



The Elders Council of Newcastle

Older People working for Older People

May 2011 - Issue 41

Elders Council of Newcastle

Contact Details:

Elders Council of
Newcastle,
FREEPOST
RRAK-YURB-SKGS
2nd Floor,
MEA House,
Ellison Place,
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 8XS

Tel: 0191 233 0200

Fax: 0191 260 5307

Email:

info@qualityoflife.org.uk

Website:

www.elderscouncil.org.uk



**THE ELDERS COUNCIL
NEEDS YOU TO HELP
PROMOTE ITS WORK.**

**PLEASE PASS THIS
NEWSLETTER ON TO
OTHERS WHO MIGHT
BE INTERESTED.**

Older and Safer

Tuesday 5th April saw a gathering of about 100 Elders Council members at the Assembly Rooms to discuss safety, both when out and about and at home.

After a brief welcome from Elders Council Chair, Mary Nicholls, the meeting started with a performance by the Old Spice drama group, touching on many aspects relevant to older people keeping safe. Participants then spent an hour addressing a number of questions including:

- When and where do they feel safe at home and in their neighbourhood?
- When and where do they felt unsafe?
- If there were areas in their neighbourhood where they felt unsafe, what would they like done about it and by whom?

During the second part of the meeting, participants had the opportunity to discuss safety issues with representatives of 12 different agencies, including the Police, Community Care Alarm Service, Safe Newcastle and the Fire Service. Additionally and run in parallel to these discussions, there were two further short performances from Old Spice, dealing with bogus callers.

The meeting concluded with a prize draw for a £25 shopping voucher, which was won by Irene Coghill (*see picture on page 2*).

An account of the matters raised is being prepared

Older and Safer - cont -

and will be included in the next issue of the Newsletter.



Photo: Irene Coghill being presented with the £25 gift voucher by Mary Nicholls

Editors' Note: Readers interested in following this up please turn to pages 22-24

Working Group Updates

Communication Working Group



Everyone's tomorrow – today!

If you want to listen to the programme live, tune in to 102.5fm from 2-4 on the first Friday of every month or 10-12 on the following Monday.

And, if you miss either of those slots, you can go to:

<http://www.elderscouncil.org.uk/audio/>
and listen to all our interviews on line.

If you would like to join the team, please get in touch with Steve Whitley on

tel. 273 4727 or email

steve.whitley@phoncoop.coop

Working Group Updates

Transport and Highways Working Group

Gold Card expiry date information

Nexus has altered the validity of some Metro Gold Cards to ensure that customers buying a £25 pass will receive 12 months of travel. This means that Gold Cards bought since 1 April 2011 will be valid until the end of April 2012.

Anyone who has purchased a Gold Card since 1 April with a 'March 2012' expiry date is advised to return to the Travelshop where they bought it to be issued with a replacement pass, bringing with them the Gold Card, and their concessionary travel pass.

Alongside the £25 Gold Card for Tyne and Wear residents, customers can instead choose to buy Gold Cards for shorter periods if they want to split the cost of payment or use Metro at only some times of year.

Local bus services are changing

Nexus is making big changes to the local bus services it provides in Newcastle (using funds from local authorities) and a number of routes in the city have changed.

The changes come following a consultation with local people (including Elders Council Transport Working Group) last year, in which thousands gave their views at community meetings and online.

The key changes are listed in *CityLife* and are:

- new service 3 from Battle Hill in North Tyneside to the Freeman Hospital via Walkergate and High Heaton, extending to Regent Centre via South Gosforth Metro at peak times;
- new service 4 from Callerton to Metrocentre via Westerhope and West Denton, Blakelaw, Cowgate and Scotswood;
- new service 13 to link Newburn, Throckley, Lemington and Walbottle with West Denton shops;
- service 353 to replace Arriva services 3, 350, 351 between Four Lane Ends and Kingston Park via Hazlerigg, Dinnington and Newcastle Airport;
- improvements to existing services including additional evening and weekend journeys on services 18 and 33.

Full details and timetables are available on www.nexus.org.uk, or visit a Nexus Travelshop or call North East Traveline 0871 200 2233.

Working Group Updates

Transport and Highways Working Group – cont -

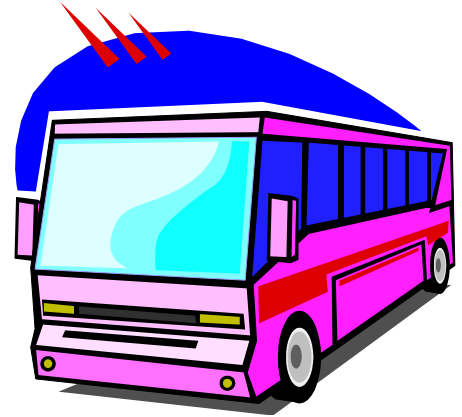
Summer Outings 2011 using a Concessionary Bus Pass

Following the huge success of our last two *Summer Outings with a Concessionary Bus Pass* leaflets, we are delighted to say that we are proposing to issue the leaflet again this year. Last year over 500 copies were sent out and many people commented on how useful it has been.

Despite the cutbacks in support for rural bus services, we have still been able to come up with one or two new routes for you to try.

However, a word of warning: bus services are changing frequently and it is most important that you check the details with Nexus or the companies concerned before you travel. We, obviously, cannot accept any responsibility for any problems which might arise; it is up to you to make any enquiries necessary.

We are happy to say that the leaflet is still free to Elders Council members.



Unfortunately, because of the success of the leaflet last year when our switchboard was inundated, we are asking you not to phone in this year. However, the easiest place to access the leaflet is through the Elders Council website <http://www.elderscouncil.org.uk/publications> . If you do not have a computer, you could have it printed for you at your local library. If all else fails, either call into the office or complete the address label on page 27 and send it to the Elders Council office; a copy of the leaflet will be sent to you.

