

MONTHLY GATESHEAD HEALTH STAFF ADVICE BULLETIN

ISSUE 15: HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR SPRING CLEAR OUT

If you're considering a spring clear out, or even if the thought hasn't crossed your mind, have a look at some of the main reasons why you should.

1. **Selling your stuff has never been easier**

Whether it be the cost-conscious consumer, environmentally aware buyer, or vintage connoisseur, second-hand shopping has seen tremendous growth in the past few years. From clothes to cobweb covered plant pots in the shed, you'll be surprised with what's in demand.

2. **Ethically beneficial**

You can make your fast fashion more ethical by selling it. Through giving your clothes a new life in someone else's possession, you reduce its carbon footprint, contributing to better environmental practices.

3. **Health and wellbeing – Mental**

A lot can be gained from decluttering that one drawer, the space under your bed, or specific room in your house. Through finding time to reorganise and deal with these spaces, you start to make your house feel more like a home, a place where you can relax and unwind from life's daily stresses.

4. **Health and wellbeing – Physical**

Cleaning items such as worktops, floors, bedsheets, and furniture, can reduce the build-up of bacteria, mould, and dust. This reduces the chance of infection and helps your immune system.

Removing clutter can also reduce the chance of injury. If you've ever tripped, stubbed your toe, or fallen because of obstacles in your home, you'll be aware of the risks and benefits of dealing with these items.

Some changes to your physical environment may be out of your control. If you're living in rented accommodation that requires major repairs or has safety issues which deem it unfit for human habitation; your landlord is responsible to make these changes happen or deal with the problem. Some examples of these are: mould, pest issues, damp, and structural damage.

If you would like to see more examples or require advice regarding the steps you should take if you are experiencing any of these, check out our website: [Repairs in private rented accommodation](#)

Spring clear-out advice

Whether you're looking to make some extra cash, declutter, or bring a fresh new feel to your home, there is some important advice to take note of to make the most out of it and to avoid complications.

1. Selling- what, where, how

Apps and Websites

Depop: Clothes, particularly quirky and vintage pieces.

Vinted: Largely fast fashion and high street brands, but also have home, entertainment and pet categories.

eBay: Almost everything- home, fashion, motor, shoes, jewellery, electronics etc.

Facebook Marketplace: Local sales, similar to eBay (huge variety of items).

- Displaying items: make sure picture is in frame, multiple angles, display signs of usage, and ensure image has good lighting and is not pixelated/blurry.
- Write an honest description.
- Sell seasonally minded.

It is important to be aware of tax liability when selling items online. The GOV website has a quick and simple self-assessment to check if you should be informing HMRC about this additional income: [Check additional income tax](#)

For further tax advice there is information on the [Citizens Advice website](#) or on the [Gov website](#).

2. Organise your physical environment

Throw things out: If you don't use it, you probably don't need it. Try getting rid of clutter and unnecessary items.

Put things away: Lesser used items can be put away into storage, drawers or out of sight. Whilst more frequently used items should be made more easily accessible.

Keep it minimal: Everything should have a clear purpose; excess items will create unwanted clutter.

Making your physical environment work for you can often have obstacles, especially if you have a disability. If you rent your home or if you're looking to rent, the Equality Act 2010 requires that 'reasonable adjustments' be made to help you live there. To check if you have a right to these changes, have a look at our website: [asking for adjustments to help with your disability](#)

3. Clearing your digital space

Records management: try organising and deleting digital rubbish. Be thoughtful and ruthless with what you really need.

Clearing your email inbox: getting rid of spam, unsubscribing from automatic emails, deleting unwanted emails, and organising emails into folders, will all contribute

towards better organisation.

It is important to note that scams can come in many forms, if something doesn't seem right or you want to check its validity, Citizens Advice provides a scam checker to help you avoid these. [Citizens Advice scam checker](#)

4. Taking out the emotional rubbish

Find a colleague, friend, or family member to talk through your emotions and current challenges. Getting a fresh perspective may help you make better decisions on how to face challenges.

Work on establishing new habits as you clear out the negative.

Take short breaks throughout the day: this can help you reset and find mental clarity.

There are matters which Citizens Advice can help with (discrimination, relationships, money advice, gambling support etc.) take a look at Citizens Advice Gateshead and the National website for ways we can support you and offer advice: [Citizens Advice Gateshead](#) / [Citizens Advice National](#)

5. Green Clean

Although killing the germs around your home is beneficial to your health, many of the chemicals used inside cleaning products can be harmful. There are some everyday products lying around your home which can be just as effective at cleaning, whilst also being more cost effective. Bicarbonate of soda, lemons, white vinegar, and salt are some of these products which can be used in a variety of combinations to clean.

6. Make it fun

Let's be honest, although necessary, cleaning is a chore. Playing a podcast, playlist, or favourite album can really help motivate you or even allow you to have fun.

Remember you can get in touch with your Citizens Advice Gateshead team for impartial advice, information, and guidance.

Email [gestaffswa@citizensadvicegateshead.org.uk](mailto:gstaffswa@citizensadvicegateshead.org.uk) or call 0191 490 4231 and we'll be back in touch with you within 1 working day Monday to Friday.