

Closure of Department for Communities offices in Castle Court on Wednesday 29 August 2018

Due to the fire in Primark, Bank Buildings, Royal Avenue, Belfast and as a precautionary step, the Department for Communities (DfC) offices in Castle Court will be closed until Thursday 30 August.

This decision has been made to allow the necessary safety checks required by Fire safety Teams to ensure that the office is fit for use, in terms of health and safety, before staff return. It is also to avoid compounding any safety issues by bringing large numbers of staff into the area during this incident.

Therefore, DfC staff working in Castle Court should not attend this office on Wednesday 29 August. Normal services are expected to resume on Thursday 30 August.

Universal Credit service is unaffected by this closure and customers can contact us as normal. Jobseekers Allowance customers due to attend Royal Avenue Social Security Office on Wednesday 29 August will be excused and payments will not be affected. Any other customers seeking to use Royal Avenue on Wednesday 29 August should instead use the North Belfast office in the Design Centre, 39 Corporation Street, Belfast.

Unfortunately, there will be a number of services impacted by this closure. They are:

- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- Carers Allowance;
- Attendance Allowance;
- Welfare Supplementary Payments.

Customers for these benefits will not be able to contact the Castle Court office until 9.00am on Thursday 30 August.

Any customer requiring assistance can make contact with their local Jobs and Benefits office or Social Security office.

The Department for Communities apologise for any inconvenience caused.

[GCSE results – support and advice about your options](#)

Date published: 23 August 2018

The GCSE results are out. Now it's time to make important decisions about your future and there are many options available for you to consider.

Contact a careers adviser

The [Careers Service](#) has a team of professionally-qualified careers advisers who offer impartial careers information, advice and guidance.

To contact a careers adviser, you can:

Careers advisers will be available from 9.00 am to 7.00 pm to provide support to GCSE students on Thursday 23 and Friday 24 August.

Careers advisers can provide advice and guidance on:

- Further and Higher Education
- continuing on at school
- apprenticeships
- CVs
- job applications
- job interviews
- advice on job trends, including occupations which will be important in the future

Information about options

Further information on the many options available to you are also available in the following section:

If you have an issue with a result

If you have a query on any issue relating to your exam results (for example appeals, re-marks or re-sits) then contact your school, college, or the [Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment \(CCEA\)](#) helpline:

The helpline will be open 9.00 am to 5.00 pm until Wednesday 29 August.

More useful links

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[Range of things to visit over heritage weekend](#)

More than 360 properties will be opening their doors to the public, free of charge for European Heritage Open Days (EHOD) weekend (8 to 9 September). There will also be talks, tours, exhibitions, performances, arts and crafts all over Northern Ireland.

Buildings and events

Among the places and events you can visit are:

Islandreagh Mill and Beetling Sheds, Dunadry

Visit the mills and dye works on the Islandreagh Estate, a Grade B1 listed building on the banks of the Sixmile River in Dunadry dating back to the early 1800s. You can take a guided walk in the extensive grounds.

Northern Ireland's Secret Bunker

Located 15 feet below a field on the outskirts of Portadown lies a relic of the Cold War. The secret bunker was built to study the effects of nuclear explosions.

North Down Museum, Town Hall, Bangor Castle

North Down Museum, housed in Bangor Castle (which was built in 1852) packs a lot into a very small space.

Meet characters from long ago: monks, soldiers and Vikings, have a go at archery and calligraphy, or enjoy traditional music, poetry, storytelling and weapons demonstrations.

Marble Arch Caves

Take a guided bus tour and visit some of the sites in the Marble Arch Caves UNESCO Global Geopark, with an optional nature walk and a guided tour of Marble Arch Caves.

There is an Irish language version of this event taking place on Sunday 9 September.

Springhill House, Moneymore

Visit this pretty 17th century house with an interesting costume collection, walled gardens and parkland.

There are 10 generations of family tales to enthral you, not forgetting Ireland's best-documented ghost: Olivia.

Lissan House and Demesne

Lissan House is at the centre of extensive parkland at the foot of the Sperrin Mountains and was the home of the Staples family from the 17th century for nearly 400 years.

The Regency tea room will be open and guided tours bring the exploits of this colourful family to life.

European Heritage Open Days events

To find a full list of European Heritage Open Days building openings and events you can either [use the map viewer](#) or [download a brochure for more information](#).

You can also pick up a brochure from your local tourist information centre, council office, or from museums and libraries.

More useful links

[Places available on tech academy](#)

Date published: 09 August 2018

Applications are now open to take part in a 12 week tech academy with the possibility of future employment in the software development industry. The closing date for applications is Monday, 27 August.

About the academy

The Neueda Tech Academy is a 12 week class-based training programme provided by Belfast Metropolitan College. Successful applicants will:

- get practical, real world training in an agile team environment
- learn about cutting edge technologies
- receive £150 per week plus travel expenses

Candidates who successfully complete the training will have the opportunity of employment with Neueda, with a starting salary in the range of £22,000 to £24,000.

Who can apply

Applications are welcome from people with all of the following:

- a foundation degree or equivalent in any discipline
- a passion for technology and computing
- an ability to learn quickly and pick up new skill
- an ambition to build a career in the IT industry

Previous experience is not required.

How to apply

You can find out more information and how to apply on Neueda's website:

The closing date for applications is 12.00 noon on Monday 27 August 2018.

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[Help for people with dementia to prevent accidents at home](#)

People living with dementia can now get advice on how to reduce the chance of having an accident at home. Understanding the risks can help them stay independent, and live well and safely with dementia in their own home for as long as possible.

Free home safety check

People with [dementia](#), and anyone aged over 65, are can get free home safety checks provided by home safety officers from local councils.

The checks only take around 60 minutes and offer tips on all aspects of home safety.

A room-by-room inspection will identify potential risks, and advice will be given to families of people living with dementia to make their home safer. Heating and home energy efficiency advice can also be given.

Free home safety equipment can be provided and referrals can be made for free smoke alarms and expert fire advice from [Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service](#).

As dementia progresses, householders can also get a home assessment from occupational therapists working in [Health and Social Care Trusts](#) to make sure all practical support is provided.

This can include adaptations in the home (for example, alarms, sensors or support rails) and aids such as mobility aids and tracking devices.

For more information on how to get a home safety check, [contact your local council](#).

Explain the hazards

Families and carers of those living with dementia can also help by explaining clearly all the hazards within the home and making sure the person with dementia is involved in all discussions.

Simple tips can help in some way to reassure those living with dementia, such as:

- writing notes about turning off electrical and gas appliances
- having emergency phone numbers in large print beside the telephone

All potential risks within the home should be highlighted.

More useful links