Once again, we are grateful to Mervin Dixon for researching this light-hearted summary and we hope that you will enjoy many happy days out exploring our wonderful countryside here in the North East.

Other Leaflets available

Please note that, in addition to our Summer Outings leaflet, there are a number of other interesting leaflets available as follows:

- Nexus: *Bus Walks 1, Bus Walks 2 and Metro Walks.*
- Arriva: *Coast and Castles*, which includes details on services to Alnwick and Berwick.
- Go North East: *The new way to use your concessionary bus pass on Go North East buses.*

All available from Nexus TravelShops.

Working Group Updates

Older Person Friendly City Working Group

Summer Programme in the Parks is high on our agenda as we begin to enjoy some better weather.

We are looking ahead to enjoying more activities than ever before in our parks in the summer. In March we organised an afternoon of Fun and Fitness for the over-50s as part of the Jesmond Community Festival. Although it was indoors rather than outdoors (it was March after all!), we do have some ideas to share with you about what is on offer.

Nordic Walking is really taking off as more people try it and find it an effective way of toning up the muscles, improving functioning of heart and lungs, without putting too much pressure on knees and joints. Beginners' 4-week courses and Progression courses are arranged by HealthWorks Newcastle. Telephone Health Resource Centre on 0191 272 4244 for a programme.



Bowling: the summer season will be starting in April as the bowling greens in parks are prepared for the season. Most clubs welcome new members.

Heaton Meldon Bowling Club will be holding an open day in Heaton Park on Saturday 18 June at 2.30pm. (For more information contact John Gardner on 0191 262 0643).

Brandling Park Bowling Club in Jesmond is one of the oldest in the city but would still welcome new members who would like to give it a try. The club is open every Saturday afternoon 12pm-4pm. For more information, contact A.McKinley on 0191 243 4341.

Croquet has many benefits for older players – gentle exercise, intellectual stimulation and warm sociability. Why not give it a try?

From April onwards, Tyneside Croquet Club in Exhibition Park offers free taster sessions, on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 5.30pm. Just turn up; no equipment needed, but wear flat-soled shoes.

If you really want to get involved in your local park, the best way is to join a friends group.

Working Group Updates

Older Person Friendly City Working Group – cont. -

Friends of Jesmond Dene would like you to know that the new Visitor Centre is now open with café (and loos!). Pets are returning to Pets' Corner and there is a new children's play area. The Friends Group will be opening an Archive Room and are recruiting volunteers to run guided walks and help the rangers with other tasks around the park. There is a full programme of activities, April to September, and theatrical performances in July and August.

To join the group – and have a copy of their excellent Newsletter – telephone the Chairman, Donald McEwan on 0191 265 9271.

And don't forget – there is a full programme of activities Monday to Friday in MEA House: dancing, exercise, singing, writing, drawing. Information from Shenene or Jennifer on 0191 235 9914.

SEATS, SEATS, SEATS!

We do all appreciate somewhere to sit when we are out and about – in the city centre, or out for a walk in the park. Some members of the Working Group have been involved in helping to develop a design which older people have tried out and tested. See article below about where you can try out this prototype and express your views about it.

Seat Design - There is still time to have your say about the design of public seating.



The Institute for Ageing and Vitality has worked with Design Network North to find a design which meets the requirements of older people for comfort, cleanliness and convenience. The prototype from Miko Engineering can be seen – and can be sat on – just outside the laboratory building on the Newcastle General Hospital site (at the end of the site close to Nunsmoor Park). You can see from the photograph that there are armrests to help you get up, a place to put a drink and to hang your shopping bag, and a slot to hold a walking stick. The University will be purchasing some of these seats; but would you like to see them in more public places?

You can send your comments directly to Helen Sandford by e-mail Helen.sandford@newcastle.ac.uk or to the Working Group, c/o Elders Council Office, 2nd floor, MEA House, Ellison Place, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8XS.

Working Group Updates

Action for Health – Senior Citizens in Newcastle (Working Group on Health and Social Care)

Healthy Lives, Healthy People

was the title of the White Paper on Public Health to which we have just responded on behalf of the Elders Council. What have we said about the views of older people? First of all, we have given a cautious welcome for local authorities to have more responsibility for public health and for tackling inequalities in health within their population. Councils are involved in a wide range of services which have some influence on health and on healthy lifestyles – not only social care services but also housing, transport and adult education. But we remain concerned about the future relationship between public health and the GP consortiums which will be responsible for commissioning services to meet the health needs of their patients. We have suggested they should be required, not just encouraged, to work in partnership, so that there can be effective action to improve the health of all citizens. And for us, as older citizens, it is very important that services such as health, housing and care work together to enable healthy, independent living in our later years. We know that our readers understand that a healthy old age does not depend solely on medical interventions – important though that is – but there are many other influences which promote healthy lifestyles. A few months ago, we circulated a questionnaire asking for your views about whether there should be a right to an annual 75+ health check from your

GP. 97% of your responses supported this proposal. But almost all of you had many other suggestions about how you could be helped to stay healthy – ranging from opportunities for exercise, healthy eating, social activities and educational opportunities.

We understand that our health depends on a wide range of factors. We therefore consider it essential that local authorities, GP commissioning boards, hospital trusts and voluntary organisations have a shared aim to improve public health in their areas, in spite of differences in the structure of services.

Currently the legislation to introduce changes in the NHS is still going through Parliament so we await the final outcome later in the year. And the Dilnott Commission on Paying for Social Care is due to report in June. So there will be several more months of uncertainty and further opportunities to have a say!

In the meantime, the Working Group is concerned about what is happening at the moment and is discussing changes to the charges for social care; information leaflets about recognising and reporting elder abuse; and at a forthcoming meeting will be enquiring into residential care.

Please telephone the Elders Council office for details of future meetings if you are interested in attending.

Reports – Health and Care

Bringing care closer to people's homes

Transforming Community Services

The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals are now responsible for the management and delivery of Community Services.

