gosforth. The celebrations planned will mark a further development of Daft as a Brush Cancer Patient Care in transporting cancer outpatients to and from hospital. The charity in 2014 will be involved in over 10,000 patient journeys and then in 2015 with a fleet of 16 ambulances it is hoped that this number will increase to 13,000/14,000 cancer patient journeys.

info@daftasabrush.org.uk
We’re here to help

The brand new Daft as a Brush reception desk on Level 1 of the Northern Centre for Cancer Care has been created to provide a point of contact between cancer patients, carers and the service the charity provides.

It’s well known that travelling to and from hospital can, in some instances, be quite a stressful time. Hopefully, this is where Daft as a Brush can be of assistance. If you require any information about the service the charity provides or would just like to have a chat, why don’t you ‘pop down’.

We would love to see you, alternatively, just telephone (0191) 213 8385.

Thank you

Daft as a Brush Cancer Patient Care is a registered charity No. 328 432.
Daft as a Brush House, Great North Road, Gosforth,
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2DR. Tel: (0191) 28 55 999
Donate, explore, discover more at www.daftasabrush.org.uk
Does walking help you get better?

The creation of the Daft as a Brush Cancer Patient Care Walk is a rather special and unique walk that is dedicated to all those people affected by cancer.

The walk is from the source of the North Tyne River in the Cheviots at Jimmy & Fiona Hall’s Deadwater Farm, Kielder, Northumberland and also from the source of the South Tyne River in The Pennines at Geoff & Barbara Carrick’s Tynehead Farm, Garrigill, Cumbria to the sea at Tynemouth and South Shields piers.

The 135 mile walk passes through some of Great Britain’s most beautiful and rugged countryside, plus some contrasting regenerated Tyneside industrial landscape where woodland footpaths and grassed areas have been created.

It was a couple of years ago during the first pilot walk that we called into Byker Primary School, one of the schools which has adopted a Daft as a Brush ambulance.

We gave the children a talk about the walk and introduced the team of walkers. One of the walkers had experienced cancer twice and still thoroughly enjoyed the walk. The children’s first question after we finished the talk was “does walking help you get better?” I am sure that having a positive attitude and, if possible, being able to get out into the fresh air must help in some way. Depending on their ability, walkers can choose to either complete a short section of the walk or, if time permits, complete the whole walk from source to sea.

Hopefully, the walk will raise an awareness of all those people affected by cancer and the difficulties cancer patients experience daily travelling from home to hospital whilst undergoing treatment for cancer. When the walk is officially launched in spring 2015 it will be able to rub shoulders with many of the great long distance walks in the United Kingdom.