Why management arrangements for community services are changing

The management of all community-based health services in Newcastle was transferred to Newcastle Hospitals on 1 April 2011. They claim that this means that improvements can be made in the way the services are managed and delivered by joining up hospital and community services to provide better access to services and enable them to improve care for patients.

What this means for you

Newcastle Hospitals will undertake the management of all community-based nurses, health visitors and community rehabilitation services. This includes the facilities at the Newcastle General Hospital site: the Belsay Unit, the Cherryburn Stroke Unit, Cragside Ward and Wallington Ward

Working in Partnership – Better Together

The hospitals say that bringing together community and hospital-based services creates a real opportunity to provide integrated joined-up care from home to hospital and back again. They think that this can be achieved by the delivery of seamless healthcare across community and hospital care services.



Further Information

Patients will be seen by their existing community services staff contacts. Contact and telephone numbers remain the same.

For new enquiries regarding Newcastle Hospitals Community Health, please ring 0191 233 6161.

And remember what we said in our March edition: if you have any concerns, contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on Freephone 0800 032 0202.

Reports – Health and Care

Carer's Emergency Contact Scheme – Thinking Ahead!

'What happens if I'm delayed unexpectedly or suddenly taken into hospital? What would happen to the person I look after?'

Who are Carers?

A carer is someone who looks after a relative, friend or neighbour, who could not manage without their help because of an illness, disability, frailty or drug and alcohol problem.

But what happens if they can't be there?

What is an emergency?

An emergency is an unplanned or unforeseen event that prevents a carer providing support and as a result the cared-for person could come to harm.

Examples could be:

- A carer being admitted to hospital or becoming suddenly very unwell
- An urgent family problem that means the carer has to be somewhere else (e.g. a close relative being taken ill)

What is the Emergency Contact Scheme?

It helps carers think ahead and make an emergency contact plan for what would happen if they cannot be there because of an emergency.

1. The plan would say who could replace them at short notice to make sure that the person they look after is safe. This could be a family member, friend or neighbour.
2. If the carer does not have anyone else that they can ask to help in an emergency, then the British Red Cross can send a volunteer who will be able to make sure that the person is safe in the short term and get in touch with organisations who can give practical help (like the City Council) if necessary.
3. The plan is registered with the British Red Cross, who will keep the plan safe until it is needed.

Carer's Emergency Contact Card

Once carers have registered their details, they will be given a pocket-sized card to keep with them at all times, which will have a telephone number to ring in an emergency. The card will also have a unique reference number, which will enable British Red Cross operators to access the emergency plan 24 hours per day, 7 days a week.

Reports – Health and Care

Carer's Emergency Contact Scheme – Thinking Ahead! – cont. -

The card would look like this →

The service is free and emergency services, like the Police or Ambulance Service will know what the card means.

How do you register for the Emergency Contact Scheme?

Carers can ask for a copy of an emergency contact plan to fill in from Adult and Culture Services. Support is available to make the plan if needed.

If you want to know more about this

scheme or if you want to request a plan, call Social Care Direct on 0191 278 8377.



Other things that carers can do to plan ahead:

- Talk about what would happen in an emergency with other people who can help; this could be family members or friends, but it might also be a social worker from Newcastle City Council. The Council has social workers for carers.
- Talk to someone from Newcastle Carers Centre on 0191 260 3030
- Make a long-term plan for what would happen if it is no longer possible to be a carer.
- Put an ICE (In Case of Emergency) number in mobile phone contacts.

If you need this information in another format or language, please phone the customer relations team on 0191 211 6340 or email

adultservices.customer@newcastle.gov.uk

The impact of culture and the arts on health

The Association of North East Councils, with the Economy, Culture and Environment Advisory Group to Public Health North East, are looking for examples of best practice about the impact of culture and the arts on health in the north east. If your organisation has had successful services in the arts and culture with the aim of improving health (in its widest sense), this is your opportunity to influence how this kind of work is undertaken in the future.

To find out more visit www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk/einformdocs/0324_01.pdf or email alison.jane@northeastcouncils.gov.uk

Reports – Health and Care

The Prostate Cancer Charity's Testing Choices Campaign

The Testing Choices campaign aims to ensure that all men at higher risk of prostate cancer can access the balanced information and one-to-one support they need to make an informed choice about whether or not to have a PSA test. The PSA test is a blood test that can help diagnose prostate problems, including prostate cancer. Working out whether or not to have a PSA test is a 'testing choice'. Men need to weigh up a whole range of pros and cons before deciding if it's right for them.

To make an informed choice, men need to know about the test. Yet, research by The Prostate Cancer Charity shows that two thirds of men over 50 don't even know it exists.

Unfortunately, very little is being done by the NHS to improve men's awareness. The current programme for helping men think about the PSA test – the Prostate Cancer Risk Management Programme – only helps men who already know about it.

The Charity believes that this has to change. They say that they need a programme that's able to reach every man who's at higher risk of prostate cancer, not just the few men who are already aware. To make this possible two things are needed. First, politicians and NHS officials must recognise the need for an improved programme that can help all men at higher risk of prostate cancer.

Second, there's a need to find out the best ways of communicating with men about the test. The Charity has developed a number of new ways of providing this information which it now wants to try out. Once the new approaches have been tested to find out which work best, the Charity will campaign for them to be rolled out across the country as part of an improved programme to raise awareness of the PSA test.

You can support the campaign by visiting www.prostate-cancer.org.uk/testingchoices to sign the charity's petition.

Meet me at ... the Hatton: making art accessible for people with dementia

There is mounting evidence that the arts and creativity have a positive impact on people with dementia. Based on examples of very successful projects at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Royal Academy in London, Equal Arts are working in partnership with the Hatton Gallery in Newcastle to set up a group for people with memory loss/dementia and their carers. This will involve monthly afternoon visits (1.30-3.30) to the Gallery with specially devised sessions to get the most out of the exhibitions. The group may get involved in some practical art work too. The first session will be in the autumn and will coincide with the Northern Print exhibition.

Equal Arts would welcome any feedback about this idea. Please contact Alice Thwaite at Equal Arts on 0191 477 5775 or at alice@equalarts.org.uk if you have any thoughts about the project or are interested in joining the group.

Reports – Health and Care

Paying for care

How much does care cost? How will I afford it? Can I get support?

A new website can give answers to these questions, and many more. payingforcare.co.uk is a new website which may be helpful to you or people you know. The site has just been launched and is designed to help older people, their family members and friends to make more informed decisions about the arrangements and funding for their long-term care.

It gives balanced, up-to-date advice on the complex subject of long-term care, specifically care payment, and other topics such as:

- Different types of care
- Getting care in your own home
- Choosing a care home
- Ways to pay for care

The website has been established in co-operation with charities and expert advisers in the care sector. They are authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

www.payingforcare.co.uk

Information

Would you like to know more about services for older people in Newcastle?



In previous editions of the newsletter, we have included leaflets featuring the above images. 'Just what I need' is a campaign to inform all older people about the services and information that are available to them.

The two leaflets that have been produced so far have featured organisations such as the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, the Energy Centre, and the Community Care Alarm Service.

In addition to the leaflets, we have volunteers who can visit community groups to let you know all about the information and services that are available for older people who live in Newcastle, and hopefully have a lively discussion!

If you would like us to visit your group at a coffee morning, meeting or event, just give us a call and we'll be happy to come along.

Contact Kaye Turner on (0191) 255 1984 or email kaye.turner@qualityoflife.org.uk for further information or to book a visit.

Information

Some hope for cheques?



Age UK and the Elders Council have welcomed news that the Treasury Select Committee has reopened its inquiry into the future of cheques after many people voiced their dissatisfaction with plans to abolish them.

The UK Payments Council had claimed that cheques were in 'terminal decline' at the time of the original inquiry; however, the Select Committee was not convinced by this argument. It had also been uncertain about how beneficial phasing out cheques would be in terms of costs.

The Committee Chair said: 'Many charities, small business and vulnerable people depend on cheques. Their needs must be considered.'

Michelle Mitchell, Charity Director at Age UK, added: 'Scrapping cheques without there being a suitable replacement is not acceptable. Cheques are often crucial in allowing you to pay bills securely and safely. Over the years we have heard from many older people who are worried about this issue and are really concerned about how they will cope if cheques go.'

If you would like to register your views on this issue, please write to your local MP:

Newcastle Central: Chi Onwurah, Suite 25, 7-15 Pink Lane, Newcastle, NE1 5DW; 0191 232 5838; chi.onwurah.mp@parliament.uk .

Newcastle East: Nick Brown, 1 Mosley Street, Newcastle, NE1 1YE; 0191 261 1408; nickbrownmp@parliament.uk .

Newcastle North: Catherine McKinnell, House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA; 0191 286 1266; catherine.mckinnell.mp@parliament.uk .

Are you thinking of giving up your car?

But maybe you think that taxis are too expensive? Then what about joining a scheme which offers cars in Newcastle 24/7?

You can join Commonwheels for £25, then book one of their cars for £4.25 an hour plus 19p per mile; or you can pay £36 per day (again, plus 19p per mile).

If you're interested in finding out more, please ring 0845 602 8030.

Information

Do you talk on your phone when crossing the road?

A study has discovered that older people find it much more difficult to multi-task and it could be dangerous to "walk and talk".

Psychologists have found that it took people aged over 59 "significantly longer than students to cross a simulated street while talking on a mobile".

In a series of tests which looked at a range of distractions while crossing the road, including listening to music and talking on a mobile phone, the older volunteers were "significantly impaired" when it came to getting across safely. The chief researcher said: "The findings suggest that while all pedestrians should exercise caution when attempting to cross a street while conversing on a phone, older adults should be particularly careful."

Do you agree? Please let us know.

Jesmond Festival enjoyed by all!

This year's Jesmond Community Festival attracted more events than ever, catering for all sections of the community, from toddlers to elders. Music, the festival parade, handicrafts, open days, competitions, readings and outdoor activities – there was something for every taste.



Photo: 'Put a Spring in Your Step'

Amongst the most popular regular events is "Put a Spring in Your Step", promoted by the Elders Council with Central Newcastle High School and Greggs, who donated a magnificent variety of cakes. 60 Jesmond residents, many of them from the area's residential homes, enjoyed the children's singing, Circle Dancing with Liz Hammer, tea, and a quiz set by Don Perry, with prizes donated by Marjorie Dodds.

An innovation this year was an afternoon of Fun and Fitness for the Over-50s, organised by Vera Bolter at St Hilda's Church Hall, which included demonstrations of carpet bowls, tai chi and Nordic walking; and there was also a self-defence class for the over-50s at Jesmond Pool, and an informal concert by Semitones for residents of Wordsworth House and friends.

Planning for next year's festival starts almost as soon as this one finishes, so if you have ideas for the Olympic Year Jesmond Festival, please contact Barbara Douglas now (contact details on the front of this newsletter).

Things to do ...

Make a film!

Do you have a passion for science, new innovation or questions about how technology and gadgets may impact on our everyday life? Would you like to make a short film and share your knowledge and learning with others?

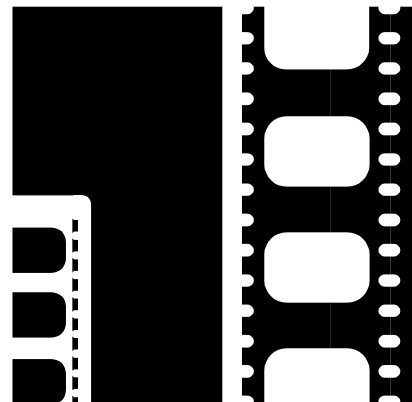
As a reporter, you would volunteer as either a presenter, cameraperson, soundperson, researcher or editor – there are roles in front and behind the camera for everyone.

Volunteers will be offered one training session per week for three weeks. These will take place in MEA House and on location in the city centre; they will cover: an introduction to digital video production; digital video editing; and planning and filming.

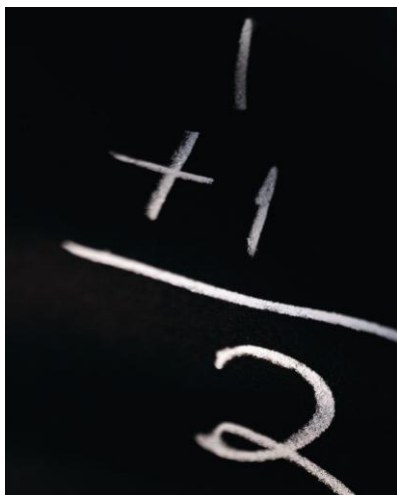
After training, you and the other volunteers will choose a topic with a scientific or technological impact. You will then be given a chance to put your new skills into practice and produce a short film.

So if you are a Newcastle resident over the age of 50 and want to learn the skills to make reports on some of the new projects in the city, this is your chance.

If you are interested contact Karen Watson on:
email. kwatson@csv.org.uk or
tel. 0191 232 6616



Public Art Project



An artist is looking to recruit people to become involved in a movement work based on simple mathematical principles. Anton Hecht has worked with the Elders Council before and says that volunteers will find it a fun way to get to understand some basic maths and to translate an abstract mathematical principle into something human.

There will be refreshments provided on the day. The final work will be put online and tied into the public art project happening as part of the Science City development.

You can contact Anton Hecht for further info:
email. antnhec@aol.com or
0795 056 6523.

Things to do in Byker and Walker

Soup and stottie ...

... at St Martin's Centre, Roman Avenue, Byker between 12.00 and 2.00pm on Monday 16 May.

Over-55s only.

Come and join us. Have a chat with others and get a free bowl of delicious homemade soup with fresh bread. We look forward to seeing you.

If you would like to find out more, please ring St Martin's Centre on 0191 276 4002.



Older and Wiser Day ...

... at St Martin's Centre, Roman Avenue, Byker between 1.00 and 2.00pm on Friday 20 May.

Come and find out what activities and services are on offer for you in the Byker and Walker area.

Refreshments will be available.

Come and try activities such as Rookie Sports, Tai Chi or just pop in for a friendly chat.



For more information please ring St Martin's Centre on 0191 276 4002.

Things to do ...

Knitting the community together

Ouseburn Trust has invited members of the Elders Council to their *Knitting the community together* event. The event will take place at Arch 6, Stepney Bank in the Ouseburn Valley from 2-4pm on 3 June to celebrate Volunteers Week.

The Heritage team of volunteers would like to gather memories of the local area to add to the Living Archives. This will be a great opportunity to share your stories and enjoy afternoon tea at Ouseburn Trust's new office.



As part of the event, it is hoped to knit a "Welcome" sign for the reception area, so if you would like to contribute to this, then please get in touch. To book your place, please contact Colette on 0191 261 6596 or colette.harrison@ouseburntrust.org.uk

Guided walks in Newcastle and Gateshead



It's the start of the season for City Guides in Newcastle. Walks take place on **Wednesdays at 7.00pm and Sundays at 2.30pm.**

You can see their leaflet online at www.newcastlecityguides.org.uk or call the Tourist Information Centre on telephone number **0191 277 8003** for a copy.

50+ Heritage Walks

Newcastle's very own City Guides run a series of dedicated 50+ walks throughout Newcastle and Gateshead covering areas such as: Local History; Art, Architecture; Nature and Story Tell. They will run every Tuesday morning at a cost of £3 per person per walk. Places are booked via the Tourist Information Offices. Call the Tourist Information Centre on telephone number **0191 277 8003** for a copy.

Research volunteers needed



Why not volunteer for the WEA?

Have you some spare time? Have you or someone you know benefited from adult education? Would you like to contribute to the development of adult education here, in Newcastle?

The Workers' Educational Association (WEA), which started in 1903, is a nationwide voluntary organisation. Volunteers in the WEA Branch in Newcastle work in partnership with WEA professional staff to promote education for all adults and we know that lives are changed and enriched by our work.

Volunteering with the WEA Branch covers a wide range of activities from making decisions about policy and the class programme to making coffee for students. The work can be demanding but meeting and working with like-minded people is worthwhile and rewarding.

So, if you are interested, why not find out more?

Ring Ann Alexander on 0191 4560888. She will be pleased to hear from you.

Memory Study at Newcastle University

Do individuals who are experiencing depression remember things differently from individuals who have never suffered from depression? To find out, a researcher at the university needs your help. The study involves an interview about your mood and a range of different tests measuring how you remember different types of information. All in all, the study is expected to take approximately three hours. You will be compensated for your time and out-of-pocket expenses.

To take part you need to:

- be between 30 and 65 years of age;
- have no personal history of psychiatric illness;
- have no first-degree relative with a history of psychiatric illness.

To find out more, please contact Jonna Nilsson on 0191 256 3296 or jonna.nilsson@ncl.ac.uk.

Research volunteers needed



How the Internet affects decision-making in health care – volunteers needed

Should the NHS incorporate patient experience into online health information? Researchers at Northumbria University are asking for volunteers to help them find the answer.

Their 5-year project will identify how and why people seek, use and interpret patient experience, and establish guidelines for presenting patient experience online. They will explore the ways in which different groups (smokers, people with asthma, or carers of people with multiple sclerosis) go online for health information and advice, and how exposure to patient experience might influence decision-making.

They are looking for smokers, people with asthma, or carers of people with multiple sclerosis to participate in a study which involves **one visit** to the University, to search for information and advice about their condition online, and to take part in a group discussion about their impressions of the health websites. The study will take about 2½ hours. Participants will be followed up over the phone two weeks later about their use of the health information obtained from the websites.

To be eligible to participate in this study, you must be aged under 66 and have had some experience of using the internet. You will be paid £20 for your participation. If you are interested in taking part, please contact Phoenix Mo on tel: 0191 227 3716 or email: phoenix.mo@northumbria.ac.uk .

Poetry

Sleeping Beauty

The tardy prince at last had come
To Sleeping Beauty's tangled home.
She awoke as she was kissed
Drifting back from sleep's soft mist.
Faltering her eyes unrolled
To view her champion, dashing, bold
And saw Prince Wally by her bed,

Looking gormless, going red.
She groaned, "Did YOU give me a kiss?
One hundred years I wait for THIS!
Just my rotten luck of course.
I'd really rather kiss your horse."

Jane Smailes

Poetry

We spring into summer

Clocks moved on to summer time
Cold and frosty nights – days still fine
As nature moves onto life's new ways
Colourful skies promise of sunny days

Birds still sing from early morn
Robin, thrush – morn till dawn
Life awakes to greet new day
As sun rises it's time of life at play

Fruit buds up and showing now
Nature's at work raising life and how
Flowers awake to warm early sun
To welcome and sustain – new life is won

Daffs are at their very best
So trumpet buddleia, nasturtiums now at rest

Lobelia, begonia, delphiniums – wait and see!

With scented fragrance await the bee!

Soil warms up to give nature's needs
Pots, containers awaiting sowing seeds
Life goes on gently to generate
Nature sets time of creative life-rate

Flowers, fruit and veg soon on their way
With sun and rain will plan to stay
With nature's produce for all our needs
Can come from such tiny seeds

Buddleia announces butterflies at play!
Birds, bees wildlife all on their way
The fox, rabbit, hedgehog down at pool
Are all aware of nature's golden rule

John Reid

Things to do ...

Open Clasp Theatre Workshop

Open Clasp is the North East's only professional women's theatre company, and are passionate about accessing powerful theatre and drama to communities all over the North East.

Open Clasp's latest project, Generation XX, aims to raise awareness and make a positive difference to the lives of older women in the North East. Open Clasp are offering Elders Council members an opportunity to participate in a workshop on Wednesday 22nd June 2011 – 10.30 am – 12.30 pm at MEA House, allowing women a safe space to reflect on their experiences, to identify any issues or areas of concern, and to celebrate strengths and achievements. The workshops aren't about acting (unless participants want to of course!). It's an opportunity to chat, make new friends, learn things about old friends, have fun, and be part of something that will make a positive difference. The workshops will directly inform and inspire a script, which will lead (funding permitting) to a new production touring regionally in February and March 2012.

If you would like to take part call Christine Richards on 233 0200 or email christine.richards@qualityoflife.org.uk

Report

Shops of yesteryear

This project was based on the memories when the “chatterbox”, who meet at Highmoor Court, Cowgate, pooled their knowledge from their younger days. Photographs, old films and items from the era resourced from Tyne and Wear Archives and Museum were inspirational in stirring up old memories of past times.

Artists Gaynor Devaney and Kath Boodhai, along with Karen Brown, guided group members towards the completion of the collage based on residents’ memories of shops of yesteryear. The artwork, using techniques of embroidery, appliqué and batik, is based on their memories and recollections of the shops that were common along Cowgate High Street.

The " chatterbox" group, whose ages range from 50 to 90+, may not all be as nimble-fingered as they used to be but their memories and input were crucial in the design and completion of the collage.

Can you remember when bread was baked in a baker’s, not a supermarket? When milk was delivered by hand-cart? When you could get bruised fruit for pennies?



And the Co-op had the original loyalty card (called the divvy); biscuits were sold from tin boxes and sold by weight; and bags were made from flat sheets of paper ingeniously twisted and folded to keep the contents safe.

The collage resulting from these memories will be displayed in the community room of Highmoor Court. If it’s not there sometimes, that’s because it is on loan or being used for display to inspire other groups to commit their memories to something that will be passed down as a legacy to future generations.

The "chatterbox" group meet every Friday afternoon between 1 and 3 at Highmoor Court, principally as a social group with tea and biscuits. Sometimes, as with this project, activities are organised to inspire conversation and fun with a sense of achievement but most importantly friendship and community. They are an open group and you are welcome to come along and find out more about them. For more information, contact Highmoor Court on 0191 286 5600.

Events

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, 15 June 2011

Throughout the world the abuse of older people is a frightening reality and no community is immune from the effects of this often hidden form of harm. Older people were the alleged victims of abuse in over 50% of safeguarding adults concerns reported in Newcastle last year. Action on Elder Abuse report that only one-tenth of elder abuse is reported.

World Elder Abuse Awareness day takes place every year on 15th June. Established by the United Nations the day is about everyone working together for greater recognition of the mistreatment of older people wherever they live in the world, and to highlight the need for appropriate action.

To mark the day the Newcastle Society for Blind People in conjunction with the Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board are holding an event at the **Bewick Hall in Newcastle City Library on 15th June** from 1.30pm to 3.30pm. The theme for this year's event is scams, bogus callers and staying safe. There will be series of talks and an opportunity to visit information stalls. To reserve a place on the event please call Marjorie on: 0191 232 7292 or email james.steward@newcastle.gov.uk

Information

Police Advice

Police in Newcastle are reminding residents to be on their guard against bogus callers and rogue tradesmen.

Over recent months, reports have been received across the force of men pretending to be from organisations, such as the water board, in order to get access to homes and steal from inside.

And in other cases people have knocked on the door saying building work needs doing to their home and then charging extortionate prices.

Officers are advising people that it's vital to be aware of such activity and take note of crime prevention advice.

Sergeant Grant Urquhart said: "These people can often seem very believable and use all sorts of stories to trick their way into people's homes and either con them out of money or steal from them. The best advice is to never, ever hand money over to someone who cold-calls at your home, and never let them inside. Anyone calling from an official organisation will happily wait or come back while you check their

Information

Police Advice – cont. -

identification. These offenders often target the elderly and vulnerable and people really need to be on their guard against this sort of activity. If you do see any suspicious vehicles or people in your neighbourhood, you should report this to police as soon as possible. And also look out for your relatives and neighbours."

Police offer the following advice:

- Be extremely cautious about anyone you don't know who arrives at your door unannounced.
- If they claim to be an official, check their identity and if necessary ring the organisation to check.
- While you check their identity, keep them waiting outside your locked door; genuine callers won't be offended if you do this.
- Don't invite any unannounced callers into your home.
- If necessary, ask the caller to come at a later date and arrange to have someone with you when they return.
- Never hand over any money to people who cold-call.

Editors' Note: 'Scambuster – Your guide to beating the scammers' is available from the Office of Fair Trading. Call 0800 389 3158 for a free copy of this publication.

Correspondence

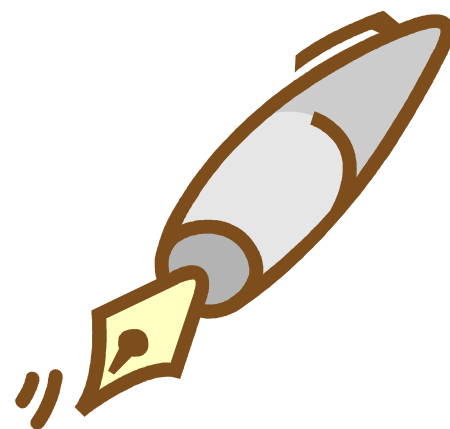
Dear Editors,

BOGUS CALLERS

Several years ago two men knocked at my door and told me that there were some tiles missing from my roof. I locked my door and went outside to see for myself. They wanted me to part with money, which I didn't. I then thanked them very much and told them I would inform the Council.

Also two people knocked at my door asking me to donate to the British Diabetic Association (it was Diabetes UK by then). I then asked if there was a local group and was told no (which there was). I contacted the police, who came and asked me why I was suspicious and I told them what I have told you. The police came back and asked if I could identify them and I could.

George Anthony



Correspondence

Dear Editors

I have just received a telephone call from "Charles", who said, "We are working with the Health Service." He asked me some questions: did I have arthritis? what sort? what medication was I on? etc and I answered him honestly and he was very polite – except that he kept calling me "love" and had a very marked Asian accent. He told me that there was a product which is being tested – rosehip –, which is very beneficial to arthritis sufferers. The product is not like rosehip syrup but is in tablet form which contains synovial fluid and you take one per day. Fine – all good so far. Then he started to talk about how it was a very expensive drug (£30 per month), but senior citizens can have it half price. All I had to do was pay £15 using my debit card. When I said that I was not willing to give my card details, he changed his attitude. They would deliver to my door each month and I wouldn't have to bother any more about payment because they would have my details etc etc. I was adamant that he would not be given my details and I hung up. I was concerned that this could be a "con" and that some elderly people would do just what was asked of them. After all, if you are in pain, you will try anything. He was a bit too persistent for my liking. He would not disclose where he got my details from but knew a lot about my condition (arthritis etc), which is how I didn't think anything of answering his questions.

Having received the Elders Council Newsletter recently, I thought I should just pass on this information.

I enjoy reading the newsletter and intend to send a donation in the near future – it's pension day next week!

Thank you for all you are doing to keep us "golden oldies" well informed.

Yours truly,
Barbara Bailes

Editors' note: Readers who want to stop telephone calls such as Barbara describes should sign up to the Telephone Preference Service. Just ring 0845 070 0707 and register.

Dear Editors

Yesterday I received an email supposedly from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) saying I had a tax rebate and asking me to click on a link.

I have just checked with HMRC, who say they never use email: everything is done by post. Can you pass on the warning, please? These people are after bank details.

I am usually quite vigilant and nearly got caught – it is so plausible.

Thanks and regards,
Anita Davies

Correspondence

Dear Editors,

Thank you for your latest issue of the Newsletter. I have so far never seen the following issue raised: very few of the disabled elderly get the chance of a holiday abroad with the need to fly. I've found that extremely difficult. It requires the assistance of two extra persons.

Let me elaborate (citing Newcastle Airport as the example):

- 1) **Arrive at airport:** how do I enter the airport? If by taxi, I'm left outside at the entrance. If by car, I have a very difficult walk from the car park. (I can walk short distances with the aid of a stick.)
- 2) **Inside:** how do I get to the check-in desk with my luggage?
- 3) Then I am sent to the disabled waiting area.
- 4) If I bring my own wheelchair, I have to go through a separate check-in process for it.



At one time there was a button in the car park to press for assistance. I personally would be willing to pay £5 for assistance, payable on booking.

Once the very caring wheelchair person takes over, I am taken to the departure lounge.

On arrival on my return, similar problems occur. The help at Newcastle is good apart from the rules that forbid the helper from pushing wheelchair and luggage trolley together; in the end, I had to put my cases on the wheelchair and push it myself.

Thank you

Mrs Seryl Spicker.

Editors' note: Do you use a wheelchair? Please let us know whether you have experienced the same difficulties as are outlined in the above letter. If you have, how have you managed to overcome them? Or has it put you off travelling by air altogether?

Newsletter Information

Newsletter Articles



If you would like to submit an article to be considered for the July 2011 edition of the Newsletter, will you please ensure that you forward it before Friday 17 June. (Contact details on page 1).

Newsletter in other formats

We can make our Newsletter available in alternative formats (e.g. in **larger print** or audio tape).



**To request information please contact the office
(details on page 1)**

Electronic Version of the Newsletter

It costs about 60p per member to send out this newsletter, so would you be willing to have the newsletter sent to you electronically? If you would, it would save a lot of money every year. So please sign up for this service now by emailing anne.richardson@qualityoflife.org.uk, please put "E-mail newsletter" in the subject box.



Advantages to signing up for this service include receiving the Newsletter at least 14 days sooner than you would normally receive it via the post; getting earlier notice of events happening throughout the city; and seeing the various images in colour.

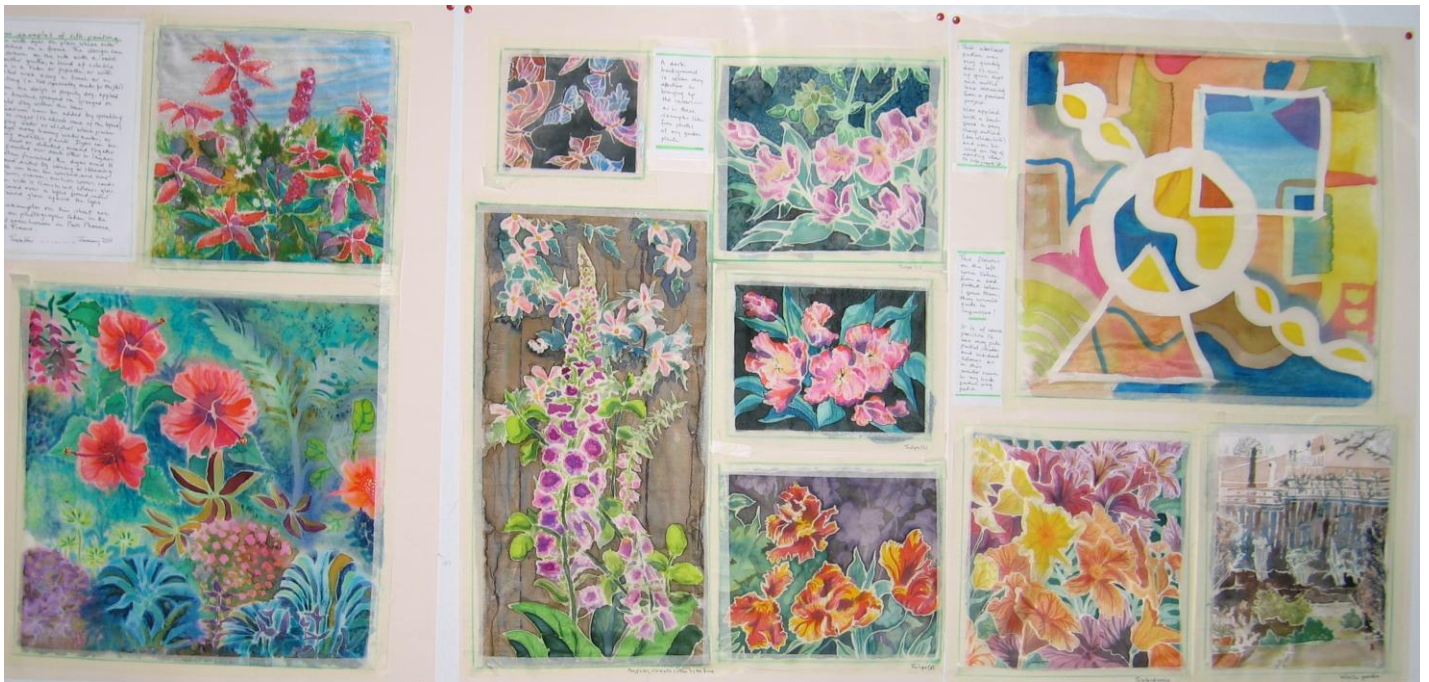
What are you waiting for?

Things to do ...

Have you got something for our Gadgies Gallery?

Do you paint, draw, sew, embroider, produce photographs, write poetry or.....? If so, we need your contributions to our constant but changing display of older people's creative work in the office, where it can be seen by visitors. Please ring the Elders Council office for details.

Some of the current contributions displayed:



Display of silk painting by June Thexton

Summer Outings 2011 using a Concessionary Bus Pass

Summer Outings reply slip:

Please send a copy of the Summer Outings leaflet to (use block letters):

Name:

Address:

.....

.....

Postcode:

Put this slip into an envelope (**stamp needed**) and post to: The Elders Council, 2nd Floor MEA House, Ellison Place, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8XS.

Gift Aid

As you know from what we said in a previous newsletter, the Elders Council grant this year was not increased by as much as we had hoped. So we need to depend more heavily upon voluntary contributions from our members.

Gift Aid is the easiest way to increase donations to the Elders Council by nearly a third at no cost to you (in fact, if you're a higher-rate taxpayer, you can even claim something back).

What is Gift Aid?

Gift Aid is a tax relief that is allowed on any money that you donate to the Elders Council. The government treat your charity donations as though you have already deducted basic tax from them, which in turn means that we can reclaim this. So we get the benefit and you lose nothing: the extra comes from the government.

How does Gift Aid Work?

Gift Aid can apply to one-off donations, or those over a specific period. It can even be backdated for up to six years.

Higher-rate taxpayers are eligible to reclaim 25p from the taxman for every £1 donated to charity by including details of their donations on their Self Assessment form. This rebate can be donated directly to the Elders Council on the same form and, if you so choose, it can be increased further through Gift Aid.

How can I use Gift aid?

If you would like any future donation to the Elders Council to apply for Gift Aid, please contact Nathan Gulliver for a Gift Aid Declaration Form: 0191 255 1980.

PLEASE HELP THE ELDERS COUNCIL TO CONTINUE ITS WORK

I wish to donate £5 [] £10 [] £25 [] Other [£] to the Elders Council of Newcastle and enclose a cheque for that amount. Please send me a gift aid form.

Name: _____

Address: _____
